



The Cook County Health & Hospitals System



COOK COUNTY HEALTH & HOSPITALS SYSTEM  
**CCHHS**

# SYSTEM NEWS

## Community Edition

### Letter from the CEO

Gun violence is continuing to have a devastating impact on our communities in Cook County. As we approach mid-summer, we are bracing for warm weekends and the tragic gun violence they have historically brought.



Each year, our trauma unit cares for approximately 900 individuals with gun injuries. For 180 years, Cook County has cared for patients in the greater Chicago region, including those who were the victims of violent attacks. We treat many of the most critically injured people in our region and have become experts in what some call “resurrection medicine”. In fact, the expertise at Cook County Hospital was such that the staff founded the first comprehensive trauma unit in the nation here in 1966. Today, 50 years later, the trauma unit, now at Cook County’s Stroger Hospital, remains one of the busiest trauma units in the nation.

The injuries we see are devastating to our patients, changing lives for individuals and their loved ones. Even for those patients who make a full physical recovery, the mental impact of being violently injured can have a long-lasting impact on their ability to live a full and successful life.

Gun violence is a complex, multifaceted problem. Like any public health scourge, it must be addressed with an equally multifaceted approach. Just as we research solutions to curb the spread of diseases like Ebola and Zika, we must conduct research on how to solve the epidemic of violence in Chicago and across the country.

For nearly 20 years, our nation’s leading public health authority, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has not put any efforts in to gun violence research due to restrictions and lack of funding, largely a result of pressure from the National Rifle Association. Even more recently, the efforts of Congress to pass some seemingly common sense gun control reforms have failed due to ongoing partisan gridlock.

We must not be bullied by lobbying efforts into disregarding such a significant threat to the lives of Cook County residents. It is imperative that legislators, educators, health care providers, business owners and members of our community all work together to address gun violence at its source. Here in Chicago, and across the country, we must not only take a stand but take action. Empowering the CDC to conduct meaningful research on gun violence and implementing thoughtful gun control measures are key to addressing this crisis effectively.

**Dr. Jay Shannon, CEO, CCHHS**

### Public Hearing Scheduled for Strategic Plan

As previously reported, CCHHS is embarking on a transformative journey to become a more modern, accessible and patient-centered health system. Earlier this year, the system began a strategic planning process that has resulted in a plan to guide the system's activities and goals from 2017 through 2019. After many discussions with the CCHHS Board of Directors and staff and community meetings, the health system's proposed three-year strategic plan, Impact 2020, has been drafted and posted to CCHHS' website, [cookcountyhhs.org](http://cookcountyhhs.org).

A public hearing on the draft strategic plan will take place on July 21 at 1:00 p.m. at the CCHHS Administration Building, 1900 W Polk St., Chicago. We encourage members of the community to attend and provide feedback on the proposed plan. Please visit our website for more information.

## Time for Back-to School-Physicals



Now is the time to schedule your kids' back-to-school physical exams! No matter how old your child is, it is important for him or her to have a yearly check-up. Scheduling an appointment before school starts is not only convenient, but may be required before your child starts any sports programs. At a physical exam, a primary care doctor will make sure your child is healthy and growing, and will also give you

an opportunity to ask any questions you may have about your child's wellbeing. **To schedule a back-to-school exam for your child at a CCHHS clinic near you, please call 312-864-KIDS (5437).**

## CCHHS Expands Communities' Access to Food

Three CCHHS health centers will be offering free lunches to children in partnership with the Greater Chicago Food Depository's (GCFD) Summer Meals program in July and August.

Englewood and Cottage Grove Health Centers will offer lunch from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. Robbins Health

Center will offer lunch on Tuesdays from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Any child 18 years or younger can come to one of those health centers to receive a meal; they do not need to be a patient of our health center.



The Summer Meals program provides free healthy and nutritious meals to children at community-based sites throughout Cook County. Summer Meals helps replace the free/reduced lunch and breakfast program that low-income children would normally participate in during the school year. CCHHS is the only health care provider participating in the Summer Meals program. Visit [summerfeedingillinois.org](http://summerfeedingillinois.org) for more details.

Also, the GCFD's Fresh Truck is now making stops at CCHHS' Robbins Health Center! The Fresh Truck is a walk-through refrigerated vehicle lined with shelves of fresh produce that community members can visit to select fruits and vegetables to take home at no cost.

More than 175 people received fresh fruits and vegetables during the

Fresh Truck's first visit to Robbins Health Center on June 21. Upcoming Fresh Truck visits to CCHHS clinics are scheduled for July 28 at Oak Forest Health Center and August 9 at Cottage Grove Health Center starting at 10:30 a.m.

## Men's Health Month

Did you know that men are up to four times less likely to see a doctor when they have a health problem than women?

"Men avoid seeing the doctor when sick and put off checkups when well," said Dr. Courtney Hollowell, men's health expert and Chairman of Urology for the Cook County Health and Hospitals System. According to Dr. Hollowell, this "if it's not broke, don't fix it" line of thinking results in men living sicker and dying younger than women. In recognition of June as Men's Health Month, Dr. Hollowell offered these steps men can take today to improve their health and prevent problems down the road:



