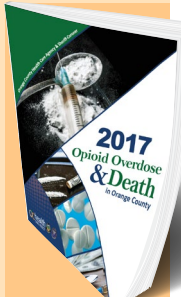


Director's Message

The opioid epidemic continues making headlines. From cities and states filing suit against drug manufacturers, to talk of a national emergency declaration, to heart-wrenching stories profiling loved ones who've tragically lost family members and friends, we're hearing and reading about this issue on a daily basis. But what's happening in Orange County?

To help inform health care policy makers, educators, and professionals, the OC Health Care Agency recently released the "Opioid Overdose and Death in Orange County" report. Among key findings: the rate of opioid-related emergency department (ED) visits has increased 141% since 2005 here.

... continued on page 2



Clients and their families feel cared for the moment they walk through the clinic's doors in Santa Ana.

RAQUEL TELLEZ Builds New Program Where Focus on Client Care Comes First

"Teamwork makes the dream work" is the mantra that **Raquel Tellez**, Service Chief II for Community Counseling and Supportive Services (CCSS), a Prevention & Early Intervention program within Behavioral Health Services (BHS), practices every day with her team and approach to client care.

Raquel's dream turned into reality when a rare opportunity to build a new program from the ground up became available. With an inspiration to make her mark in the world, she eagerly jumped on the chance to create CCSS and mold it into a program that's focused on exemplary client-care.

Raquel's team works hard to create a warm, safe and comfortable environment for their clients ranging from children to adults who need help managing everyday life issues like divorce, abuse, trauma and other challenges. From a comfortable family lounge to a child-friendly reception area, the team makes clients and their families feel cared for the moment they walk through the clinic's doors in Santa Ana.

"It gives me great joy and pride to see patients thrive. Many even opt out of our program early because they feel like they've gotten their lives to a manageable place and

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Director's Message

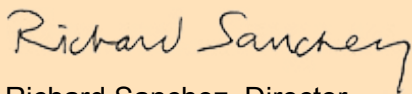
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We've also learned:

- ❖ Between 2011 and 2015, there were 7,457 opioid overdose/abuse cases treated in Orange County ED's.
- ❖ Residents between the ages of 18 to 24 and 25 to 34 years were most likely to visit the ED for an opioid overdose.
- ❖ Seven of every 10 drug overdose death investigated by the Orange County Sheriff's Department during this five-year period involved opioids, for an average of 241 opioid-related overdose deaths each year.
- ❖ Males were nearly two times more likely than females to overdose and/or die from an opioid-related incident, and residents between the ages of 45 to 54 years had the highest opioid overdose death rates.
- ❖ Geographically, cities along the coastal and southern regions of Orange County (e.g., Laguna Beach, Laguna Woods, Dana Point, Costa Mesa, and Huntington Beach) tended to have higher rates of ED visits and death than other cities.

Research like this is important because it helps us understand how to better target our efforts, in partnership with the community, to both prevent and combat opioid addiction. To learn more about what's underway, or read the report in its entirety, please visit www.ochealthinfo.com/opioids.

Best,



Richard Sanchez, Director



Stomp out the stigma of mental illness by joining dedicated OC Health Care Agency staff, friends and family as they walk for a cause in this year's [NAMIWalks Orange County](#) at William R. Mason Park in Irvine on Saturday, October 7 at 10:30 a.m.

Captain **Melody Marler**, Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Community Health Assistant II, will lead "Team BHS" to help raise funds for the [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#) Orange County, a volunteer-based nonprofit designed to eliminate stigma and raise

mental health awareness. To register, visit the [Team BHS](#) webpage. The event is free to all, but contributions are welcome.

"NAMIWalks is a great opportunity for everyone to show support

for a community of hope and inclusion," said **Mary Hale**, Behavioral Health Services Deputy Agency Director. "Be a part of Team BHS and join the movement by walking, volunteering, donating or simply taking part in the festivities!"

