

Director's Message

Last month, the Orange County Board of Supervisors (BOS) committed \$600,000 of Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) dollars for the creation of a new county-wide youth suicide prevention program.

This funding was given to MindOC, the fiscal entity of Be Well Orange County, an initiative bringing together public, private, academic and faith-based organizations to create a coordinated system of mental health care and support for all Orange County residents.

... continued on page 2



Peer-to-Peer

For Loralee Page-Ortez, "You Are Here!" is Clear

"I knew I wanted to be a nurse and work in Public Health and I was really interested in working here." **Loralee Page-Ortez**, Senior Public Health Nurse, says she realized she wanted a spot at the Health Care Agency (HCA) while she was a student nurse. She says the HCA came up on her radar when she had to come to the 17th Street facility, from her university in Los Angeles County, to get a vaccination so she could continue her studies, "I got a note saying I needed the MMR vaccine

and they gave me an address to go to in Santa Ana. I was an LA County girl and Santa Ana was the other end of the world. But I clearly remember walking in the back door, I remember seeing the stripes on the floor and saying 'One of these years, maybe 10 years, I want to work here,' and that was my first time here."

Fortunately it didn't take Loralee 10 years to be hired at the HCA. She thought it would be a long

... continued on page 20

FEATURED ARTICLES

- A Focus on Data for Authority and Quality 2
- Action Items from Meetings in Washington, DC..... 4
- Looking for Healthier Stores in Santa Ana 6
- Reducing the Spread of Superbugs .. 10

Director's Message

continued from page 1

Our Director of Behavioral Health Services, **Dr. Jeffrey Nagel**, had this to say in a press release announcing the Board's vote, "Suicide is preventable, and that prevention requires the support of the entire community. This is why leveraging the efforts of so many partners through Be Well OC can make an impactful difference in helping community members become aware of warning signs and familiarize themselves with resources like the National Suicide Life-line, 1-800-273-8255, so they can be there for a friend or loved one when it matters most. Together, we need to combat the stigma surrounding suicide and have open conversations. No one can be a bystander."



Dr. Nagel went on to appear in a Laguna Woods TV segment with BOS Chairwoman Lisa A. Bartlett, Fifth District to talk more in detail about the new initiative, and ways we can all make ourselves more resilient to mental health crises, including practicing gratitude. You can watch the video [here](#).

Visit <https://bewelloc.org/> to register for updates on our continued partnership with Be Well OC. For more information about suicide prevention, visit www.ochealthinfo.com/suicideprevention.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Sanchez".

Richard Sanchez, Director

A Focus on Data



"I would like to see Behavioral Health Services (BHS) do well and get credit for doing well," those are some of the goals **Kathleen Murray** has as she replaces **Dr. David Horner** as Director of the BHS Authority and Quality Improvement Services (AQIS) operation. Kathleen expressed her respect for Dr. Horner and the way he essentially created and then led the department, "I don't want anybody to think I believe I'm coming in here and stepping into his shoes and knowing everything he knew." In fact, Kathleen says she wishes there was some way she could tap into Dr. Horner's knowledge, "We did joke around about him doing a 'Vulcan mind meld' on his successor because I said to him, 'Who the heck is going to be able to do this after you go?' He said, 'Nobody is going to be able to step into this, but they can learn.' I thought I'm willing to learn and I was lucky enough to get the job."

Kathleen says one way of reaching the goals of doing well and getting credit for doing well is by focusing on data. She says data can be used in a number of areas. Those include:

1.) To show how clients are progressing:

"The challenge we have is that there are a lot of



Authority and Quality

clinicians and staff doing great work, but if they don't document it appropriately, it's really hard to prove."

2.) To develop treatment options, which are based on data:

"One of HCA's projects is to create an enterprise data warehouse, with

predictive analytics, which could help us better understand the needs of the clients who are coming to us for services. So when a person comes in, the data would indicate that 'this person is likely to do better in this type of program with this progression and this direction,' opposed to doing something else."

3.) To document the work under regulatory requirements:

"When auditors come out they don't sit through sessions with clinicians. They have to sift through the documentation and if our documentation doesn't meet the requirements they're looking for, it doesn't mean that they're not doing great work, but it could mean we might have to return money and that can make it look like we don't know what we're doing."

4.) And to share the successes:

"The public's perception has to do with whatever story they read in the newspaper and a person can write a story without having a lot of background information. This could provide that information. The point is, I don't know that we have always used data to sell ourselves as much as we could have."

Developing that data and the systems for gathering it will take a team approach says Kathleen, "That's not just me and my own vision, that's with the vision of the various managers as well. We're all going to work together." When it comes to gathering data, Kathleen says the clinicians are, obviously, crucial, "I know the clinicians sometimes struggle with understanding why they're doing all this paperwork when what brought them to the field was to work with people. And so I'd like to get what we need in as painless a way as possible." She says the payoff to using the data will benefit clinicians and clients, "They will be able to see documentation and treatment planning not as something you do because someone told you to do it, but as a real contract and meaningful agreement between themselves and the client. They can both look at the data and use it as a guide for how the person is going to move to the highest level of recovery they can."

Recovery has been at the core of Kathleen's career since she started at the Health Care Agency (HCA) on Christmas Eve 1990. "I always wanted to be in the health profession and this pulled towards me." She's been a case manager, marriage and family therapist (licensed), service chief and service chief II. Kathleen says change is always happening and her attitude is to work as a partner in making it happen, "I always keep in mind that anything we build always needs to support people who make the right decisions and a big part of that is making sure clinical decision support is one of our goals."