*Dr. Courtney Hollowell*

- **Get regular checkups.** Regular health exams and tests can help find problems early or before they start, when chances for treatment and cure are better. Few of us have ideal levels on all screening tests and this valuable information can put us in a position to begin making meaningful lifestyle changes. High cholesterol or increased weight, for example, may drive home the message that it's time to change your diet and exercise.
- **Get moving.** Try to get 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week. Up to 60% of Americans don't get regular exercise and 25% are, to be blunt, couch potatoes. A pedometer can help remind us how much walking we've done over the day. The minimum daily goal should be 5,000 steps, but shoot for 10,000 steps for maximum benefit. Some studies suggest walking 30 minutes a day adds three years to your life, while physical inactivity doubles your risk of heart disease. But one thing is certain: any exercise is better than none, regardless of what time of day you do it. The best time for you to exercise is when it's done consistently!
- **Lose the belly.** It's important to maintain a healthy weight. Excess weight, especially around the waist, can have real health consequences. Grab a tape measure and put it around your body at the level of your belly button. A waist measurement of 40 inches or more in men and 35 inches or more in women doubles the risk for heart disease. In addition, so-called "abdominal obesity" greatly increases the risk for chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes, elevated cholesterol and premature death. Belly fat releases a toxic stream of fatty acids, inflammatory agents, and hormones that ultimately leads to health problems.
- **Make sleep a priority.** More than a third of Americans get less than the recommended amount of sleep. To get the most out of our sleep, both quantity and quality are important. Aim for a good seven to nine hours of shut-eye a night to allow your body to begin to repair cell damage, prime the immune system and consolidate memory. It takes discipline, but start by sticking to a sleep schedule and shutting off all electronic devices a half-hour before bed. Not only does the light from a TV or computer suppress melatonin, a hormone that controls our sleep-wake cycle, but many programs are stimulating rather than relaxing. Sleep-deprived men report worsening libido and increased appetite, leading to unnecessary weight gain.
- **Kick the habit.** Smoking has been found to harm nearly every organ in the body. Although everyone knows it's bad for you, there are still

over 40 million current smokers in the United States. In addition to being the leading cause of cancer and death from cancer, it also causes bronchitis, emphysema, diabetes, osteoporosis, rheumatoid arthritis, age-related macular degeneration and cataracts – just to name a few. Men should also be aware of the fact that smokers are twice as likely to develop erectile dysfunction compared to non-smokers. So if you want to prevent these types of issues or improve the problems you already have, take that cigarette and throw it away. The Illinois Tobacco Quitline is a FREE resource for tobacco users who want to quit for good. It can be reached at 1-866-QUIT-YES, that's 1-866-784-8937. Your doctor can help you with your quit attempt.

## Chicago Health Centers Receive Grant to Launch Medication-Assisted Addiction Treatment Programs

CCHHS supported three Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) networks, Esperanza Health Centers, Heartland Health Centers, and PrimeCare Community Health to receive grants totaling more than \$2 million for a two-year period from The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to offer medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for alcohol and opioid addiction in the communities they serve. This collaborative effort to expand the treatment of addiction with medications comes at a crucial time as Chicago's substance abuse epidemic continues, and traditional funding sources for addiction services remain at risk. Today opioids cause more deaths than motor vehicle accidents in Cook County.

"Esperanza, Heartland, and PrimeCare offer comprehensive primary care in communities across Chicagoland. Together they saw a tremendous opportunity to help their patients by establishing much-needed substance abuse treatment services in primary care settings where they are not only easily accessible but also culturally competent," said Dr. Mark Loafman, Chair, Family and Community Medicine, CCHHS.

Through a combination of behavioral therapy and FDA-approved medications, MAT is used to help individuals beat opioid and alcohol addictions. It is estimated that more than 15,000 patients will benefit from substance abuse screening through the FQHCs, with clinic-based interventions, including MAT, readily available for those who need it. CCHHS' addiction psychiatrists and behavioral health staff will provide the FQHC's MAT programs clinical oversight, consultation services, training and technical support.

"Medication-assisted treatment is the gold standard for a severe opioid addiction," said Dr. Andrew Segovia Kulik, Chair, Psychiatry, CCHHS. "Addiction is a disease to be treated just like any other illness. There are highly-effective medications and programming that can help an individual get and stay well. Our collaborative will provide thousands of people in Chicagoland with new resources to receive the best treatment possible."

Together, Esperanza, Heartland and PrimeCare have more than a dozen clinic locations across Chicago.

## Service Update

Effective July 10, the Immediate Care Center at Oak Forest Health Center has new hours and will be open from 7:00 a.m.-10:30 p.m. every day.

Visit our website at [cookcountyhhs.org](http://cookcountyhhs.org)

# CCHHS in the News

- [What It's Like to be Counted on to Repair the Bodies Broken by America's Relentless Gun Violence](#)
- [County Hospital Boss Says Gun Violence A 'Major Public Health Disaster'](#)
- [Rush, Cook County Hospitals Get Grant for Fight Against Deadly Superbugs](#)
- [Rise of Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria a Concern for Doctors, Experts](#)
- [WVON: Men's Health Month](#)
- [Know Your Mosquitoes so You Can Avoid Them](#)
- [Why Cook County Health Thinks It Should Expand Into Nursing Homes](#)

## Upcoming Events

- July 11: CCHHS Board of Directors Meeting (Strategic Planning)
- July 21: Strategic Plan Public Hearing
- July 28: GCFD Fresh Truck Visits Oak Forest Health Center
- July 29: CCHHS Board of Directors Meeting

**If you would like to invite a representative from CCHHS to attend a community event, please send an email to [events@cookcountyhhs.org](mailto:events@cookcountyhhs.org).**

**To provide feedback on CCHHS Community News, update your contact information, or unsubscribe, please email Marcelino Garcia, Director of Community Affairs, at [mgarcia6@cookcountyhhs.org](mailto:mgarcia6@cookcountyhhs.org).**

## Employment

**CCHHS is hiring! Check out our website, [cookcountyhhs.org/careers](http://cookcountyhhs.org/careers) to find open positions.**

