

Resolution Honoring Dr. Connie Mennella

WHEREAS, DR. CONCETTA MENNELLA is an exemplary correctional health physician, teacher and advocate; and

WHEREAS, DR. MENNELLA committed early in her career to care for underserved, vulnerable populations as a member of the National Health Service Corps; and

WHEREAS, DR. MENNELLA, following a medical school rotation that exposed her to the need for high quality care for detained populations, has provided care to patients detained in Cook County Jail since 1991; and

WHEREAS, for the past thirty years, DR. MENNELLA has continued to be a tireless advocate of her patients, a compassionate caregiver and a leader who inspires and empowers her team and correctional health leaders around the country; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of her exceptional care and leadership, DR. MENNELLA was named Chair of the Department of Correctional Health in 2014; and

WHEREAS, DR. MENNELLA has dedicated her life to uplifting the health and wellbeing of her patients at the jail, addressing the health conditions that disproportionately impact detained individuals; and

WHEREAS, whether that is ensuring unique specialty services for a patient in need, advocating for compassionate release or family visitations for patients under hospice care, or developing mitigation efforts to address infectious disease risks at the jail, including access to robust COVID-19 testing and vaccination, DR. MENNELLA always serves as a voice for her patients; and

WHEREAS, before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, DR. MENNELLA's leadership and around-the-clock work resulted in an extensive COVID-19 mitigation, testing and care plan that was lauded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a best-in-class strategy for a correctional health setting; and

WHEREAS, the Cook County Sheriff said that during the pandemic DR. MENNELLA's "leadership and tireless work on behalf of her patients saved lives, and the citizens of Cook County should be grateful for her unswerving dedication"; and

WHEREAS, DR. MENNELLA has authored many journal articles during her career, providing notable insights on topics ranging from COVID-19 to antibiotic resistant infections, and advancing the field of correctional health care nationally; and

WHEREAS, DR. MENNELLA earned the 34th "Human Rights Award" from the National Alliance Against Racist & Political Repression, the Health and Medicine Policy Research Group "Medicine Award" in 2018 and Cook County Health's "Doctor of the Year" award in 2017; and

WHEREAS, after making a positive impact on the health of countless individuals, DR. MENNELLA is beginning a well-deserved retirement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of Cook County Health, on behalf of the more than 5 million residents of Cook County, does hereby gratefully acknowledge CONCETTA MENNELLA for her remarkable career and dedication to the mission of Cook County Health and the people the health system serves.