

8/27/21 Board Meeting - testimony submitted

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	
1	Corpuz, Esther	Alivio Medical Center	Written
2	Francis, Lee	Erie Family Health Centers	Written
3	Bithos, Marianne	NAMI South Suburbs of Chicago	Written
4	Inman, Emily T.	Respond Now	Written
5	Franklin, Donzell	The Partnership for Resilience	Written
6	Holland, Loys	Provident Women's Auxilliary	Written
7	Hoskins, Mayor Rory E.	Village of Forest Park	Written
8	Epplin, Wesley	Health & Medicine Policy Research Group	Written

Cook County Health Budget Public Hearings  
August 20, 2021

Esther Corpuz  
Chief Executive Officer  
Alivio Medical Center  
966 W 21<sup>st</sup> St.  
Chicago, IL 60608



**Alivio Medical Center**  
*An Active Presence for a Strong Community*

My name is Esther Corpuz, Chief Executive Officer of Alivio Medical Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center serving 50,000 Chicagoans in the Pilsen, Little Village, and Back of the Yards neighborhoods. I am writing to voice Alivio Medical Center's support for the CountyCare Medicaid program—a vital lifeline to us and the communities we serve.

Alivio Medical Center works with CountyCare patients through the Medical Home Network ACO (MHN ACO), serving close to 7,000 CountyCare patients and providing practice level care management. Through the MHN ACO relationship, Alivio takes on delegated care management responsibilities for the health plan, hiring the staff and implementing a truly unique practice level care management program that includes use of innovative technology.

CountyCare has supported community-based delivery systems and real care transformation, and we are proud to partner with the top managed care plan in Illinois. Today, our CountyCare patients are receiving higher quality care—and getting care in the right place at the right time, because of the integrated care management model, technology, and resources on the ground. As a result, our patients have a health plan to follow, access to a variety of covered services, and a greater understanding of how they can take control of their health. This forward thinking MHN ACO-CountyCare arrangement also acts as an economic engine for our clinic and our communities, allowing us to invest care management staffing dollars to create community jobs and reinvest shared savings into enhanced clinical programming—making Alivio, and our communities, stronger.

I would like to share a brief story about one of our CountyCare patients at Alivio who was in the hypertension management program started by MHN ACO. After a care coordinator identified uncontrolled hypertension in a particular patient, the care coordinator recommended the patient go to the ER immediately. This intervention helped flag additional cardiac issues the patient had, and after monitoring food and salt intake and cardiac rehab, his blood pressure decreased. The patient truly appreciated the care coordinator's quick and potentially life-saving response.

In closing, thank you to Cook County Health for supporting CountyCare and MHN ACO, these programs have changed the way we are able to connect with and serve our patients—with life-changing results.

Sincerely,

Esther Corpuz

CEO, Alivio Medical Center

Cook County Health Budget Public Hearings  
August 20, 2021

Lee Francis, MD, MPH, President and CEO  
Erie Family Health Centers  
1701 W Superior St., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60622

On behalf of Erie Family Health Centers, a Federally Qualified Health Center that has provided care to Chicago's medically underserved patients for over 60 years, I am pleased to offer my support of the CountyCare health plan, a valued partner for the communities we serve.

Erie Family Health Centers is a regional health care resource serving more than 81,000 patients a year at 13 health centers spanning the West Side of Chicago to Waukegan. These sites include seven large primary care centers that offer integrated health care services, the region's oldest and largest comprehensive teen and young adult health center, and five school-based health centers. Through the COVID pandemic, Erie continues to be a critical partner in the Protect Chicago Plus initiative, operating a warehouse at 4500 W. Chicago Avenue in addition to offering appointments in clinic for anyone ages 12 and up.

The individuals from our community rely on the CountyCare health plan for comprehensive coverage; Erie Family Health Centers serves close to 26,000 CountyCare patients. Through our relationship with MHN ACO, Erie Family Health Centers takes on full care management responsibilities for our CountyCare patient population. Our robust care management and care coordination infrastructure has been established to work with CountyCare patients so we can continue to proactively identify barriers, manage chronic illnesses, and be ready and responsive when situations and needs evolve.

There isn't a better example of interdisciplinary care management than the recent experience of "Ms. Smith." Ms. Smith was diagnosed with liver cancer in February 2020, after a long history of Hepatitis C from an earlier blood transfusion. When her infection was first detected, she was told that nothing could be done, and she carried that belief forward even after treatments had radically improved. Liver cancer devastated her health, causing multiple admissions from complications, and forcing her to take early retirement. Despite the impact on her health, she remained hesitant to get a liver transplant.