ACTION

from Meetings

provide better coordination of care and support services. We suggested that lawmakers adopt the regulations already used in [HIPAA](#) (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act). There was a federal bill last year to address this, but it didn't make it out of committee. We'd like them to try again."

Jeff weighed in on another topic, this regarding the much needed federal guidelines to improve accountability in recovery residences (i.e. sober living homes), "Unless there's a regulatory change in the Americans with Disabilities Act ([ADA](#)) or the [Fair Housing Act](#), we can't really effectively regulate recovery residences. So, a voluntary national certification to reinforce best practices would go a long way towards improving conditions and accountability for this needed level of care."

He said lawmakers could address this by approving funding for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ([SAMHSA](#)) to develop the guidelines approved in legislation last year.

Data-sharing was also a hot topic in DC. OC's Be Well OC partnership garnered a lot of interest from county leaders across the country, "We heard from many who said they want more information on the public-private partnership we developed for Be Well OC," said Richard.

Homelessness, [Be Well OC](#) and health services in the jails were just some of the many Orange County (OC) topics brought up before federal lawmakers and county leaders from across the country during conferences and meetings in Washington, DC last month.

The gatherings allowed a group of County of Orange leaders to meet with OC's members in the House of Representatives along with Senators Dianne Feinstein and Kamala Harris' staff. The meetings with federal lawmakers took place while the annual National Association of Counties Conference ([NACo](#)) was underway. Joining members of the Board of Supervisors (BOS) during the week-long events were Health Care Agency (HCA) Director **Richard Sanchez** and Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Deputy Agency Director **Dr. Jeffrey Nagel**.

"This is an annual opportunity we take to meet with leaders on Capitol Hill to present what's happening in OC and at the HCA," said Richard, "One issue lawmakers in Washington are closely watching is how OC is handling homelessness."

HCA leaders also described to federal lawmakers how legislation is needed on a number of issues affecting health care. Richard said one concern is bringing about clarity for privacy regulations in cases involving clients with substance use disorder, "The clarity is needed so we can



N ITEMS in Washington, DC

He also said many of those leaders who expressed interest in Be Well OC said they might send delegations to OC to learn more about the program.

Richard also said the HCA benefits from connections made at the NACo conference. “There are some counties across the country, such as San Diego and Sonoma Counties, that have figured out a way to share substance use data and mental health data with outside entities. We’re going to be following up with them.” He said the counties held a lot of talks about health services in jails, “The criminal justice population is impacting counties across the country. We spoke with several leaders and plan more talks, to find ways for what we can do to increase treatment and to make sure our mental health professionals are being treated appropriately.”

Meantime the County of Orange leaders also presented plaques to the newly-elected lawmakers who represent the people of OC. The plaques were given to them to place in their offices in Washington.

1. Before meeting with Orange County lawmakers in Congress. Pictured, (L-to-R), Dr. Jeffrey Nagel, Deputy Agency Director, BHS; Richard Sanchez, Director, HCA; Dylan Wright, Director, OC Community Resources; Susan Price, OC Executive Office; LaShe Rodriguez, Chief of Staff, Supervisor Doug Chaffee, Fourth District; Rachel Selleck, Assistant to the Director, HCA. **2.** One of several meetings with lawmakers in Congress. Pictured, (L-to-R), Shane Silsby, Director, OC Public Works; Dylan Wright, Director, OC Community Resources; Susan Price, OC Executive Office; Richard Sanchez, Director, HCA; Rep. Mike Levin, D.-49th District; BOS Chairwoman Lisa A. Bartlett, Fifth District; Rep. Gil Cisneros, D.-39th District; BOS Supervisor Andrew Do, First District; and Frank Kim, OC Executive Officer.



Putting Your Clothes to Work

“You have no idea how donations like these make a difference in people’s lives.” That’s how Ashley Vican, Senior Manager of New Business and Contracts for Working Wardrobes, describes the donations made by Health Care Agency (HCA) staff during the recent clothing drive. She says they call the donations, ‘success suits,’ “Because donations like these are very important to our clients in their process of going to work.”

Ashley says the clothing is the final touch for their clients after they go through job training and other services. She says the clothes donated by HCA staff go right to the men and women served by Working Wardrobes, “When they say they’ve got an interview, they’re ready for their ‘success suit’ and we provide a personal consultant to fit them with a suit.”

There’s a common saying that clothes make the man or woman, and in this case there’s truth to that, “The clothing brings a boost of self-confidence to our clients which helps them nail their interviews and get their job,” says Ashley, “It’s truly life-changing for people who wouldn’t otherwise be able to buy their own suits.”

She says the donations and the generosity from HCA staff are much appreciated, “A huge ‘Thank you’ to HCA and staff of First District Supervisor Andrew Do, the partnership that has been created because of this clothing drive is invaluable. We are so grateful for the donors and volunteers, to everyone who helps our clients with this piece of the program and we would love to continue doing this on an annual basis.”

For more on how donated clothing makes a difference, including testimonials, visit: [Working Wardrobes](#).



Looking for

HEALTHIER STORES

A newly-formed coalition is growing in the Health Care Agency's (HCA) Tobacco Use Prevention Program ([TUPP](#)) with the goal of working to bring changes in the shopping experiences of residents and visitors in Santa Ana. It's called the Santa Ana Healthy Retail Team (SAHRT) and its part of the statewide [Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community](#) campaign. Their bottom line is to work with business owners and residents to bring about a healthier store environment for residents and a recognition program that acknowledges business owners. "It's a fairly new concept and fairly new group as well," says Health Educator **Alicia Carranza**, "We haven't had a Healthy Retail Team, so we're really starting everything from scratch."

