



# COOK COUNTY HEALTH

**ISRAEL ROCHA, JR.**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
**REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**March 25, 2022**

## Employee Recognition

**John H. Stroger Jr., Hospital of Cook County** has been named the #1 most racially inclusive hospital in Illinois and #5 most racially inclusive hospital in the nation by the Lown Institute Hospitals Index. The 2022 Lown Institute Hospitals Index racial inclusivity metric measures how well more than 2,800 US hospitals serve people of color in their surrounding community based on Medicare claims and the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey from 2020.



**Ann Sikora Jackson**, Director of Advanced Practice Providers, has been an active supporter of the Ukrainian Medical Association of North America (UMANA) and recently facilitated the evacuation of a family who were fleeing their home in a suburb of Kyiv. The family, including 2 children, suffered gun-shot wounds and the grandmother killed when their car caravan was ambushed. The mother sustained severe injuries to her arm and could not receive the necessary hospital care in Ukraine. When UMANA sent out an international call for assistance, Ms. Sikora-Jackson called on a connection in Poland who was able to transport the family in a media vehicle to a Polish hospital. The family is recovering, and the mother is able to receive the surgeries she needs. “Whether patients are from Ukraine, Yemen, Syria, Eritrea, the West or South side of Chicago, Ukrainian Village or Avondale, whoever they are, we care for all.... This is the way of Cook County Health,” she wrote. CCH is working with national and international media to tell this story.



**Caryn Stancik**, Chief Communications and Marketing Officer, received the 2022 Chicago Women of Impact Award from [The Motion Agency](#). Ms. Stancik was recognized for her three decades of service to Cook County, particularly her work to promote the health and wellness of County residents. She was praised for bringing “authenticity, creativity, and commitment to every project” and for ensuring that “her work, her team’s work and the work of the County’s health system is inclusive, culturally appropriate and equitable.”

Ms. Stancik’s department was also recognized with two awards for its work around COVID-19 communications and education.

The “My Shot Cook County” campaign won Nonprofit PR/Marketing Campaign of the Year 2021 from [PRNEWS](#). The campaign highlighted real residents of Cook County, provided education about the COVID-19 vaccines, and details about how to get vaccinated. It generated more than 101 million overall impressions and nearly 100k visitors to the campaign website.





The “Trust Us” campaign, featuring CCH physicians urging people to get vaccinated, earned [Adsposure’s](#) 2021 Community Awareness Award for using transit advertising to its fullest. The award was determined based on popular vote and Trust Us was up against several other health/non-profit campaigns.

## Activities and Announcements

### COVID-19 Update

Inpatient admissions for COVID as well as the overall positivity rate remain low however CCH and CCDPH are monitoring closely the emergence of the Ba.2 variant.

CCH is developing a test to treat program that will ensure patients receive new therapeutics as soon as possible after a COVID diagnosis.

Cook County Health continues to offer COVID vaccination to employees, patients and the community. CCH has administered more than 994,000 vaccine doses. Cook County Health held a two day vaccination push and distributed more than 2,000 \$100 gift cards. CCDPH is also offering gift cards at many of their hyperlocal vaccine events. Additional promotions are being planned in anticipation of FDA approval for the under five population.

Both CCH and CCDPH continue to offer vaccines, including booster shots, in the community. A full list of locations, dates and times can be found [here](#).

IMPACT 2023 Focus Areas 1 and 5

### The Change Institute of Cook County Health

On Wednesday, March 23, 2022, CCH CEO Israel Rocha gave his first address to the City Club of Chicago where he announced the creation of The Change Institute of Cook County Health.



The Change Institute of Cook County Health (CICCH) grew out of crucial conversations about health equity in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic that disproportionately impacted communities of color and underserved populations.

The Change Institute of Cook County Health will seek to develop innovative, cohesive new strategies to bridge gaps in treatment and prevention leveraging the delivery models and lessons learned from the response to COVID.

The CICCH work will begin with four of the most prevalent causes of premature death in Cook County – cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke. By addressing the stages of care for each disease, actionable steps that deliver immediate impact and improve health outcomes for generations to come will be identified. This initiative that will centralize much of our existing work and address these diseases in four distinct quadrants of care: prevention, primary care, acute care and social risk factors and fill in gaps to ensure a robust approach to preventing disease and premature death. Over the course of the next year, CCH will operationalize the institute and its work. More information can be found at [www.cicch.org](http://www.cicch.org).

