



SYSTEM NEWS

Community Edition

Letter from the CEO

I'm proud to share with you the latest news from the Cook County Health & Hospitals System about our plans to expand behavioral health services in our region. As the state budget impasse continues, our patients have been disproportionately impacted by community-based health and social services cuts and closures. The lack of comprehensive mental health care and substance abuse treatment drives an increase in emergency department visits and detentions for individuals who have un- or undertreated behavioral health disorders. CCHHS is making investments in a number of areas to improve access to these critical services, including:



Community Triage Center

Working closely with President Preckwinkle and the Cook County Justice Advisory Council, CCHHS will establish a pilot Community Triage Center (CTC) in the Roseland neighborhood to provide assessment and stabilizations services for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis or intoxication. The CTC, which will be open 24 hours a day/ 365 days a year, is expected to open later this year and we predict it could divert hundreds of individuals from local emergency departments and the Cook County Jail in the first year.

Behavioral Health Consortium

Through our Medicaid health plan CountyCare, we are establishing a consortium of behavioral health providers in the Chicagoland area. Physicians in the CountyCare network who have a patient in need of behavioral health services will have access to a single referral resource that is available round-the-clock. Through the consortium, providers will be able to request a referral for their patient to see to an appropriate and available community-based mental health or substance abuse provider. The initial providers in the consortium include: Community Counseling Centers of Chicago (C4), Metropolitan Family Services, Human Resources Development Institute Inc. (HRDI), Habilitative Systems, Inc. (HSI), the South Suburban Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, and Family Guidance Centers Inc.

Integrating Behavioral Health into Primary Care Medical Homes (PCMH)

CCHHS is also integrating behavioral health care into our community clinics. Primary care settings can effectively treat and manage individuals with mild to moderate behavioral health needs and, in many cases, prevent the escalation of illness. In the coming year, CCHHS will be focused on equipping primary care staff at the system's 16 clinics to effectively screen for and treat common mental health and substance abuse disorders. This effort will increase access to ongoing behavioral health care for patients and allow for care coordination within a single team of health care providers.

Expanded Substance Abuse Treatment

To address the growing epidemic of substance abuse, particularly opioid/ heroin use, CCHHS is developing a strategy that would provide substance abuse treatments and naloxone (an opioid "antidote") to at-risk patients in the event of an overdose.

Stay tuned for more information throughout the year about the latest developments on our behavioral health services!



Dr. Jay Shannon, CEO, CCHHS

CCHHS Clinicians Honored



CCHHS would like to congratulate a few of our outstanding providers who have recently been recognized for their fantastic work (left to right).

- **Dr. Kenya Key**, Chief Psychologist, Cermak Health Services at Cook County Jail, honored by The Chicago Defender as a Woman of Excellence
- **Dr. Claudia Fegan**, Executive Medical Director, CCHHS, named one of Modern Healthcare's Top Minority Executives to Watch
- **Dr. Suja Mathew**, Chair of Internal Medicine, CCHHS, recognized by Congressman Danny K. Davis as one of Chicagoland's Top 10 Outstanding Women

Thank you for your service and dedication to our patients!

March is Kidney Disease Awareness Month

More than 26 million Americans have kidney disease, but many do not know it as kidney disease has few warning signs. Kidneys function to remove waste from your body and to maintain fluid and chemical balances. Your kidneys filter all of the blood in your body every 30 minutes.



People with diabetes, high blood pressure, or a family history of kidney issues is at risk for kidney disease. CCHHS's Chair of Nephrology, **Dr. Peter Hart**, recommends patients with these conditions or history to have regular blood and urine tests at their primary care physician's office. (Nephrology is the medical specialty related to kidney function and diseases.)

"Take charge of your health and find out from your doctor if you have kidney disease," said Dr. Hart.

A healthy lifestyle, good blood pressure control, and avoidance of over-the-counter medications like ibuprofen and herbal supplements can help prevent kidney disease.

To find a primary care doctor near you, please call the CCHHS Patient Support Center at 312-864-0200. If you are interested in learning more about kidney disease at a Kidney Health Class, please call 312-864-4600.

First Blood Bank in U.S. Established at Cook County

The Cook County Hospital Blood Bank opened on March 15, 1937. It was the first blood bank established in the United States. Founded by Dr. Bernard Fantus (right), the blood bank is celebrating its 79th anniversary this month. The ability to store and transfuse blood made modern surgery as we know it possible. Today, nearly 21 million blood components are transfused each year and there are more 15.7 million blood donations at blood banks around the country.



Make Your Home Poison Safe During Poison Prevention Week

March 20-26 is National Poison Prevention Week. Poisoning is the number one cause of injury-related death in the U.S., surpassing motor vehicle accidents. While poisonings can happen at work, school, outdoors, and anywhere else, 91 percent occur at home. From the garage to the bathroom to the attic, hundreds of toxic chemicals and substances are stored in our homes. Even some of the more common household items can be poisonous to children, such as laundry products, plants, and personal care products.



"We treat hundreds of poisonings each year across our health system. The most serious cases often involve children who have ingested medications they shouldn't have. I urge parents and caregivers to ensure that medication is kept out of sight and reach of children and to safely dispose of any medications you are no longer using," said **Dr. Steve Aks**, emergency medicine physician and toxicologist at CCHHS' John H. Stroger Jr., Hospital.

Here are a few more simple steps to help make your home poison safe:

- Save the Illinois Poison Center's number, 1-800-222-1222, in your phone.
- Install and regularly check carbon monoxide detectors in your home.
- Be aware of where the button batteries are in your home (remote controls, key fobs, watches, etc.) and keep these objects secure or away from children!
- Make sure all cleaning products are stored in their original containers. Store these containers up high and out of reach of children.

For more information, visit the American Association of Poison Control Centers at <http://www.aapcc.org/prevention/nppw/>.

Visit our website at cookcountyhhs.org

CCHHS in the News

- [Cook County announces bold plans to address behavioral health](#)
- [In Chicago, triage for mentally ill before jail](#)
- [First blood bank: Cook County Hospital](#)
- [Dr. Jay Shannon elected to IHA Board](#)
- [Treating Chicago's young people traumatized by violence](#)
- [Family of shooting victim meets recipient of organ donation](#)
- [Apps and technology help low-income people access health care](#)
- [Cook County plans to complete high-speed Internet project in 2017](#)

Upcoming Events

[March 25: CCHHS Board of Directors Meeting](#)

[April 16: 4 Men Only, 20th Anniversary Men's Health Event](#)

If you would like to invite a representative from CCHHS to attend a community event, please send an email to 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.