Members of the team have had initial meetings with some business owners in Santa Ana, allowing them to introduce the program and gather feedback from the retailers. The conversations cover a wide range of topics including: what products the stores sell and how they display and advertise the products in their stores; making sure healthier foods are more available, particularly in low-income areas; and ensuring the healthier foods are affordable. "We also want to make sure customers are not bombarded by alcohol or tobacco products or advertisements when they enter a store or wait in a



checkout line," says Alicia.

A survey of stores in Orange County (OC) by the campaign found about 67 percent of stores near schools had what are considered 'unhealthy' ads on the front of their stores for products such as sodas, ice cream, cigarettes or alcohol, while about 83 percent of stores near schools sold flavored tobacco products, which were



1. Organizing meeting for SAHRT team. Participants include: [America On Track](#); HCA Alcohol & Drug Education & Prevention Team (ADEPT); Nutrition Education & Obesity Prevention, (NEOP); Kidworks; City of Santa Ana; and [American Heart Association](#).

RES in SANTA ANA



not cigarettes but items such as menthol cigarettes, strawberry e-juice liquids and honey-bourbon cigarillos. The survey also found about 21 percent of adults in low-income areas cannot always find fresh fruits and vegetables in their neighborhood stores.

The coalition wants to make sure the businesses thrive, too. “We respect this is their livelihood and they are an-

other partner and that’s why we want them working with us,” shares Alicia. She says members of the coalition understand the concerns of the businesses and understand there might be matters to work through, “Some businesses have said they have contractual obligations for some of their products to be in certain locations.” And she says it’s up to residents and businesses to communicate what they want, “Some store owners have said they believe that their customers only come in for chips, cookies and cigarettes and if they offer anything else they’re going to lose customers. We need the community’s input on what they want in stores, and feedback from the businesses about what they can provide so hopefully we can find ways to create a market if you will, that offers healthy food, advertised in a healthy way, which is sustainable for both residents and businesses.”

Members of the coalition are encouraged that beneficial changes can be made. They point to a policy in San Francisco which provides incentives to businesses that follow the healthy stores guidelines. (You can learn more by visiting [HealthyRetailSF](#).) “This is a great project,” says Alicia, “It’s a beautiful example of just bringing together all the partners, in a way that impacts every area in the community.”

GOODBYE

to Doctor Eric Handler

You've no doubt heard of his retirement and maybe you read the story the Orange County Register wrote about former Health Care Agency (HCA) County Health Officer, **Dr. Eric Handler**, MD, MPH, FAAP. (Story [here](#).) We spoke to Dr. Handler about some of the things in the story and some things that were not. The OC Register story ends with Dr. Handler telling the paper, retirement is, "brand new to me," and the 68-year-old doctor said he is, "not going to sit quietly." So picking up where that story left off, we asked him what are some of the things he might do. He said he plans on teaching and mentoring, (he was mentored by former Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Director Dr. Jonathan Fielding), and Dr. Handler said he's, "very focused on social determinants of health and helping community partners achieve success."

That desire started early in his HCA career, said

Dr. Handler, when he and then public health nurse **Paul Leon** focused on families who were homeless, "Paul and I saw 200 people sleeping on mats on the floor, with 50 children running around, at a cold armory in Santa Ana. I turned to Paul and asked, 'As a pediatrician and a parent, how can I say this is acceptable?' We were able to shine a light on the problem and because of our efforts, the [Illumination Foundation](#) was established. It's not only the model for California, but for the nation."

Dr. Handler also said a conversation in 2012 with Mark Lowry of the [Orange County Food Bank](#), led to the [Waste Not OC Coalition](#). Their website says the coalition recovered more than 17 million pounds of food in 2018 and fed over 300,000 people in Orange County. Dr. Handler said these interventions made him appreciate the importance of his position, "I realized the role of the Public Health Officer is to determine, with community partners, where



Susan G. Komen:

Being involved in your community is a choice, but being recognized for your efforts doesn't always happen. Recognition though has happened for **Lisa Alford**, Health Care Agency (HCA) Special Projects Coordinator in Health Policy, Research and Communications. Lisa has been named the [Susan G. Komen "Worker Bee Award"](#) recipient for her volunteer efforts with the breast cancer organization in Orange County.

"Lisa gives her time, energy, money and resources and does it all with grace and a smile," says LarLeslie McDaniel, Susan G. Komen Orange County Community Resource Advocate. Lisa is a 12-year participant in the annual [Komen Race for the Cure](#). For the past three years, Lisa has volunteered as a trained Komen breast health ambassador with the Circle of Promise Partnership. "I watched her and a fellow volunteer

gaps exist in services and bring community partners together to bridge those gaps. It was the best job in the world!”

As for his successor, Dr. Handler expressed high praise for interim County Health Officer **Dr. Nichole Quick**, MD, MPH. He also offered some advice for his eventual replacement, “There’s strength in building community partnerships with dedicated and passionate people.” He said he sees the next County Health Officer focusing on areas such as opioid use and women’s health issues. Dr. Handler also dispenses some advice handed to him by his mentor, Dr. Fielding, “He said to me, in order to be an excellent public health officer, you have to do your job as though you’re not afraid to lose it.”

As for excellence, well, Dr. Handler was honored as Physician of the Year by the Orange County Medical Association in 2015. “It had never been awarded to a public health officer,” said Dr. Handler, who called it, “One of my proudest moments.”

Dr. Handler also expressed thanks to many others during our interview, “I will miss the County employees. Working with them has been a great

experience. I wish everyone the best.” He said the Orange County Board of Supervisors (BOS) was a, “Crucial component,” in his work while his “Biggest help” was from his assistant **Maria Montelano**, Secretary III. But it’s his wife of 35 years, Jill who he said deserves the most credit, “She has been my biggest supporter and is thrilled with my retirement. I am the luckiest man in the world and this is a ‘win-win’ for both of us.”



