



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

For my final Director's column, I'm pleased to share that Richard Sanchez, REHS, MPH has been officially selected following a competitive recruitment process to serve as your next Director.

Richard is a proven professional with more than 32 years of experience in public health care administration. He first joined us here at the OC Health Care Agency (HCA) in 2005 as our Director of Environmental Health (EH). Under his leadership, EH was a two-time recipient of the

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Highlighting the People and Programs Serving our Mission

Robert Fore Pays it Forward with Help and Kindness

"When we help others, we also help ourselves" is the motto that **Robert Fore**, Peer Mentor for Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Costa Mesa Program of Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) program, lives daily when he assists clients and colleagues.

Inspired and motivated to help others by sharing his lived experience and positive recovery, Robert's journey toward his career in mental health began after taking classes at [Pacific Clinics Recovery Education Institute \(REI\)](#) to be a para-professional mental health worker. Upon seeing his potential and positivity toward students and staff, REI recommended Robert for a position at BHS.

Robert serves as one of six BHS PACT peer mentors who meets and builds rapport with clients, some of whom typically isolate and resist treatment. His goals are to help these folks navigate available resources and services, link and encourage them to integrate into community programs and provide transportation to and from appointments and the Wellness Center to help with recovery.

"I just don't give up with clients," Robert said. "I point out their strengths, see things they do that are positive and let them know they're okay and that I'm a consumer of behavioral health services too. Sometimes people need to hear that. My clients, like all people, need encouragement, support, empowerment, or someone to believe in them and recognize the positive things they do."

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Director's Message

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Orange County Business Council's "Turning Red Tape into Red Carpet," an honor given in recognition of the collaborative work with business and cities to promote economic growth while protecting the public.

Before his tenure in Orange County, Richard served as Director of Environmental Health for the Sacramento County Environmental Health Department, and as a Program Manager and field staff for the San Bernardino County Environmental Health Department. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences from the University of California Irvine and a Master of Public Health from Loma Linda University.

Since I appointed Richard to the position of HCA Assistant Director in 2013, we have worked very closely together as a team, and I have absolute confidence that Richard will be a wonderful leader who will empower you to continue the great work of improving the health and wellbeing of those we serve.

On a personal note, it has been an honor and a privilege to be your colleague and your Director. Thank you and so long,



Mark Refowitz
Director, Health Care Agency

Robert Fore Pays it Forward with Help and Kindness

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Everybody's got potential; they just don't always recognize it."

Robert was also instrumental in creating a weekly meeting for peer mentors to discuss difficult cases and support each other in their role. Robert's colleagues note that his advocacy for clients embodies the principles of the Recovery Model and his actions pave the way for the success of consumer para-professionals employed by the County.

With his ongoing contributions to HCA and the community, it should come as no surprise to readers that Robert was nominated by his colleagues and selected as March's [Peer-to-Peer](#) award winner. Congratulations, Robert!



James Madison Elementary Joins Fight to End Hunger in OC

Did you know that one in five children in Orange County don't know where their next meal is coming from? Sixth graders at James Madison Elementary School in Anaheim are now joining the fight to end hunger and food insecurity by partnering with the [Waste Not OC](#) Coalition (WNOC) after hearing a presentation by **Rachel Otair**, WNOC Program Manager.

Madison's sixth graders are in charge of collecting and placing excess food from primary and upper grade lunches in coolers to be retrieved and delivered that same day by Food Finders (a food rescue organization) to local pantries for distribution. They also created and displayed public awareness posters throughout campus to show how students can do their part to end hunger.

Envisioned several years ago by County Health Officer **Dr. Eric Handler** and [OC Food Bank](#) Manager Mark Lowery, WNOC aims to end hunger and food insecurity in Orange County by reducing food waste through the donation of wholesome surplus food from food-producing facilities to local pantries. To learn more, visit www.wastenotoc.org.