NAMI Orange County is the leading self-help organization in the county for families and friends of those suffering from serious mental health disorders and offers family support groups, advocates for legislation, supports research efforts and works to educate the public to reduce stigma. Learn more about NAMI OC [here](#).



Last year's Team BHS participants (standing, left to right): Mary Hale, Suzi Ganey, Cenia Robinson, Tina Sampson, Melody Marler and friends.

5

Things You Need to Know About the AIDS SERVICES FOUNDATION'S

#IMPOSITIVE CAMPAIGN



ASF @OCASF - Jun 2

Linkage to Care case manager Gabe Reyes is positive that he can be an ally for those affected by HIV. #ImPositive #ASF #OC



1 2

1

More than 60 million people have been infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and approximately 30 million people have died of AIDS worldwide. As of December 2016 in Orange County, 12,682 people have been diagnosed with HIV, and there are an additional 669 people estimated to be infected, but unaware.

2

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) says that stigma prevents some people from getting tested and treated for HIV while also leading to “perceived discrimination, fear and anxiety.” Treatment not only preserves health, but can help decrease the risk of transmission to others. Read a CDC HIV stigma fact sheet [here](#).

3

A social media campaign launched by the [AIDS Services Foundation](#) (ASF) called #ImPositive aims to eliminate stigma, raise awareness, encourage testing, end the HIV/AIDS epidemic and put a face to its work by featuring ASF staff, volunteers, community members and those living with HIV/AIDS. Using the hashtag #ImPositive in their social media posts, participants either identify themselves as HIV-positive or simply post something that makes them a positive ally to those affected by HIV/AIDS.

4

Tamarra Jones, HCA's HIV Planning and Coordination Program Manager praised the courage of those sharing their status and photos publicly. She notes in an OC Register article [here](#) that, “When you see people’s faces and they’re saying, ‘I’m positive,’ you’re saying, ‘That looks like my aunt, my cousin, my brother,’ In the images I’ve seen, they don’t look sick, they don’t meet the stereotype.”

5

The CDC recommends that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 be tested for HIV at least once as part of their routine health care. Anonymous and confidential testing is available Monday through Friday at HCA's 17th Street Testing, Treatment & Care. For more information, visit the [HIV/STD Clinic](#) website or view a list of testing sites throughout Orange County [here](#).

Teachers and Students Learn How to Better Cope With **STRESS**

The saying that children learn by example is the motto that drives a school-based stress management program that trains teachers how to become healthy role models of stress, who then use these techniques to teach their students healthy social and emotional coping skills.

Through a contract with Behavioral Health Services, the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) offers this Mindful Learning training to their teachers that adopts a “tool box” approach allowing them to select from a variety of age-appropriate strategies that can easily be integrated into their daily kindergarten through 12th grade academic curriculum. OCDE shares more about the successful program [here](#).

“The training is an evidence-based, trauma-informed approach that’s taught to teachers so they can support students to better manage their stress and increase their ability to identify stress triggers, recognize distress and utilize coping skills like the use of mindful breathing exercises to help calm themselves down,” said **Mark Lawrenz**, Prevention & Intervention Administrative Manager III.

Applying what he/she learned into action and seeing its positive results, a first grade teacher shared, “I have a little girl in my class who’s diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and struggles with self-regulation. When she’s upset, she cries loudly and has a hard time calming down. By utilizing what I learned in the training, I had the tools to help her recognize how



her body feels when she’s going to be upset and how she can use calming breaths to help her relax. This little girl told me that she now recognizes that her body gets hot when she’s going to be upset and uses the breathing tips I taught her to calm herself down. At that point, I realized that I hadn’t seen her cry in weeks!”

After learning coping skills from his/her teacher, a third grader said, “I am more relaxed on the playground. When I used to get mad,

Kids learn healthy social and emotional coping skills by practicing breathing techniques in their classroom. ▼



I'd get into fights. Now, when I get mad, I breathe."