Dr. Eric Handler, Joel Handler and Jill Handler.

“Worker Bee Award”

approach people with brochures and information in hand, motivating them to hear the message of early detection and make a pledge to get screened and tell others to do the same,” LarLeslie says. The Komen Foundation says the Worker Bee Award is for a volunteer who undertakes projects which require a vast amount of time and energy and whose support is highly valued by Komen staff. Following is a Labor Management Committee (LMC) interview with Lisa.

1. Please describe your current position at HCA, how long you have been in this position, and what inspired you to come work for the Agency?

I joined the HCA in 1991 as extra help to fill an immediate need in Alcohol Drug Abuse Services,

the department has since changed its name to Behavioral Health Services. For the past two years, I’ve worked in Health Policy Research and Communications (a division of the Director’s Office), as the HCA Special Projects Coordinator. In this role, I manage the Employee Recognition Programs (Peer to Peer, Years of Service and SOAR) as well as Board Resolutions and Proclamations. I manage all customer relations inquiries. I coordinate County Executive Office Initiatives such as Operations Santa Claus, Senior Santa and Home Essential Baby Drive. I work with the Whole Person Care Pilot program as the Administrative Coordinator. Lastly, I

... continued on page 19

Reducing the

A one-of-its-kind intervention, introduced

to Orange County by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and with significant support from the Health Care Agency's (HCA) Public Health Services (PHS), is showing strong results in stopping the spread of antibiotic resistant bacteria (ARB) in Orange County (OC).



These bacteria are professionally referred to as Multi-drug Resistant Organisms (MDROs) and oftentimes referred to as 'superbugs' in the media. Hospitals and nursing homes have been able to track a reduction in MDROs in OC, thanks to a coordinated effort to enhance infection control in the facilities, on a scale which has not been done before. The effort includes using a type of soap, that's been around for a while, in a more planned and coordinated way. The reductions have been recorded in two of the three healthcare facility types where these bacteria are known to thrive and therefore, present the greatest risk of spreading. The initial findings are, "Exciting," says **Dr. Matthew Zahn**, Medical Director of Epidemiology and Assessment (E&A), "OC has had a very good year-and-a-half of infection control, the drops in numbers are very encouraging."

This work involves a lot of partners and moving parts. The University of California-Irvine (UCI) is the lead agency with [Dr. Susan Huang](#) the primary investigator, "She is a nationally-known figure for infection control," says Dr. Zahn, "Her previous work and reputation drew this funding to OC." He says the HCA supports the project and provides surveillance. For the past three years the E&A unit and Public Health Lab (PHL), along with researchers at UCI have been coordinating and analyzing data from various health providers.

SPREAD SUPER

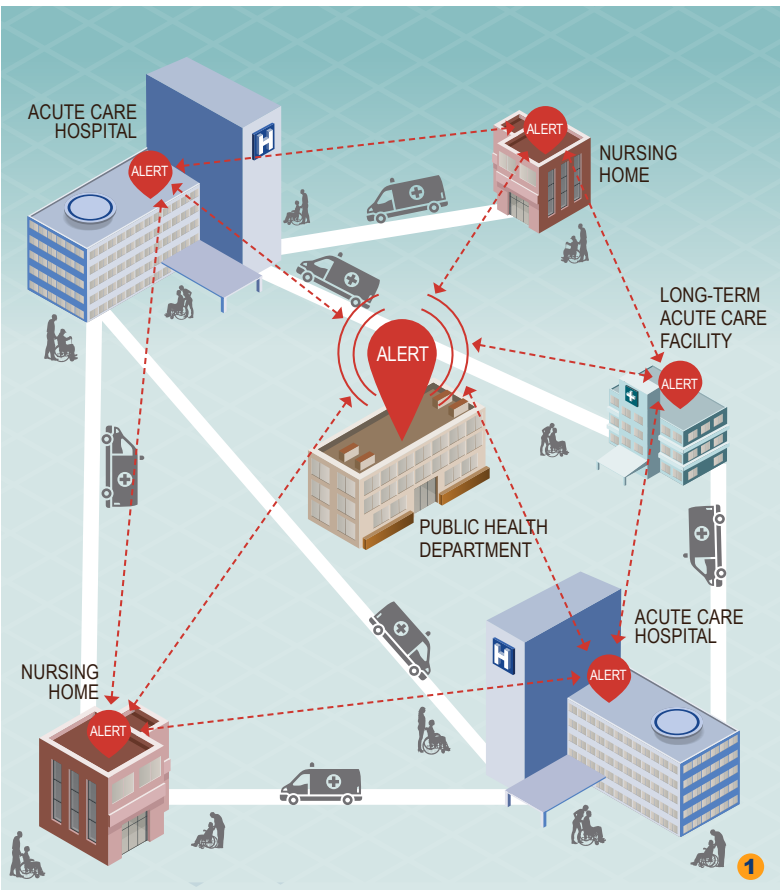
The project, known as SHIELD OC (Shared Healthcare Intervention to Eliminate Life-Threatening Dissemination of MDROs in Orange County), is funded by the CDC. The goal has been to determine how this new way of washing patients, impacts the spread of MDROs across a wide area. The CDC has a similar project underway in Chicago which is targeted to selected facilities. But, the CDC says Orange County is the only place in the country, where a community-wide intervention on this scale has been implemented. Dr. Zahn says the OC collaboration involves, "18 hospitals, 16 nursing homes and three Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCFs). These healthcare facilities are the places where MDROs are known to present the biggest risk of infection and spreading." You can read more on the CDC's Projects by visiting [here](#).