IMPACT 2023 Focus Areas 1 and 5

## Food As Medicine

As access to healthy food remains a great need for our patients and communities, the Fresh Truck partnership between Cook County Health (CCH) and the Greater Chicago Food Depository (GCFD) continues. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic required CCH and GCFD to develop and implement revised protocols for the Fresh Truck distributions that allow for appropriate screenings and social distancing to protect patients, as well as CCH and GCFD staff and volunteers. These revised protocols are in place until further notice.

Through March 8, 2022, CCH's Fresh Truck partnership with the Greater Chicago Food Depository (GCFD) resulted in 376 visits to CCH health centers – Arlington Heights, Austin, Blue Island, the CORE Center, Cottage Grove, Englewood, Logan Square, North Riverside, Provident/Sengstacke, Prieto, and Robbins.

Collectively, the Fresh Truck distributions have resulted in the provision of fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as some shelf stable items during the COVID-19 pandemic, to an estimated 41,697 households, representing 137,424 individuals, totaling more than 942,550 pounds of food. Most of the individuals benefiting from the Fresh Truck screened positive for food insecurity at a CCH health center visit.

The Greater Chicago Food Depository's Fresh Food Truck visits for the month of April include the following ACHN Health Centers.

- April 5 – **North Riverside Health Center** – 1800 S. Harlem Avenue, North Riverside, IL 60546
- April 7 – **Austin Health Center** - 4800 W. Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60651
- April 14 – **Cottage Grove Health Center** - 1645 Cottage Grove Avenue, Ford Heights, IL 60411
- April 19 – **Robbins Health Center** - 13450 S. Kedzie Avenue, Robbins, IL 60472
- April 21 – **Englewood Health Center** - 1135 W. 69th Street, Chicago, IL 60621

IMPACT 2023 Objective 5.1c

## Community Advisory Councils

Cook County Health Advisory Councils include patients, community and religious organizations and serve as a way to promote our services in the communities where our centers are located. The Councils provide feedback to our staff and help strengthen our health center's relationships in the community. The councils meet quarterly to provide current information on Cook County Health and as an avenue for members to share information about their organizations.

As part of the Strategic Planning Process, Mr. Israel Rocha hosted a joint community advisory council meeting on Thursday, March 3, at 12:00pm.

The Second Quarter of 2022 topic presentations include Cardiology, CountyCare and MoreCare. In addition, updates on Cook County Health, Covid-19 Vaccination and Community Outreach are provided. Each clinic also does an update on its operations at the meeting. Upcoming CAC meeting dates, including the 2022 schedule:

**Provident Hospital/Sengstacke Health Center:** Wednesday at 9:00 AM: April 13, July 13, October 12  
500 W. 51st Street, Chicago, IL 60609

**Cottage Grove:** Tuesday at 1:00 PM: April 26, July 26, October 25  
1645 S. Cottage Grove Avenue, Ford Heights, IL 60411

**Blue Island:** Wednesday at 1:00 PM: May 18, August 17, November 16  
12757 S. Western Ave., Blue Island, IL 60406

**Arlington Heights:** Tuesday at 1:00 PM: May 24, August 23, November 29  
3520 N. Arlington Heights Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60004

**Robbins:** Tuesday at 1:00 PM: June 14, September 13, December 13  
13450 S. Kedzie Road, Robbins, IL 60472

**North Riverside:** Wednesday at 1:00 PM: June 15, September 14, December 14  
1800 S. Harlem Avenue, North Riverside, IL 60546

**Englewood:** Thursday at 1:00 PM - June 16, September 15, December 15

IMPACT 2023 Focus Area 5

**Community Newsletter, media and social media reports are attached**

## Legislative Update

### Local

- On March 14 CCH appeared before the Cook County Health & Hospitals Committee to provide an overview of CCH's Strategic Planning process and to elicit SWOT analysis feedback from Cook County Board Commissioners.
- On March 15 CCH appeared before the Cook County Health & Hospitals Committee to provide a COVID-19 and Contact Tracing Update as well as CCDPH's First Quarterly Report of FY2022 to the Cook County Board in their capacity as the Cook County Board of Health.