Waste Not OC Happenings:

- County Health Officer Dr. Eric Handler served as speaker-of-honor at an annual meeting of public information officers and communications practitioners from hospitals throughout Orange

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James Madison Elementary Joins Fight to End Hunger in OC
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County where he discussed his efforts with WNOC to combat food insecurity. Read an OC Register article [here](#) about the growing list of local hospital providers who are donating surplus cafeteria food to help feed the hungry.

- Congratulations to the Waste Not OC Coalition on being named 2017 Community Champion of the Year by the Orange County Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics for promoting pediatric excellence through its strong contributions to the community that achieve optimal health for all Orange County children. Read more about the award [here](#).

“ This project has empowered students to make a difference locally through their own daily actions and increased their awareness of hunger issues facing our county. James Madison Elementary joins the growing list of WNOC partners that have recovered 4,803,980 pounds of extra food and transformed into 4,003,316 meals since 2016. ”

– Dr. Eric Handler,
County Health Officer



2016 Steve Ambriz Team Excellence Award Winner

Get to Know Behavioral Health Services' Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) Fullerton Clinic

Behavioral Health Services' Program for Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) Fullerton Clinic is an outpatient mental health program that provides specialized services to adults aged 18-59 years with severe and chronic mental health conditions that make it difficult for them to function within the community.

The program's ultimate goals are to decrease the number of occurrences that a consumer of behavioral health services experiences homelessness, hospitalizations and incarcerations. The PACT Fullerton team does this by focusing on their client's strengths and resilience, empowering them to be their 'best self' and working with them to develop strengths already within them.

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2016 Steve Ambriz Team Excellence Award Winner

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The team's greatest strength is how they use their combined backgrounds (Latino, Filipino, African-American, Korean, Middle Eastern, Caucasian and Cambodian), varying therapeutic approaches and more than 200 years of shared experience to address the needs of their diverse client population.

PACT Fullerton has successfully decreased psychiatric hospitalizations from the year prior to admission by 50% or more and has graduated 36 clients and linked them to community psychiatrists or local, contracted mental health clinics.

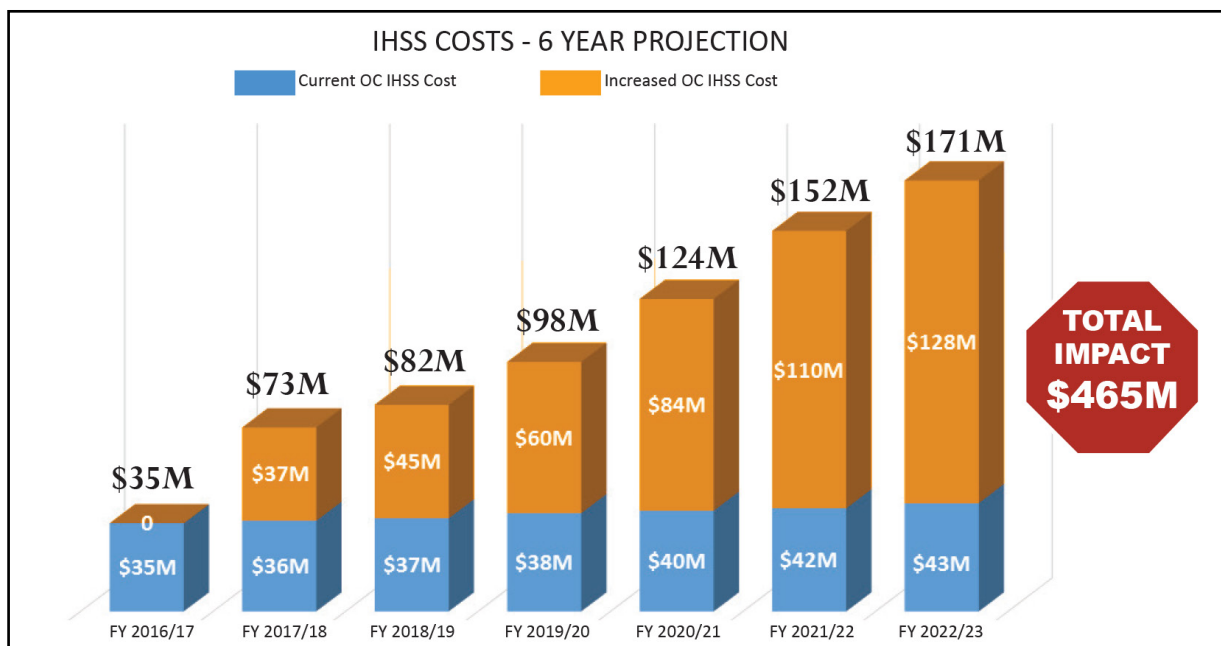
The Steve Ambriz Team Excellence Award was created by the Health Care Agency and Orange County Employees Association Labor Management Committee (LMC) to identify qualities and characteristics of effective work teams and to encourage teams to exemplify the principles of enlightened leadership and team excellence in creative collaborative action. Learn more at <http://intranet/lmc/team>.