The soap being used to wash the patients is called chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG). Researchers at UCI developed the standards for CHG use and their guidelines are being used in all the nursing homes in the collaboration along with the LTCFs and on a case-by-case basis in the hospitals says Dr. Zahn, "They have changed the soap and the bathing habits. But it's not that simple because this soap is not like an Ivory bar. It involves a process of using it. It comes in wipes and there's some training for nurses to make sure they use it correctly." He says CHG is more expensive than traditional soaps and it involves more work because it has to

1. SHIELD OC: Tracking patients and spread of MRDOs (Graphic from CDC).
2. Cleansing products like those used in SHIELD OC can be found in stores. For details on how CHG is used click [here](#).

of

BUGS



be used properly, especially in places where bacteria is more abundant on people, such as the underarms. The washing also includes a nose swab, povidone iodine. Dr. Zahn says there are several benefits to the procedure including: it has been widely accepted, “You don’t want residents saying its annoying or disagreeable,” and perhaps even more importantly, he says CHG is not based on any bacteria-related product which MDROs could adapt to and overcome, “We don’t want to create a situation that we’re using soap with a similar mechanism of action to an antibiotic, then after repeated use, bacteria become predominant that are resistant to that antibiotic and it can’t be used to treat patients.” To make sure of that, he says the PHL, for months, will be testing bacteria from facilities in the research, to see if any of the bacteria is becoming more resistant to the CHG, “Our lab is looking hard to see if there is evidence of resistance to the soap. We don’t have a worry that we are going to make things worse from that side.”

The payoff so far, is a reduction of approximately 20% in reports of MDROs among patients in the nursing homes and in the LTCFs, “A 20-percent drop in both of these facility types is a very exciting number,” says Dr. Zahn, “One-fifth of the MDRO infections have gone away in these facilities, that’s a big deal, especially when we are having success in the highest-risk facilities.” Hospital patients who are at high-risk of carriage of MDROs, undergo bathing with CHG while in the hospital. That sends out people who are less likely to be carrying these MDROs home or to nursing homes or LTCFs. While a drop in MDRO infections has not yet been seen in patients visiting hospitals, it’s hoped that this population will eventually be benefited as well. As for who these people are in the project and which facilities they’ve been through, Dr. Zahn says the CDC is now looking at the data provided by HCA and partners,

... continued on page 19

Hospitality, the Hazardous M

In between responding to hazardous materials incidents, (as we told you about in the [March 2019](#) newsletter), members of the Environmental Health (EH)/Hazardous Materials Surveillance Section (HMSS) are taking on other big events. Over a five day period, all of the HMSS staff worked, “Tirelessly to assist the California Certified Unified Program Agency ([CUPA](#)) Forum Board to deliver the largest Environmental Compliance training conference in California,” says **Darwin Cheng**, EH, HMSS Manager.

He says it brought together federal, state and local government agencies and private industry to strategize and discuss the various [Unified Program issues](#). Still there was more, “Most of all, our HMSS staff single-handedly

managed the Hazardous Waste Workshop and provided a world-class customer experience to over 1,100 attendees from our local businesses in Orange County, Los Angeles, San Diego and the Inland Empire.” We asked Darwin about the CUPA conference and HMSS’ involvement.



Q: What is this conference all about, what’s the importance of it and how many HMSS staff took part?

A: “The 21st California Unified Program Annual Training Conference was held at the Anaheim Marriott on February 25-28, 2019. Our theme this year was “One Team One Goal.” We set an all-time conference attendance record of 2,787 attendees. Representatives from government agencies and businesses alike came together in Anaheim to learn, explore and discuss their continued partnership and the emerging topics and challenges that lie ahead. All 37 HMSS staff help plan, prepare, set up and attended this conference.”

Q: What were some of the Unified Program issues discussed and were any action items taken to go forward? What impact would these have on your section?

A: “The conference featured 14 tracks of educational and technical training topics with over 145 sessions and 255 presenters to keep up our continuing education. We had many industry stakeholders meet our staff and other regulators to discuss environmental compliance and regulatory



aterials Way

impacts. A few of our HMSS staff were session speakers and panelists. Others were part of the event planning team to ensure registration and logistics of the conference operated on time. This conference was supplemented with 59 on-site exhibitors, three off-site tours to local OC businesses with HMSS staff leading the tours, a variety of committee meetings, 50 students on Student Day, conference and exhibitor welcome receptions, an Industry Stakeholders meeting and an opening ceremony with the Anaheim Mayor and statewide leadership awards and keynote speaker Scott Berg from the Disney Resorts.”

Q: What was the significance and importance of the Hazardous Waste Workshop and its impact for those participating in the conference?

A: “Our staff helped plan, market and prepare the Hazardous Waste Workshop for regulated industry. Over 1,126 attendees were at the workshop to learn about the basic regulatory requirements for hazardous waste management. This workshop helps our regulated com-



munity to better understanding the requirements for environmental compliance.”

Q: How does HMSS’ involvement in an event like this benefit the staff in their duties and how much does the staff help improve operations of others by providing the services you did?

A: “Our staff not only were able to have an exclusive look behind the scene of how to set up a multi-million dollar training conference, but also participated in putting on this conference. They were able to gain event planning experience as well as a great opportunity to apply their technical knowledge networking with industry stakeholders.”



1. Outstanding CUPA Project Award for Darwin Cheng, Program Manager, HMSS, for hazmat software he worked on. For more on the software click on [PEAC-WMD](#). **2.** HMSS staff members with Hazardous Waste Workshop. **3.** Michael Palazzola, EH Supervising Hazardous Materials Specialist, with the “14th Annual CUPA Cup Competition, aka 64 team Corn Hole tournament”. **4.** Part of CUPA’s “largest Environmental Compliance training conference in California.”