Since its launch last year, teachers from 27 schools within 14 OCDE school districts have been trained thus far. This training is part of a number of school-based programs funded by the [Mental Health Services Act](#) (Prop. 63) that supports mental health in schools as well as a healthy school environment. To learn more about Behavioral Health Services Prevention & Early Intervention, click [here](#).

Raquel Tellez, Tellez Builds New Program Where Focus on Client Care Comes First

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CCSS's lounge makes for a comfortable and inviting spot for clients and their families.

feel empowered to go live their life on their own again," said Tellez. "We love seeing clients succeed and are pleased to report that 87% of them who complete our program show improvements."

To further enhance client care and assist with their recovery, Raquel recently championed to have clinicians on her team trained and certified in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (an integrative psychotherapy approach that enables people to heal from the symptoms and emotional distress from the result of trauma).

Raquel joined the OC Health Care Agency after she received her Master's degree in Social Work from Cal State Long Beach and began her career with BHS as a contract Spanish-speaking therapist who counseled clients with drug and alcohol issues. Not long after, she promoted to a licensed clinical social worker who managed all Drug Court and Driving Under the Influence programs.

Raquel was nominated by her colleagues and selected as August's Peer-to-Peer award winner. Congratulations, Raquel!



Raquel and Sierra Martinez, Community Worker II, sit in CCSS's childcare room filled with toys, books and activities to keep kids busy as they or their family members wait to receive services.

That's Some "QUALITY" Sampling: a Firsthand Look at How We Keep

Orange County (OC) is widely known for possessing three unique geographical commodities: Disneyland, the biggest malls you'll ever see, and of course, its 42-mile stretch of pristine, world-famous beaches. But with 48.2 million people who visited the OC in 2016 (up 1.9% from 2015), surfers and sand-lovers alike need year-round protection from, well, themselves.

Sewage spills and surface run-off in nearby communities may affect water quality daily, posing multi-faceted threats of pathogen-related gastroenteritis to staph infections to even meningitis. This is where the dedicated staff of the OC Health Care Agency's (HCA) Environmental Health (EH) Water Quality section and other collaborating agencies step in; highly trained environmental health specialists who exhaustingly trek the coastline between Seal Beach and San Clemente visiting up to 150 shoreline sites representing 25 beaches, and submitting a yearly average of 8,000 water samples (4,000 of HCA's samples alone) to our Public Health Water Quality Laboratory for analysis.

As an intern for HCA this summer, I wanted to get a

closer look into this process from start to finish and learn firsthand how the Agency protects the health of all who visit OC's beaches. Supervising Environmental Health Specialist **Larry Brennler** was kind enough to introduce me to Senior Environmental Health Aide **Tami Halle**. Every day, Halle scans the wild swells of the California sea, well before you've had your first morning cup of coffee. She takes and sends about 44 samples to the lab daily, and folks, that's a lot of shoreline to cover! But Halle is no stranger to this "dance with the water," as she calls it. She's worked this position for 18 years (almost as long as I've been alive) and has, unsurprisingly, seen it all. From dolphins to coyotes to skunks to snakes, she still says that her favorite part of her job is educating curious on-lookers. "You have to remain approachable," said Halle. "Education is really important."

It's no surprise that early morning beachgoers would be fascinated, if not perplexed by Halle and her work. In order to take the most accurate samples, Halle created an extendable water sampling pole, on which she positions a 100mL sampling bottle. She then proceeds to scoop



Feature by **Grace Papish**,
HCA Communications Intern

Beachgoers Safe

up the saltwater at a precise 4-24 inch submergence, all while being vigilant of cross contamination and collecting virtually no sand. Halle is a professional, no doubt. After watching her perform this magic it was my turn to try. The task was not an easy one, to say the least. After multiple attempts, with Halle's instructions to insert the bottle behind the wave, I finished the experiment with a less-than-admirable concoction of sand and seawater (and damp socks). For the good of the public, mine was not one of the samples sent to the lab that day.