“ One of our clients came back after graduating and looked for me. We sat down to chat, and he shared, ‘I’ve never been or have felt better than I do today. I want to thank you for what you have done for me. It’s because of this clinic, that I’m able to be where I am today. If it wasn’t for what you have done for me, I would have never made it this far. Now I’m going to college, I have a job, and I can drive anywhere I want to. Thank you for being there for me.’ I’m grateful to have helped and be part of this client’s successful journey.

– David Guzman,
Community Health Assistant II

5 Things You Need to Know About In-Home Supportive Services and the County of Orange Budget

- 1 This past January, the State proposed to eliminate the Coordinated Care Initiative, which would dismantle the In-Home Supportive Services Maintenance of Effort (MOE) as described in the Governor’s Proposed Budget for California (FY 2017-18). This means that counties would once again be responsible for the cost of administering the IHSS program, which for the County of Orange is approximately \$38 million more than anticipated in FY 2017-18 and incrementally more in the years to follow.
- 2 On February 17, 2017, our County Chief Executive Officer, Frank Kim, issued a Budget Management Action Plan for the County which includes a hiring freeze for all vacant positions. This is a pro-active effort to ensure the County’s ability to remain stable and continue providing services to the community going forward.
- 3 HCA submitted a balanced FY 2017-18 Requested Budget that we believe addresses this issue based on what we know today. For more information about next steps in the California budget process, including when the Governor issues his Revised Budget, visit <http://www.ebudget.ca.gov/>.
- 4 The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program provides supportive services such as housecleaning, meal preparation and personal care services, for seniors, blind or disabled persons who are limited in their ability to care for themselves and cannot live safely at home without help.
- 5 In FY 2011-12, the State established the IHSS MOE agreement that spelled out which entities (State vs. counties) were responsible for funding the supportive services as well as who had the responsibility for collectively bargaining with IHSS workers.





Inconsistency in Availability & Marketing of Healthy Products in Orange County

Findings from a new [Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community](#) survey show that only 13% of stores in Orange County advertised healthy products on their storefronts, while 69% of stores marketed unhealthy products and the availability of e-cigarettes has grown nearly 21% since 2013.

These findings are part of new research on the availability and marketing of tobacco products, alcohol, condoms and healthy and unhealthy food options in California stores that sell tobacco. An OC Register article [here](#) talks about how e-cigarettes are easier to find in Southern California stores than fresh produce. Health supporters gathered in March to raise awareness about the results and educate retailers on how they play a critical role in our community’s health.

The survey is the largest of its kind and builds upon initial research released three years ago in

March 2014. It provides insights into changes in the availability and marketing of the studied products from information collected in the summer of 2016 from more than 7,100 stores in all 58 California counties including pharmacies, supermarkets, delis, convenience and liquor stores as well as tobacco-only stores.