Over the last 10 months, Ms. Smith and her Erie Nurse Care Manager had hours of honest and open conversation about having a liver transplant and what that involved. To ensure that Ms. Smith kept her options open and could make the best decision for her when she was ready, the care manager facilitated ongoing communication with the transplant nurses and surgeons, Ms. Smith's Erie therapist and medical providers. In time, this work paid off, and we could not be more delighted to report that Ms. Smith is the proud recipient of a new liver. Ms. Smith

recently called her care manager to say how happy she is with her decision. She is thankful for the support of her team and for the chance to live a fulfilling life.

Stories like this represent the best of integrated and collaborative care. Partnering with CountyCare through the MHN ACO has aided Erie Family Health Centers in achieving our mission of positively impacting the health of the people and communities we serve through more efficient, more personalized, and cost-effective care. Together, we are leading the charge in transforming care and creating a community-based delivery system that works for our shared populations. Erie strongly supports the Cook County Health and the CountyCare insurance plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lee Francis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lee Francis, MD, MPH  
President and CEO

August 17, 2021

Board of Directors  
Cook County Health  
1950 W. Polk  
Chicago, IL 60612

**RE: Fiscal Year 2022 Cook County Health Budget**

Dear Cook County Health Board of Directors,

I am Marianne Bithos, President of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), for the South Suburbs of Chicago and have been in this role for 10 years. NAMI South Suburbs of Chicago is an advocacy organization and offers free education for families to learn about how to help someone living with a mental health disorder.

I collaborate with many organizations to advocate on behalf of the mentally ill including Cook County Health, where I serve as a member of their Community Advisory Council at the Robbins Health Center.

The Robbins Health Center provides Primary Care to children and adults and plays an important role serving as a safety net for some of our neediest residents in the South Suburbs. We are grateful for the expansion of mental health and behavioral health services at the Robbins, Cottage Grove and Blue Island Health Centers. Without this treatment, individuals, families and whole communities might be in crisis due to the domino effect that untreated mental illness can have. During the Covid-19 Crisis the South Suburban Clinics in Robbins, Ford Heights and Blue Island have served as an anchor in the community and patients trust that these are safe places to get the help they need either in person or via telehealth appointments.

I am writing to support the Cook County Health Fiscal Year 2022 budget. It is great to read that the System is looking to grow and add services so that our vulnerable communities can have resources to keep their residents safe and healthy especially during this pandemic.

Thank you for your consideration,

Marianne Bithos  
President  
NAMI South Suburbs of Chicago



**RESPONDNOW** | Because all our neighbors matter

Food Pantry

08/19/2021

Rent and  
Mortgage  
Assistance

Board of Directors  
Cook County Health  
1950 W. Polk  
Chicago, IL 60612

Utility  
Assistance

RE: Fiscal Year 2022 Cook County Health Budget

Prescription  
Vouchers

Dear Cook County Health Board of Directors,

SNAP Outreach

I am the Food Access & Street Outreach Coordinator at Respond Now in Chicago Heights, IL. We are a United Way sponsored agency that enhances the quality of life across more than 22 South Suburban Cook County communities by working to alleviate hunger and prevent homelessness for people at risk. Each year we keep over 125 families in their homes, help more than 133 families with utility assistance, provide over 60 households with emergency hotel stays, and prepare over 18,000 bags of food. Our mission is to enhance the quality of life of community members through health, hunger, and housing services. Our service communities are composed mainly of low-income African-Americans and Latinx, many of whom are living at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.

Temporary  
Lodging

I lead our street outreach team. We provide outreach, education, resources, and connections to healthcare services for our most vulnerable community members. Our most vulnerable community members include those who are uninsured or underinsured, undocumented, literally homeless, living lease-to-lease, unemployed or underemployed, and experiencing the affects of generational poverty. Many of these vulnerable community members are substance misusers, live with multiple comorbidities, and/or live with multiple disabilities.

Travel  
Assistance

Community  
Garden

We currently partner with both CCDPH and CCH on community health initiatives and healthcare resource referrals and delivery. We were a recipient of the CCDPH Contact Tracing & Community Supports Grant administered by the Hektoen Institute of Medicine. Through this grant, the street outreach team conducted COVID-19 related health education, promotion, outreach, and community engagement. They placed over 60 literally homeless and newly homeless households into emergency hotel shelters to preventatively quarantine, delivered quarantine supply boxes to these households in order to maintain quarantine, and coordinated routine COVID-19 testing of these households. They also took referrals from CCDPH, CCH, local emergency services personnel, and local hospitals systems to place additional households into emergency hotel shelters throughout the pandemic.