I was further able to extend my knowledge of the water quality process when I had the opportunity to put my 9th grade honors biology education to the test at Public Health's Water Quality Laboratory at the Back Bay Science Center on Shellmaker Island in Newport Beach. I was given a thorough testing demo by Supervising Public Health Microbiologist **Joseph Guzman** and Public Health Microbiologist II **Tania Chiem**. At the lab, water samples collected by Halle and the EH Water Quality team are used to test for three different types of bacteria: Total Coliform, Fecal Coliform, and Enterococcus. To achieve

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Tami Halle scoops up saltwater from Huntington State Beach at a precise 4-24 inch submergence.



The water is collected in a 100ml sampling bottle with virtually no sand.



Tania Chiem demonstrates the step-by-step process that microbiologists perform to achieve a finite bacteria count.



Colonies of indicator bacteria are identified based on specified sizes and color, then counted.



Public Health Water Quality Lab staff (left to right): Emma Sarmiento, Jessica Roussos, Joe Guzman, Tania Chiem, Manisha Sulakhe and Alyssa Veliz. Not pictured is Stacy Dykman.



Breastfeeding Moms and Their Families Find Comfort at the

OC Fair



Away from the sweltering heat and sun-drenched rays of summer, families found shade and solace to breastfeed and change their babies while visiting the [OC Fair](#) this year thanks to nursing and changing stations available for the first time.

“We wanted to offer a convenience on-site so parents can nurse their babies without having to leave the fairgrounds,” said Michele Richards, OC Fair and Events Vice President of Business Development. “Breastfeeding is the most natural way to feed a baby and we’re excited to share this message with all families who visit us at the OC Fair.”

Each station featured an inviting area with comfortable couches, a coffee table for belongings and baby items, as well as a changing table. One mom who used the station expressed her gratitude and said, “I appreciate that there was a place for me, my husband and baby to feed in private, away from the busy crowd and heat.”

Public Health Services’ Nutrition Services program partnered with the OC Fair to promote the message that breastfeeding support goes beyond community programs and clinics.



Breastfeeding promotion posters were developed and hung inside the nursing and changing station pop-up tents located in the Fair’s Family Fairway section.

“We should find ways for moms to breastfeed where they eat, work, play and shop,” said **Maridet Ibañez**, Nutrition Services Program Manager. “We’re thankful for partners like the OC Fair that are willing to sustain our breastfeeding outreach and education efforts.”

Nutrition Services promotes public health efforts to make breastfeeding the normal method of infant feeding and nutrition for at least the first six months of life and offers breastfeeding support and resources to new and expecting moms through the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. To learn more, click [here](#).

That's Some "QUALITY" Sampling: a Firsthand Look at How We Keep Beachgoers Safe

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a finite bacteria count, microbiologists perform a complicated series of dilutions, including sterilization, heating, cooling, an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-regulated shaking process, filtering, pipetting, vacuuming and a 24-hour incubation period. Obviously, the Water Quality Lab is no place for amateurs! The process is an intense one, but results in an almost beautiful display of bacteria colonies, which emerge in shades of metallic green, magenta, and halos of blue. The colonies are then counted, and if the number exceeds [State health standards](#) indicating high levels of bacteria, notifications to the public are made through the [OCBeachInfo](#) website, telephone hotline (714-433-6400) and posted on [OCHealth's](#) Twitter. Beach lifeguards who also receive the notification, will then either post a warning sign advising swimmers that bacterial levels in the ocean or bay waters exceed health standards