For more county-specific data, read the full survey at www.healthystoreshealthycommunity.com. Visit our [TUPP](#) program to learn how they’re working to reduce tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke in Orange County.

“ This survey found that our community’s youth are exposed to many unhealthy messages and choices. Our Tobacco Use Prevention Program (TUPP) is committed to continuing to work with retailers and local partners to provide accurate information to help make the healthy choice the easy choice for our residents. ”

– Amy Buch,
Division Manager,
Health Promotion Division

Nutrition Services “Puts Their Best Fork Forward”

To celebrate National Nutrition Month in March, our Nutrition Services program reminded staff and visitors at the Health Care Agency’s 17th St. Clinic and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) clinics throughout Orange County that each of us has the tool to make healthier food choices – a fork!

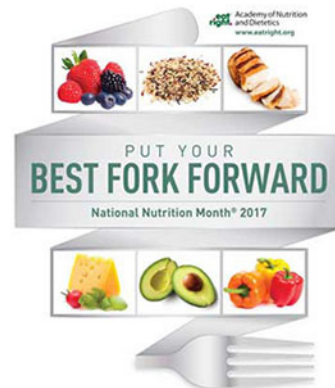
“Healthy eating doesn’t have to be difficult. It’s all about being inspired to make small changes in your eating habits and over time, helps to improve your health now and into the future.”

– Maridet Ibanez,
Nutrition Services Program Manager

Displays featured brochures and handouts highlighting this year’s theme “Put Your Best Fork Forward,” to inspire people to make small changes one bite at a time.

Information included how to create a healthy eating style by cooking meals at home and how favorite recipes can be more nutritious by experimenting with healthier ingredients.

Visit [Nutrition Services](#) to learn more about the great work they do. For more healthy eating tips, visit www.eatright.org.



Healthy Eating Recipe

Quinoa Tabbouleh Salad

Serves 8

Submitted by Marisela Barcenas, HCA Public Health Nutritionist

Ingredients:

- 1 cup uncooked quinoa
- 2 cups water
- 2 cups parsley, minced
- ½ cup mint, minced
- 4 green onions, minced
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 2 cups tomatoes, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon salt

Directions:

1. Rinse the quinoa under cool water.
2. In a medium saucepan, combine quinoa with 2 cups of water and bring to a boil.
3. Reduce heat and simmer, cover for about 20 minutes until the quinoa is fluffy and chewy.
4. Empty the cooked quinoa into a large bowl and allow to cool in the refrigerator. The quinoa should feel just barely warm to the touch.
5. Stir in parsley, mint, green onions and tomatoes.
6. Whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt, and pepper. Pour this over the salad and stir to combine.
7. Serve chilled or at room temperature. This salad can be served on its own, as a side dish or with wedges of pita bread as a light appetizer.



Motel Assistance Program Continues to House More Participants

Since it launched in February, the Motel Assistance for Behavioral Health Homeless program continues to successfully house participants who are struggling with a mental illness or substance use issue and currently work with our Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Outreach and Engagement (O&E) team.

Our O&E team identifies participants who are working toward their behavioral health goals and coordinates with contract providers to place them in a motel for up to seven days to support their

A participant, who's also a new mom, shares how the program helped her and her baby:

“ Because of BHS O&E team members Tammy Waitman and Araceli Vidales and the Motel Assistance Program, I was able to stay in a motel room to recover from my emergency c-section and be close to the hospital to see my daughter. They got me a week’s stay, which was perfect timing because on the sixth day, my new apartment was ready and I moved in. This was such a blessing because if it hadn’t been for the motel stay, I would have been back on the streets. I thank staff and the Health Care Agency for their kindness and generosity for going above and beyond to help me and my baby. ”

recuperative care and link to behavioral health programs. Participants who have been matched to a housing opportunity through the [Coordinated Entry System](#) can also stay in a motel for up to seven days.