Children's Book  
Distribution

Holiday Toy  
Drive

We are currently a recipient of year two of the above grant. Our year 2 work began 07/01/21. As a year 2 recipient, we participate in CCDPH's Contact Tracing Initiative as a Care Resource Coordination hub. Since 07/02/21 we have delivered quarantine supplies that include PPE, hygiene kits, sanitization and cleaning supplies, and health food, to 25 households currently in quarantine because they are COVID-19 positive. Many of these households have at least one spouse who is hospitalized, one spouse experiencing grave symptoms and acting as a single parent, and other family members with disabilities sheltering in place. We have also provided financial case management and support to 15 similar households currently in quarantine because they are COVID-19 positive.

Our success with the above is largely due to our employment of community health workers (CHWs). Our CHWs live, work, and socialize in the communities we serve. They face the same challenges, barriers, and social determinants of health as our service community. They have been instrumental in community engagement, health promotion and education, and outreach to our most vulnerable community members. Respond Now plans to continue growing our CHW model and street outreach team by actively participating with CCH and CCDPH in the CDC NCCDPHP's Community Health Workers for Covid Response and Resilient Communities -CDC-RFA-DP21-2109. Respond Now plans to serve as an active member of the suburban Cook County CHW coalition co-facilitated by CCDPH and the Health & Medicine Research Policy Group. Respond Now also plans to engage our CHWs in training opportunities offered by CCDPH and CCH to ensure that CHWs build the relevant knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to influence measurable behavior change.

In addition to the above work, we have been organizing and conducting COVID-19 vaccination events in partnership with CCDPH and CCH since April 2021. We have successfully organized or co-organized, planned, promoted, and executed 9 vaccination events 4/12 - 8/11/21. Our work as a vaccination hub will continue through the end of FY'22.

CCH's continued funding of essential public health services like those described in this letter is imperative to the health of all people living and working in Cook County. I am writing to support the CCH Fiscal Year 2022 budget. The proposed budget will ensure vulnerable communities have access to added services and resources needed to keep their residents safe and healthy, especially during this pandemic.

Many thanks for being there for us in the community.

Sincerely,

 MPH

Emily T. Inman, MPH

Food Access & Street Outreach Coor.





August 19<sup>th</sup> 2021

Board of Directors  
Cook County Health  
1950 W. Polk  
Chicago, IL 60612

**RE: Fiscal Year 2022 Cook County Health Budget**

Dear Cook County Health Board of Directors,

I am Donzell Franklin, the Southland Organizer for The Partnership for Resilience. The Partnership for Resilience works to improve academic, health, and social outcomes for children by fostering trauma-responsive schools and effective family, school, health, and community partnerships. Cook County Health has served as a valuable partner since the inception of our organization.

CCH has provided immense support in PfR's efforts to increase access to health services for underserved communities in the Southland. PfR and CCH have strategically coordinated plans of action to ensure school districts can meet physical/immunization compliance expectations during the Covid-19 pandemic. CCH has also played a vital role in our efforts to increase "medical homes" consistent primary care physicians for children and families in the Southland. PfR is looking forward to continuing our efforts with CCH in the coming years envisioning opportunities to increase services to uninsured or underinsured children and families in the South Suburbs.

I am writing to support the Cook County Health Fiscal Year 2022 budget. It is great to read that the System is looking to grow and add services so that our vulnerable communities can have resources to keep their residents safe and healthy especially during this pandemic.

Many thanks for being there for us in the community.

Sincerely,  
Donzell Franklin



August 23, 2021

Board of Directors  
Cook County Health  
1950 W. Polk  
Chicago, IL 60612

**RE: Fiscal Year 2022 Cook County Health Budget**

Dear Cook County Health Board of Directors,

I am writing to support the Cook County Health Budget for the Fiscal Year 2022. I was happy to read that the system is looking to grow and add needed services for our vulnerable communities. It is important to have accessible services for those with transportation and economic barriers.

I am a 62 year resident of Bronzeville, a 40 year retired CDPH Public Health Administrator, a more than 20 year member of the Provident Community Advisory Board, and presently serving as Vice President of the Provident Women's Auxiliary. My first association with Cook County Health began many years ago working in partnership with Provident to provide continuity of services between CDPH and Provident specifically to provide Mammography services to women in our communities.