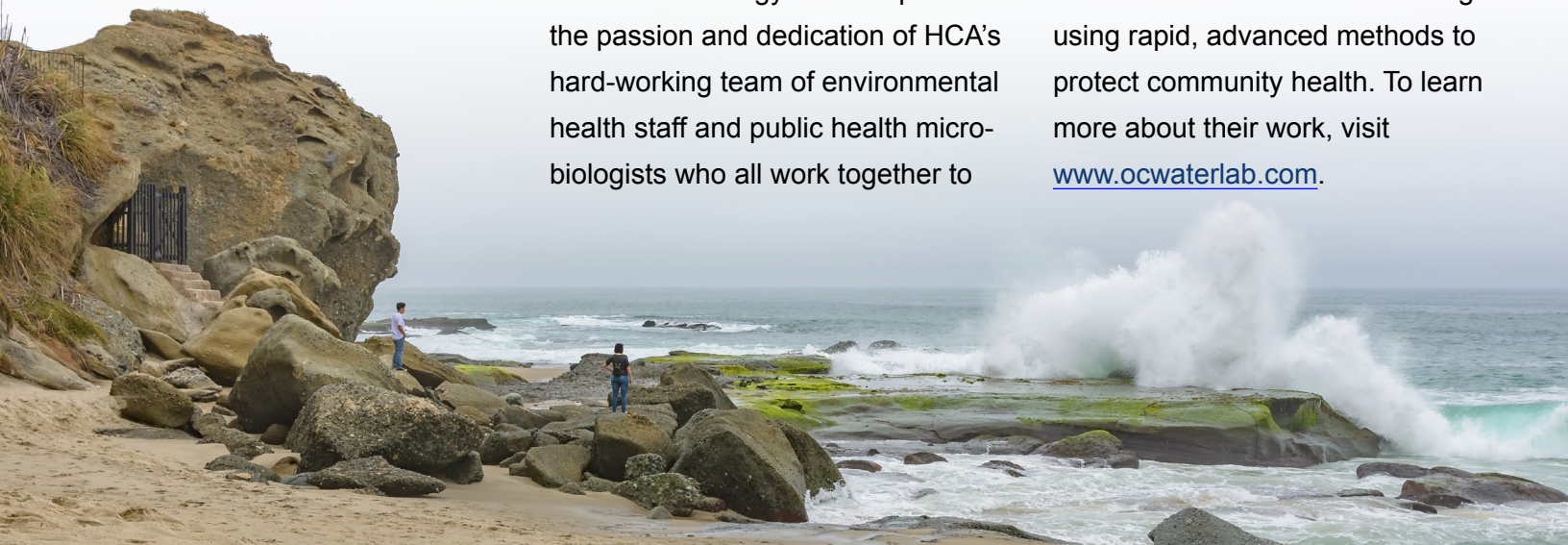
Tami Halle shows HCA Communications Intern Grace Papish how to "dance with the water" to collect a water sample using her extendable pole.

or maintain a closure sign to "Keep Out" when a sewage spill is known to be in the water. Learn more about ocean water closures, warnings and advisories [here](#).

In recent years there have been new developments in the world of water quality testing technology like the [Nowcast/Predictive Modeling Pilot Project](#), developments that the Water Quality team properly utilizes in collaboration with Heal the Bay and Stanford University. But from what I saw that breezy Thursday morning, no new technology can compete with the passion and dedication of HCA's hard-working team of environmental health staff and public health microbiologists who all work together to

protect public health. So the next time I see a water-quality warning or closure posted at my favorite beach spot in the OC, instead of being disappointed, I'll be reminded of all the great work that HCA does to keep me and my family safe.

Visit www.ocbeachinfo.com to learn more about Environmental Health's Ocean and Water Protection program that protects the public from exposure to ocean and bay waters that may be contaminated with sewage or cause illness. Public Health lab staff conduct recreational water testing using rapid, advanced methods to protect community health. To learn more about their work, visit www.ocwaterlab.com.



Back to school

Did you know that children who eat a nutritious breakfast before school have improved academic performance, longer attention spans, higher energy levels and are more likelier to eat healthy throughout the day?

Help your kids make the grade with these simple, healthy breakfast and lunch ideas! For more kid-friendly recipe ideas, check out the Woman, Infants and Children “Let’s Cook With Kids” cookbook [here](#).