BHS O&E provides outreach services to individuals of all ages who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, and struggling with a behavioral health condition. The team develops trusting relationships with homeless participants in any public area and works with them to reduce barriers to housing due to behavioral health impairments and facilitates linkage to available resources and support services. To learn more about the great work they do, visit the [Outreach and Engagement](#) website or call 800-364-2221.

O&E staff had been working with a woman who was staying in the riverbed and was referred to the Courtyard. She was pregnant at the time and recently became ill, which resulted in a hospital visit and early delivery. After her release, staff was able to house her in a motel near the hospital so that she could continue visiting her baby while in the neonatal intensive care unit.



Reducing Implicit Bias Improves Relationships with Staff and Clients

As professionals, we work with diverse clients and coworkers; and as humans, we all have preferences. Yet, did you know that our brain sometimes automatically makes decisions on these preferences without us even realizing it?

“**When I first came into the training, I saw myself as a very open-minded person. This training significantly raised my awareness. In our daily interactions with clients and staff, we may not realize that we are unintentionally stereotyping individuals, while consciously thinking we are looking out for their best interest and helping them. Learning ways to reduce our implicit biases by practicing intervention strategies led me to understand how we can more effectively help others achieve greater health and success in our community.**”

– Shoshana Vokas,
Program Supervisor II, Maternal
Child and Adolescent Health

The topic of perception and how it plays a role in our relationships with clients and colleagues served as the theme of a recent training provided to Public Health Services (PHS) staff by the [Perception Institute](#).

Attendees learned how implicit bias (our brain's instant association of stereotypes or attitudes toward particular groups without our conscious awareness) can affect how they interact with and provide services to the people they meet. To address this, participants were taught intervention techniques like de-biasing (efforts to break unconscious preferences) and got into groups to discuss how this could be applied in their roles at the Health Care Agency.

Public Health Services shares learning opportunities, information and training to help PHS staff provide quality services to Orange County's diverse communities. To learn more, visit <http://intranet/trainings>.

Stereotyping and bias are universal human phenomena. No one is immune from the effects of implicit bias, racial anxiety and stereotype threat. These phenomena have serious impacts on our decisions and on the way we treat each other in every sector of daily life. Learn more about how unconscious mental processes may be contributing to serious differences in health care outcomes at <https://perception.org/reality/health-care>.

COMPLIANCE CORNER



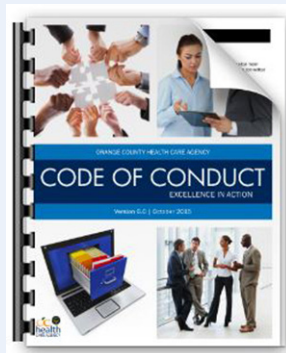
How Does the Code of Conduct Guide Our Actions and Decisions?

As the cornerstone of the Health Care Agency's Compliance Program, the [Code of Conduct](#) serves as a guideline for all staff that helps us make ethical decisions, highlights the values of the Agency and provides a framework to which we operate.

“With our Code of Conduct, not only are we given the parameters for our own behaviors, but it also conveys the values of our organization to external parties and compliments all Agency-wide or department specific policies and behaviors.”

– Chi Rajalingam,
Chief Compliance Officer

If it's been a while since you've read the Code of Conduct, take a moment to refresh yourself at <http://intranet/compliance/code>. From HCA's mission, vision, core values, goals and standards of behavior, the Code of Conduct has it all!



Take this fun crossword activity to test your Code of Conduct knowledge. All entries should be submitted to the Office of Compliance via email, fax or mail by April 10, 2017. Please be sure to include your name and pony address. From all eligible entries received, five random winners will be selected to receive a Compliance goody bag. Good luck!