CCH/Provident has continually provided safety net health services to our community, services that would otherwise go unprovided especially for those with low or no health insurance coverage.

Thanks for being a constant in our community.

Thanks for your effort to improve and increase community public health services.

I am especially thankful for establishment of additional Kidney Health Services and a Dialysis Center at Provident as the statistics show and increase in the number of residents developing Chronic Kidney Disease.

Thank you again, I look forward to hearing more and serving CCH/Provident Hospital.

Loys Holland

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██████████

VILLAGE OF



BIG CITY ACCESS

SMALL TOWN CHARM

**Rory E. Hoskins**  
MAYOR

517 DESPLAINES AVENUE  
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PUBLIC PROPERTY

**Maria Maxham**  
COMMISSIONER  
PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

**Moses E. Amidei**  
VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR

**Vanessa Moritz**  
VILLAGE CLERK

August 23, 2021

**Toni Preckwinkle**  
County Board President  
Cook County Government  
118 N. Clark St. Suite 537  
Chicago, IL 60602

As I stated publicly when elected officials gathered to close out the regular, mass vaccination center operations at the former HOB0 store located on the grounds of the Forest Park Mall, the Village of Forest Park was happy to do its part to help deliver jabs into arms. As Mayor, please be assured that our police and fire staff are more than prepared to provide further support to the Cook County Health Department for administering “boosters” should you choose to re-open the facility that was previously used in Forest Park.

As mayor, I like to promote the village in part based on its geography. Our community is easily accessible by CTA L trains, CTA buses, or by private auto. This pandemic has reinforced our staff and community’s readiness to be part of the solution. Our residents were proud to see our first responders working with Illinois Guard personnel and others from the various Cook County agencies that staffed the mass vaccination site.

Thank you for your leadership and for selecting a site in Forest Park to serve the greater west suburban region.

Respectfully yours,

Rory E. Hoskins, Mayor

August 27, 2021  
Testimony to the Cook County Health Board



Hello. I'm Wesley Epplin and I serve as the Policy Director at Health & Medicine Policy Research Group, a nonprofit focused on improving the health of all Illinoisans by advancing health equity. As a long-time supporter of Cook County Health and its critical mission, we offer our testimony today regarding the health system's fiscal year 2022.

Health & Medicine supports the development of an equity and inclusion office within Cook County Health. We hope Cook County Health will make strides on equity both among its employees and in its health services. Having all staff focused on advancing equity and the makeup of staff better reflect the communities being served will improve quality of care, accessibility, and trust.

Next, Health & Medicine urges the Cook County Health board and administration to make a much larger request for funding for both the Cook County Department of Public Health and for clinical services.

The proposed budget requests only a \$1 million increase in the local taxpayer allocation to the health department. The Cook County Board has long provided insufficient local funding for public health.

Contrast that small increase with the Cook County Department of Corrections, which the forecast suggests will receive a more than \$50 million increase in its local allocation. In the midst of a deadly pandemic, after underfunding public health for many years, it is unconscionable to not put massive new local resources into public health. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is on top of preexisting deadly health inequities and other public health threats, including climate change and future pandemics.

The noted \$25 million CDC grant for public health will be gone before we know it and Cook County Government needs to ramp up local spending on public health by tens of millions of dollars to create sustainable capacity change in public health, reduce and eliminate health inequities, and save lives.

As examples, there should be funding for more epidemiology staff to bring data to bear on public health decisions; for staff to promote health equity in all policies; and for community health workers to provide health education, guidance, and advocacy alongside of communities. We need new public health staff to partner with community organizations who are focused on the social determinants of health, in areas like housing, food access, and environmental justice. To work to reduce and eliminate health inequities, our local health department needs sustained sufficient local funding.

Also, Health & Medicine urges the Cook County Health Board and administration to increase the request for funding its healthcare operations. As more patients gained coverage under the Affordable Care Act, the Cook County Board has reduced the local taxpayer allocation to Cook County Health's hospital operations in an unsustainable manner. While there is a proposed modest increase in the local tax allocation, it is insufficient. Much more funding is needed to successfully fulfil the mission of Cook County Health and to invest into system transformation and service expansion. Mental healthcare, dental care, specialty care, and primary care should all be considered areas for expansion with a larger local funding allocation to make it happen.

Health & Medicine thanks this board for the opportunity to provide input and testimony on this budget. We challenge this board and the administration of Cook County Health to make a much larger request for local allocations for public health and healthcare.

Contact:  
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Policy Director  
Health & Medicine Policy Research Group  
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