### State

- Senate and House leadership remain firm in their deadlines and the April 8 adjournment date for the spring session. Effective this week, the Senate resumed in-person committee hearings and is no longer permitting virtual participation.
- Cook County Health has two primary legislative priorities in the Spring 2022 session:
  - [SB3695](#) (Sen. Jacqueline Collins/Rep. Robyn Gabel) – Amends the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to ensure that HIPAA protected health information is not subject to public records requests.  
**Status:** SB3695 was amended to address concerns raised by stakeholders including the Office of the Attorney General; the amendment clarifies and narrows the focus of the bill to ensure that only HIPAA covered entities and information protected by HIPAA would be exempted from FOIA.

SB3695 passed the Senate 54-0-0, and is posted to the House Executive Committee.

- [HB4645](#) (Rep. LaToya Greenwood/Sen. Mattie Hunter) – Creates the **Equity and Representation in Health Care Act**, which authorizes a new loan repayment and scholarship program to promote greater diversity among health care providers when it comes to race, ethnicity, or other demographics. This Act will also build and strengthen the workforce at community-based provider locations that serve a high-proportion of Medicaid and uninsured patients, specifically at FQHCs, FQHC look-alikes, and provider locations operated by CCH, including Cermak Health Services. A separate appropriations request is being pursued to support the scholarships, loan repayments, and program operations. CCH co-leads this effort with the Illinois Primary Health Care Association, which represents FQHCs statewide.  
**Status:** House Floor Amendment (HFA) 2 was filed and brought back to the House Health Care Availability and Access Committee and passed unanimously (12-0-0). HFA2 clarified intent and addressed concerns and questions raised at an earlier committee hearing, as well as incorporated input from the Illinois Department of Public Health.

The bill passed unanimously in the House 112-0-0. A technical amendment was adopted by the Senate Health Care Availability and Access Committee, and the amended bill passed unanimously. HB4645 now awaits action by the full Senate.

Other bills of interest CCH supports include:

- [HB4437](#) (Rep. Delia Ramirez) – Expands Medicaid to adults 19-54 years who have income at or below 138% FPL, regardless of immigration status. Healthy Illinois leads this effort.  
**Status:** Assigned to Appropriations – Human Services. Deadline extended to March 31.
  - Healthy Illinois successfully advocated for coverage for immigrant adults 65+ years, which began December 2020, and coverage for those 55-64 years, which will begin no later than May 2022.
- [SB3632](#) (Sen. Doris Turner) / [HB4264](#) (Rep. Greg Harris) - Getting To Zero Omnibus, which includes a \$15M appropriations request that will support increased access to and uptake of PrEP, keep more

people living with HIV in care, and continue funding for supportive services. This is an initiative of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

**Status:** SB3632 assigned to Appropriations – Health; HB4264 assigned to Appropriations – Human Services.

## Federal

- **Appropriations** – President Biden signed HR 2471, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (i.e., the “Omnibus”) into law on March 15. The bill funds all the agencies and programs of the federal government for the remainder of the current federal fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, as well as other provisions.

House Leadership, facing blow-back from within the Democratic caucus pulled the \$15 billion COVID supplemental relief package from the bill. Rank and file members objected to the offsets Leadership had agreed to, which included \$7 billion from unspent American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) state and local aid. [Note that the County raised objections to the offset with key members of the County delegation that.] The White House has renewed its push for least at \$22 billion in emergency COVID supplemental funding, and Speaker Pelosi has indicated that she plans to revisit the issue and find acceptable offsets, at the insistence of Senate Republicans. The proposal which was pulled from the Omnibus focuses on national preparedness, including increases for vaccine, therapeutics and other countermeasure research and development as well as \$5 billion for vaccination and other aid efforts overseas. Along with America’s Essential Hospitals and other organizations, the County is advocating that any new COVID-19 emergency supplemental appropriation includes additional Provider Relief Fund (PRF) funding and flexibility, and an orderly and gradual phase down of the enhanced FMAP after the end of the public health emergency (PHE).

For the first time in over a decade the bill includes Congressionally directed spending on local community projects, aka “earmarks.” Sen. Durbin secured \$315,000 in the Department of Labor appropriation for an emergency medical technician (EMT) apprenticeship program requested by CCH. Conversations are ongoing on the Hill over whether earmark requests will be entertained for FY 2023.