ATTENTION:

General Safety Training

A friendly reminder that you have until the end of the month to complete your mandatory General Safety Training for 2018-19. Heads up: you will be asked questions along the way. The training covers the 'core four' safety program requirements; the Health Care Agency's (HCA) Ergonomics Program; a review of the Special Incident Reporting (SIR) process; and a module on the Workplace Violence Prevention Program. The training is mandatory for all HCA regular, extra-help and contract employees.

The online training requires you to enroll through the Training Partner system. To access Training Partner follow the link: <http://tp2003.ocgov.com/TPOnline/TPOnline.dll/Home>. Once there, enter your first and last name and password – lower case and no spaces. Please note 'password' might be your 'password.' When you are logged on, go to the left side menu under "Catalogs" and there type "2018-2019 General" then hit return or click enter. When the training appears, click once on "Enroll as CBT/WBT" and then click on the "2018-2019 General Safety Training" to begin the training.

At the end of the training, you will be asked to provide your name and employee ID number. This enables you to get your certificate. Please print, fill-out and sign the certificate, then provide a copy to your supervisor. Copies of the certificates should be kept in each program's Red Safety Binder.

If you have any questions on the training, please contact the HCA Safety Program at (714) 834-SAFE (7233) or email HCASafetyProgram@ochca.com. If you need any assistance with the enrollment process, please contact HCA Information Technology at (714) 834-3128 or email ServiceDesk@ochca.com.

Charlotte Egan:



50 YEARS GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

Dr. Megan Crumpler, PHL Director; Charlotte Egan, PH Microbiologist II; David Souleles, Deputy Agency Director, Public Health Services

There were 89 Health Care Agency (HCA) employees recognized, honored and thanked for their contributions during the recent 4th Annual Service & Outstanding Achievement Recognition Awards ([SOAR](#)). Among the dedicated staffers, **Charlotte Egan**, Public Health Microbiologist II, was applauded for 50 years in the Public Health Lab (PHL)!

She is set to retire next month but told her colleagues it was a difficult decision to leave, "I like the work so much. I knew from a young age I wanted to work in the medical community and when I found lab work that was my niche. I've had an extremely rewarding and satisfying career and am very confident my co-workers, who are intelligent, committed and caring, will continue our efforts in the community and our service and dedication to public health."

Charlotte was among 73 employees honored for their length of service (50 to 25 years). Also spotlighted for their achievements and outstanding work were 16 HCA all-stars. You can read all about them by clicking on the [SOAR Awards program](#).

The SOAR Awards are to formally recognize HCA staff for "Pursuing Excellence" in their service to the HCA. As awards host **David Souleles**, Deputy Agency Director of Public Health Services put it, "Our successes come from our people and it's our people who make the differences in the services we offer."

A Rarity Among 89 Award Recipients



David Souleles, Deputy Agency Director, Public Health Services; Sara Perez, Public Health Services



David Souleles, Deputy Agency Director, Public Health Services; Katherine Harvey, Public Health Services



(L-to-R) Jeannette Granados, (BHS); Glorinda Horton, (AS); Diana Gipson, (BHS); Timothy Grogan (R/MHS); Veronica Benitez, (BHS); Lance Malis, (R/MHS); Estela Ortiz, (AS); Diana Martinez, (PHS); Mary Maurer, (PHS); Kim N. Phan, (BHS); Kim-Phuong Phan, (PHS); Sunita Prabhu, (PHS); David Souleles



(L-to-R) Mauricio Prado, (PHS); Ted Becker, (BHS); Emma Chavez-Valle, (PHS); Susana Escobar, (PHS); Alma Gomez, (PHS); Katherine Krusel, (PHS); James Marquez, (BHS); Estefana Martinez, (PHS); Dora Ponce, (PHS); Maria Velazquez, (BHS); David Souleles

SERVICE AWARDS

2019 Fourth Quarter Employee Service Awards (January 1 - March 31 Hire Dates)

On behalf of the Health Care Agency Executive Team, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to each of you for your years of service to our department and the County of Orange.

50 Years

Charlotte Egan

40 Years

Sara A. Perez

35 Years

Debora Bennett
Katherine Harvey
Nancy Hesketh
Diana Mendoza
Lupe Morfin
Susana Ontiveros

30 Years

Elsa Amezcua
Veronica Benitez
Magali Bustamante
Jennifer Durbin
Diane Gipson
Jeannette Granados
Timothy Grogan
Gloria Horton
Merida Hughes
Edith Knott
Susan Kodaira
Nina Konen
Lance Malis
Diana Martinez
Mary Maurer
Estela (Blanca) Ortiz
Kim Phan
Kim Phuong Phan
Sunita Prabhu
Brandi Solarte

Ruth Strickland
Cecile-Thu Truong
Shannon Vecchione
Pamela Vellen
Asuncion Vergara
Norman Wohkittel

25 Years

Elizabeth Arroyo
Ted Becker
Jennifer Bosch
Reyna Iraida Brown-Guillen
Linh Bui
Frank Cabrera
Florinda Carbajal
Emma Chavez-Valle
Eugene Corral
Susana Escobar
Miguel Franco
Sheila Gill
Alma Gomez
Mario Gutierrez
Tiffany Huynh
Kathryn Krusel
Ithamar Lopez
Donna Lundgren
Linda Makovic
James Marquez
Estefana Martinez
Fabian Mendez
Angelica Miscione
Alaka Nafday
Mubula Naku
Elvira Navarro
Minh-Tam Nguyen
Reginald Ortega
Susan Pollard