Breakfast Energy Bars

Ingredients:

- ◆ Cooking spray
- ◆ 5 tbsp. butter
- ◆ ¼ cup brown sugar, packed
- ◆ 2 tbsp. honey
- ◆ 1 ½ cup rolled old fashioned oats
- ◆ ¼ cup dried mango, chopped
- ◆ ¼ cup raisins
- ◆ ¼ cup dried cranberries
- ◆ ¼ cup pepitas
- ◆ ¼ tsp. salt

HEALTHY HABITS



Directions:

- ◆ Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat a 8-inch square pan with cooking spray. Set aside.
- ◆ In a small saucepan over low heat, melt together butter, sugar and honey. Remove from heat.
- ◆ In a large bowl, mix together oats, mango, raisins, cranberries, pepitas and salt.
- ◆ Pour warm mixture into bowl, stir until well mixed.
- ◆ Spoon mixture into baking pan, press down to even out bars.
- ◆ Bake in oven for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove, cool and cut into bars.

Lunch Wraps

Ingredients:

- ◆ ½ cup hummus
- ◆ 1 cucumber, cut into strips
- ◆ 2 carrots, shredded
- ◆ 1 cup spinach leaves
- ◆ 2 whole wheat tortillas, halved

Serve with a side of fruit for an extra healthy meal!

Directions:

- ◆ Spread layer of hummus onto tortillas.
- ◆ Place cucumbers and carrots evenly on tortillas and top with spinach leaves.
- ◆ Roll-up each tortilla tightly.

DID YOU KNOW...

We're excited to announce the arrival of a new section to replace **Uplift**, that's designed to feature healthy living topics, resources, recipes and tips for staff! The top three titles will be up for your vote in next month's newsletter.



Walk to School With us on **OCTOBER 4!**

Back to school season means that it's time to walk and roll during [Walk to School Day](#) on Wednesday, October 4. Walking to school is great physical activity, gets kids energized and ready to learn and also builds community camaraderie!

Walk to School Day reinforces kids' good traffic and safety skills, promotes the fact that children need regular physical activity to stay strong and healthy and also alleviates car congestion at school sites.

With the help of Public Health Services' [Health Promotion Division](#), more than 100 Orange County schools will support the event by reminding parents and students of the simple joy of walking or bicycling to school, while also building support for improving safer walking and bicycling routes. To learn more, visit Health Promotion's Walk to School Day webpage [here](#).

Promote Your Program's Activities Using **SOCIAL MEDIA!**

Have you ever wondered how to promote your program's news, events and information on the OC Health Care Agency's social media sites, but didn't know how? Well, there's an opportunity to learn!

Contact Health Information Specialist [Tricia Landquist](#) to discuss your program's specific social media needs. Schedule a training for staff to learn about HCA's policy around social media use, best practices and the process to develop optimum content. We'll come to your worksite!

Check out what we've posted on our social media accounts on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#) to help spur ideas to get your program's message out to our followers! Encourage staff and clients to connect with us by printing or sharing our *Healthy Living Just Clicks* flyer [here](#) to stay connected to important news, health information and engaging conversation.

In addition to social media, view our HCA Communications [Menu of Services](#) for other ways we can help promote your team's important work. We look forward to hearing how we can be of service at (714) 834-2178 or [HCA Communications](#).



Search and Download Images from **HCA's Stock Library**

Need a photo or image to add to your PowerPoint presentation or flyer? Look no further! Check out our searchable "Stock Images" shared folder that's accessible to all OC Health Care Agency staff by mapping the following network drive to your computer: \\ochca\hcashares\StockImages.

Because all images have already been purchased by or were taken by HCA Communications staff, all employees have rights to view and save any photos or images directly to your own computer. Watch this [IT Self Help video](#) to learn how to map a drive or contact the [HCA Service Desk](#) for additional assistance.

For tips and guidelines on how to select and use photos and graphics in your materials, click [here](#) or contact the HCA Communications team at (714) 834-2178 or HCAComm@ochca.com.



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.