Below are the funding levels appropriated for select programs of potential interest to CCH:

- **Health and Human Services (HHS)**
  - **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** – The bill includes \$8.5 billion, an increase of \$582 million above the FY 2021 enacted level.
    - ❖ \$200 million in a new, flexible funding stream for public health infrastructure and capacity nationwide
    - ❖ \$100 million, an increase of \$50 million above FY 2021 enacted level, to improve data surveillance and analytics at CDC and state and local health departments
    - ❖ \$61 million, an increase of \$5 million above FY 2021 enacted level, in public health workforce initiatives
    - ❖ \$83 million, an increase \$20 million above FY 2021 enacted level, for motherhood and infant health
    - ❖ \$195 million, an increase of \$20 million above FY 2021 enacted level, for the Ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative
    - ❖ \$491 million, an increase of \$15 million above FY 2021, for opioid overdose prevention and surveillance
  - **Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)** – The bill includes \$8.9 billion for HRSA, an increase of \$1.4 billion above the 2021 enacted level.
    - ❖ \$2.5 billion, an increase of \$71 million above FY 2021, for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS program
    - ❖ \$1.3 billion, an increase of \$72 million above FY 2021, for HRSA’s Bureau of Health Professions programs to support health workforce development

- **FY 2022 Budget and Reconciliation** – Discussions around advancing a smaller Budget Reconciliation package with some elements of the President’s Build Back Better agenda are on hold, though it may be possible to advance some CCH agenda items through other avenues.
- **FY 2023 Budget and Appropriations** – The White House has announced that it intends to submit the President’s FY 2023 Budget request on March 28, nearly two months after it is supposed to be submitted to Congress. This is the formal start of the budget and appropriations process.
- **Biden Administration** – After a late February extension, the current PHE is set to end April 15. PHE declarations enable HHS to waive or modify some requirements in federal health laws and are tied to some statutory changes, including the 6.2 percent Medicaid FMAP enhancement. Observers predict that the PHE declaration will not end until July. While the Administration has affirmed its commitment to give at least sixty days’ notice before allowing the PHE to end, some governors are asking for ninety days, and the National Association of Medicaid Directors are asking for additional flexibilities for winding down Medicaid emergency provisions.

On March 17, the White House announced that COVID coordinator Jeff Zients would be leaving the Administration in April and that he would be replaced by Dr. Ashish Jha, Dean of the Brown University School of Public Health. A familiar face on cable news, Dr. Jha’s appointment may signal a renewed focus on clear public health messaging as the country enters a new phase of the pandemic.

## Community Affairs

As in person event participation begins to resume, Cook County Health and CountyCare will be present at events to promote the health system and the Medicaid program. Events in the month of March and April include the following:

- March 26 Cook County Health and CountyCare promotion at **Commissioner Aguilar’s Spring Forward Health & Resource Fair** hosted by Commissioner Frank Aguilar and the Village of Melrose Park and which will take place at the Melrose Park Civic Center located at 1000 N. 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Melrose Park.
- March 31 Cook County Health and CountyCare promotion at Ndica and Better Sister and Brother Growth Network’s **Expungement and Employment Pop-up Event** which will take place at 29 W. 159<sup>th</sup> Street in Harvey.
- April 9 Cook County Health, CountyCare and MoreCare promotion at **Lucero (Latinos United for Education, Research and Outreach) Community Health and Resource Fair** which will take place at the parking lot of Chicago Family Health Center located at 9119 S. Exchange in Chicago. The fair will provide for cancer and covid testing and other health screenings.
- April 12 Cook County Health and CountyCare promotion at **Prairie State College’s Veterans Resource and Job Fair** which will take place at the college located at 202 S. Halsted in Chicago Heights. The event is being cosponsored by the Cook County Department of Veterans Affairs, the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, National Able Network and IDES.
- April 16 CountyCare promotion at the **Roseland Hospital Community Easter Celebration** which will take place at the hospital located at 45 W. 111<sup>th</sup> Street in Chicago.
- April 30 Cook County Health and CountyCare promotion at the **Sisters Working It Out First Annual 5K Walk** which will take place at Rich East High School located at 300 Sauk Trail in Park Forest.