Submit entries to:

Office of Compliance
405 W. 5th St., Ste. 776
Santa Ana, CA 92701
Pony: Bldg. 38T
Fax: (714) 834-6595
Email: officeofcompliance@ochca.com

ACROSS

- 3 Number of days HCA has to notify a client of a breach.
- 5 The frequency for which HCA conducts sanction screenings.
- 9 Any adverse action taken against an employee for engaging in a protected activity, such as reporting a concern in good faith.
- 10 The Compliance Telephone Hotline and Online Issue Reporting service provides this type of disclosure method to report compliance concerns or violations.
- 13 This is defined as the “intentional deception or misrepresentation that an individual knows or should know to be false that could result in some unauthorized benefit to you or another.”
- 14 How soon you should notify the Office of Compliance of a suspected/known breach.
- 15 Any information that can be used to identify, contact, or locate an individual, either alone or combined with other easily accessible sources.
- 16 This is one example of retaliation.

DOWN

- 1 The number of PHI Identifiers.
- 2 The “P” in PHI.
- 4 A [] of interest arises when the personal interests or activities of an HCA workforce member appears to, or does in fact influence, his/her ability to act in the best interest of the County.
- 6 The [] of Conduct are a key component to the Code of Conduct and affirms the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals that guide the Agency.
- 7 The first “I” in PII.
- 8 An individual's health information that is created or received by a health care provider related to the provision of health care by a covered entity that identifies or could reasonably identify the individual.
- 11 866-260-5636 is the number to the Compliance [].
- 12 Number of Standards of Conduct identified within the Code of Conduct.

Employees Receive Recognition at 2nd Annual SOAR Awards

The 2nd Annual Employee Recognition event, held on March 9, featured a contest to encourage employees to submit innovative slogan ideas that exemplify this year's recognition ceremony. The Agency received 47 entries and selected the theme "SOAR Beyond the Stars Together," submitted by **Darlana "Chris" Downey**, Mental Health Specialist with Behavioral Health Services Substance Use Disorder Services program.

The Agency is appreciative of employee's level of commitment and dedication in providing quality healthcare to the entire County population. In addition, the ceremony recognized employees with 40, 35, 30 and 25 years of services for the timeframe April 2016 – March 31, 2017. Congratulations to the 18 SOAR winners and to all years of service recipients.

Click [here](#) to view the online slide show.



MISSION

In partnership with the community, protect and promote the health and safety of individuals and families in Orange County through:

- Assessment and planning
- Prevention and education
- Treatment and care



Connect with Us

The **What's Up** newsletter is created and distributed monthly by HCA Communications. Please call (714) 834-2178 with any suggestions or comments.

Welcome to

Uplift

a feature designed to bring each edition of our newsletter to a close with something that inspires you.

“

“This photo was taken during sunset at Victoria Beach in Laguna. It’s amazing that scenes like this play out every day and not many are able to witness them. I began my passion for photography by taking landscape and nature shots so that I could share these beautiful scenes with friends and family.”

– **Patrick Martin**, Communications Photography Volunteer, Health Policy, Research & Communications

“

“The colors of the sky at dusk outside my parent’s house in Mission Viejo have always been this deep amber color on particularly foggy evenings. I would often enjoy these moments on my way home from school, for many years.”

– **Steven Flores**, Photography & Digital Communications Assistant, Health Policy, Research & Communications

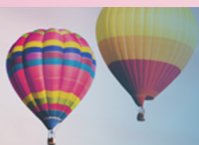
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Perfection is attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence. ”

– Vince Lombardi. Submitted by **Steve Thronson**, Deputy Agency Director, Regulatory /Medical Health Services

“No kind action ever stops with itself. One kind action leads to another. Good example is followed. A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees. The greatest work that kindness does to others is that it makes them kind themselves. ”

– **Janel Alberts**, Grant Coordinator, Behavioral Health Services



What inspires you? Would you like to share a motivational quotation, photograph you’ve taken of something beautiful – even a fitness tip or healthy recipe – with Uplift for consideration? If so, send it via email to tlandquist@ochca.com, and please be sure to include your job title, division name, and a sentence or two about why it moves you. Please know that not all submissions will be used; decisions are at the discretion of HCA Communications.