Dora Ponce
Mauricio Prado
Veronica Ramirez
Sandra Sagarnaga
Maria Velazquez
Joan Villanueva
Esther Viramontes
Helen Wong
Bernice Youngs

20 Years

Helena Aguiar
Kathryn Cole
Catalina Gama
Kristin Jones
Lorraine Marquez
Rosalie Moylan
Elizabeth Alquisira
Kierra Aved
Richard Dale
Daniel James
Mai-Tram Nguyen
Janice Richardson
Dixie Terrones-Granado
James Trimmer
Eva Dennen
Janet Jackson
Gustavo Plasencia
Lisa Wales
John Crane

15 Years

Michele Cheung
Haimanot Girma
Minh Luong
Elizabeth Martinez
Linda Scott

Madhavi Yarlagadda
Annette Tran
Tatiana Tretiakova
Hien Nguyen
Tanadol Suphavarodom

10 Years

Wayne Johnson

5 Years

Javier Ambriz
Karina Arcos
Ana Gallardo
Bijan Amirshahi
Milena Andreani
Shifteh Azodi-Deylami
Ashley Bart
Erin Batchelor
Martin Bick
Tiffany Brown
Skarlet Bui
Haydee Cabrera
Alynn Cauldwell
Patricia Chavez
Susan Choe
Eugene Davila
Gloria Dialynas
Wendy Elliott
Elaine Estrada
Rachael Ferraiolo
Nicole Garcia
Jessica Hadlock
Amanda Hamm
Diego Hernandez
Vanessa Acevez
Matthew Kee
Stephanie Kua
Jamie Langford

Adriana Luong
Elizabeth Macias
Golmar Maleki
Lisa Mau
Tammy Mckee
Meredith Mebane
Barbara Medina
Kristian Miranda
Samuel Fraga
Chung Nguyen
Connie Nguyen
Duy Huynh
Grace Ko
Lisa Niino
Lisa Osterman
Andrew Parker
Theodore Phan
Cynthia Rabe
Vickie Reza
Jennifer Rowe
Lauren Saunders
Mark Shugarman
Nanette Tangkeko
Luke Tostado
Brenda Truong
Hector Valdivia
Crystal Valencia
Laura Venegas
Leyna Vo
Victoria Young
Laura Zamora Macias
Priscila Zuniga
Norma Macias
Elia Reyes
Jemilyn Velasco
Haley Daub



“Thank you” to the County's Social Workers

Social workers are, “The unsung heroes who go the extra mile in some very challenging circumstances that are before them and they do it with grace and dignity and do a great job.” Strong words of praise for County of Orange social workers during National Social Work Month. The words were part of the resolution ceremony held by the Orange County Board of Supervisors (BOS) in March to recognize the professionals in the field of social work.

Social workers from the Health Care Agency (HCA) and Social Services Agency (SSA) were honored by the BOS. Chairwoman Lisa A. Bartlett, Fifth District, said social workers, “Serve the community in a multitude of fields and enhance the wellbeing and meet the basic needs of all people. We recognize the incredible work that all these folks do.”

HCA Director **Richard Sanchez** paid tribute to our social workers in public health, behavioral health and in correctional health. He singled out a number of services such as the “Blue Shirts” with the Behavioral Health Services

Outreach & Engagement (BHS O&E) team, who work with homeless individuals, “Frequently these are a peer with lived-experience as a homeless individual and working with a social worker they make contact with homeless individuals every day, taking them to services and getting them into treatments.” Richard also gave a “shout out” to the people working in the jails, “Correctional Health Services doesn’t get a lot of publicity but we provide mental and physical health services for people who are incarcerated. We have dedicated individuals working with people in the jails to help them get back on their feet when they leave and so they are ready to enter society in a productive manner.”

Richard also thanked the BOS for the resolution and thanked all of the HCA’s social workers for the work they do.

1. HCA Director Richard Sanchez at podium thanking social workers for their dedication. **2.** Social workers recognized for their “Commitment to champion the welfare of people being served.” Social workers with BOS Supervisors Andrew Do, First District; Doug Chaffee, Fourth District; and Chairwoman Lisa A. Bartlett, Fifth District also HCA Director Richard Sanchez.

Take Them BACK

DEA NATIONAL ^{Rx}
TAKEBACK



Saturday, April 27 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Keep them safe. Clean them out.

Visit DEATakeback.com to find a collection site near you,
or call **(800) 882-9539**.



For Health

Spring has sprung! During Public Health Week (April 1-7) and Every Kid Healthy Week (April 22-26), model healthy eating habits to help your child build healthy behaviors! Eat vegetables, fruits and whole grains with meals or as snacks. For more tips on being a healthy role model, click [here](#).

Try making this spring spread recipe as a snack with your kids. It can be used as a dip for vegetables or spread on whole wheat crackers or whole wheat tortilla and sliced up for mini pinwheel sandwiches.

SPRING SPREAD

Servings: 4

Preparation Time: 10 mins

Ingredients:

- 4 ounces** Low-fat cream cheese whipped or softened
- ½** Carrot grated
- ½** Red bell pepper finely diced
- 2** Green onions finely diced
- 1 tablespoon** Fresh herbs chopped
- 1 teaspoon** Lemon or lime juice freshly squeezed

What You'll Need:

- Chef knife
- Cutting board
- Cheese grater
- Large bowl
- Rubber spatula



Directions:

Mix all ingredients with a rubber spatula until creamy.

Chef Tips:

This is a great way to use up leftover herbs (such as dill, thyme, oregano, basil) and vegetables.

serve as the Recruitment Chair for the Labor Management Committee.

2. Tell us a little bit about yourself. What can we find you doing in your spare time? Do you have any hobbies, places you like to visit, activities you like to participate in?

In my spare time, my greatest joys come from my two daughters, now in college, and my husband of 27 years. We laugh, play board games and watch television series together. We enjoy eating at new restaurants and traveling. When I am not with family, I am with friends, playing bunco or on a girls' trip. I enjoy planning events and making others happy. I am often coordinating parties and events for family and friends. As a member of the Book Divas book club, I enjoy reading and discussing books. I have great compassion for others, and spend many hours per month serving in the community as an Ambassador for Susan G. Komen OC and Hands of Empowerment (a women's charitable organization that educates, employs and empowers women by selling jewelry handmade by women from nine countries). I frequently wear jewelry or an accessory made by a woman who has suffered from some form of poverty or abuse.

3. There are many reasons why HCA employees join the LMC. What were some of the reasons that con-

tributed to why you joined the committee? How long have you been a member of the LMC?

When asked by Executive Management in 2016 to consider joining LMC, I did not hesitate. I believed that my experiences and job skills would bring value to the committee. I have been a member for the past three years.

4. The LMC serves as a collaborative body which represents both staff and management in an effort to create a more efficient and positive work environment. As a member of this committee, what do you want to accomplish to help the HCA flourish?

My sincere hope has been to enhance the work environment through increased and effective communication and enriched employee engagement. Since joining the committee, great strides have been made towards those efforts. Through the HCA suggestion box comments, LMC has structured those concerns into strategic projects. As a committee we are working one-by-one through the list of issues and concerns that matter to employees. We have made progress that we're happy about.

5. What is the best piece of advice, personal or professional, that someone has ever given you?

Advice given to me - Good, Better, Best, Never Let it Rest, Until Good is Better and Better is Best! There is always room for improvement. My personal philosophy is LIFE IS SHORT so love life, live life, enjoy life to the fullest. That is what I aim to do daily.

Reducing the Spread of Superbugs

continued from page 10

"We'll find out more about whether the hospitals that are participating are benefiting as the project goes along and with further data analysis. And we'll find out how nursing homes and LTCFs are benefiting from hospital patients who have been washed." But Dr. Zahn cautions they are not ready yet to definitely state there's a 'cause and effect' from the washings, "We'll learn more as we gather more data. For now, we are content with seeing improvement in a serious public health problem. It's pretty rare and unusual to see improvements like that, and it's very encouraging."

He says the next step is for the CDC to release its findings on the data which is expected when the project ends in May. His hope is the work will continue in order

to fight the spread of antibiotic resistant bacteria, "Very broadly, ARB is something that as communities we look at with a sort of fatalistic attitude as if it is destined to occur and destined to get worse. I'm very encouraged this project actually attempts to address the issue and do something about it. The initial results from this are encouraging to me because as a principle, there are ways we can figure out to use to intervene. The intervention makes a difference in the facility and in the community and public health plays a role in that. I think that's important because public health has been trying to figure out where we belong. I think we played a very important role from our surveillance and data gathering in this and that's something to be proud of."

For more on the CDC's research which led to the SHIELD Projects, please click [here](#).

Peer-to-Peer

continued from page 1

time before getting a chance, because she had been told nurses needed at least a year of medical-surgical nursing before even being considered for a public health job. But after working at a hospital for four months, which Lorelee says, “wasn’t her cup of tea,” her opportunity came when she found out the HCA was hiring, “They were doing a lot of hiring at the time. They were looking for Spanish-speaking nurses and I speak some Spanish. I got the job and I was really surprised.”

Her initial job at the HCA put her right where she wanted to be, in the field, making visits, “It is ‘classic’ public health,” says Lorelee, “It allowed me to work with people in their home setting.” She says being in a client’s home offers insight into their lives and the opportunity to serve them better, “So if a mom is having problems breastfeeding her newborn, you can actually see what she’s doing in her home and in a more relaxed setting. Or if someone is taking medications or folk remedies, you can get that trust up a little bit better to see what they have on hand. There’s just a lot more things you can do in the field than in a clinic or hospital.” Building that trust pays-off for clients says Lorelee, “You know what type of referrals to make, you see things you might not think to ask about, and it’s a much more thorough assessment. With detailed information you can address your interventions to what you’re seeing.”

Lorelee says she was attracted to public health because she likes the idea of community work and she says her career has been “fascinating.” In addition to working as a field nurse, she has worked as a public health nurse (PHN) at the Orangewood Children’s Home, and worked as a

PHN case manager handling Tuberculosis cases following an outbreak in the 1990s. She also earned an associate’s degree in Computer Information Systems which she used to help create a system to track providers and generate reports for the Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) program. That work was no small feat according to her supervisors. She now works as a PHN in the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) and coordinates provider trainings for the CHDP program. While she doesn’t spend as much time in the field as she did before, Lorelee says her passion for her work remains strong because she still sees herself as a nurse at heart, “I absolutely love what I’m doing. It’s still teaching, still nursing, it’s the heart and soul of nursing. I would say this is what public health nursing is made of and what we do. We identify needs that are based on a person’s physical, mental, social and spiritual condition and then we make referrals or address those in some way.”

Lorelee not only puts her heart and soul into her work, she goes all-in away from work as well. Most recently she joined a mountain biking group because she, “Loves the mountains and going to the gym was getting expensive.” It also reminds her of snow skiing, “You get going down the hill, it feels just like snow skiing and then you have to deal with trail and dirt conditions.” Lorelee also does a lot of photography and videography and often journals the vacations she and her husband of 29 years Art take together, which are usually to Yosemite and the Sierras.

Her colleagues say Lorelee is a model for excellence, integrity and service. She says her colleagues are wonderful.



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.