



COOK COUNTY HEALTH

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INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FEBRUARY 23, 2024

Employee Recognition

Cook County Health earned the 2024 High Reliability Horizon Award from Press Ganey. The Horizon Award recognizes healthcare organizations that position safety as an uncompromisable value and are on a journey to methodically deploy high reliability organizing principles and practices in managing operations to prevent adverse events and optimize outcomes. Cook County Health was one of five recipients of the 2024 Horizon Award.

Thanks to the great work of the Division of Endocrinology and the multidisciplinary team supporting patients with diabetes Becker's recognized Cook County Health as a system with a "Great Diabetes and Endocrinology Program".

The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC) issued a report concluding its operational review of the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center (JTDC). The AOIC staff verified that the Cook County JTDC took affirmative actions to achieve satisfactory compliance with AOIC Juvenile Detention Standards and received an "Exceeds AOIC standards" rating for Medical and Mental Health Services.

Congratulations to the CCH physicians who were named in Chicago Magazine's Top Docs list!

- Dr. Michael C. Giovingo– Ophthalmology
- Dr. Elizabeth A. Marcus– Surgery
- Dr. Bosko Margeta– Cardiovascular Disease
- Dr. Sharon F. Welbel– Infectious Disease

The list included nearly 1,400 area physicians, nominated by their peers as the best across 70 specialties.

Kudos to January's Commitment to Excellence Award winners for going above and beyond in support of CCH's mission:

- Alexandra Soriano, Physician Assistant I : Stroger Hospital
- Tara Denise Goodie, Director of Patient Relations: Stroger Hospital
- Angelica Johnson , EVS: Stroger Hospital
- Agina Howard, Clerk: Provident Hospital
- Angela Sims-Haynes, Executive Assistant: Administration

Congratulations to Gina Massuda Barnett, Deputy Director of Public Health Programs, Cook County Department of Public Health for getting selected for the 2024 cohort of the University of Chicago Civic Leadership Academy (CLA) based at the Center for Effective Government and the Harris School of Public Policy.

Activities and Announcements

On February 15, Cook County Health held its first Behavioral Health Summit, bringing together health care and social service providers, mental health advocates, community leaders and elected officials to discuss how to improve access and care in Cook County. More than 700 people from 300 organizations attended the event.

In honor of Black History Month, CCH hosted a media event at Provident Hospital on February 21 to celebrate and honor the rich history of Cook County Health and the individuals we serve. The event focused on the importance of representation in medicine and how we can work collectively to support youth in pursuing health care careers.

Local

- The week of January 23, CCH leadership appeared before the following Cook County Board committees to provide testimony and respond to questions from Commissioners.
 - **Asset Management Committee** – Craig Williams, CCH Chief Administrative Officer along with Earl Manning, Cook County Director of Capital Planning appeared before the committee to respond to questions related to the following contracts:
 - Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Inc. (HOK, Inc.), for consulting services for CCH Healthcare Services Long-Term Plan Phase II.
 - GSG Consultants, Inc., for architectural and engineering services for the environmental abatement, remediation, and demolition of the CCH Administration, Hektoen and Durand Buildings.
 - Desman, Inc., architectural and engineering assessment, design and engineering services for the renovation of the existing loading dock area of John H. Stroger hospital, along with the subsequent construction administration and closeout services during the construction period.
 - **Finance Committee** – Pam Cassara, CCH CFO addressed questions related to the County's Monthly Revenues and Expenses Report as well as CCH finances. CCH Interim CEO Erik Mikaitis was also available to respond to questions related to the CCH Monthly Report to the Cook County Board. The CCH Monthly Report is a compilation of the metrics and presentations made to the CCH Board of Directors from the previous month.
 - **Health & Hospitals Committee** – Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, CCDPH Chief Operating Officer provided the committee with an update on COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. Dr. Thomas Nutter, CCH Chief Behavioral Health Officer presented CCH's Semi-Annual Behavioral Health Report.
 - **Labor Committee** - Carrie Pramuk-Volk, CCH Interim Chief Human Resources Officer provided the committee with an update on CCH's participation in the Recruitment Incentive Pay Program and Retention Bonus Pay Program which was approved by the County Board in 2022.

State

- The Illinois General Assembly began the 2024 spring session, convening in Springfield for several days in January and several days this month. May 24 is the scheduled adjournment date for the [House](#) and [Senate](#). Additional dates of note include:
 - March 19 – Primary Election Day
 - July 1 – Start of the state fiscal year
 - November 5 – General Election Day

- Governor Pritzker delivered the [state of the state and FY2025 budget address](#) on February 21. Highlights from the address and subsequent state agency budget briefings include:
 - \$629M to maintain Medicaid-like coverage for immigrant adults 42 years and older as part of the Health Benefits for Immigrant Adults and Seniors programs
 - \$150M to support healthcare transformation collaboratives
 - \$10M to erase \$1B of medical debt for at least 300,000 low-income Illinois residents
 - New investments in maternal and child health including:
 - Authorizing doulas, certified professional midwives, and lactation consultants to be reimbursed by Medicaid
 - \$5M to expand home visiting in the Department of Human Services (DHS)
 - \$1M for a new program in DHS that will provide diapers to low-income families
 - \$12M for a new state child tax credit for low-income families with children under 3 years
 - \$181.7M to provide support and wraparound services for new arrivals
 - \$250M to prevent and end homelessness in Illinois
 - Support of ongoing efforts to implement the state based health insurance marketplace, including \$6M for Navigators and community application assistors
 - \$3M for the Illinois Department of Public Health to continue support of the Equity and Representation in Health Care Act, a legislative priority of Cook County Health

Additionally, the Governor announced that he would be championing legislation to curb predatory health insurance practices including banning step therapy and prior authorization for inpatient mental health care; setting statewide standards on clinical criteria when performing utilization review; prohibiting insurance companies from selling short-term limited duration plans (aka junk plans); and requiring insurers to publicly list all treatments that require prior authorizations.

- [Governor Pritzker announced a new partnership with Google to improve access to children's behavioral health services](#). Behavioral Health Care and Ongoing Navigation (BEACON) will provide a user-friendly experience for Illinois families to access behavioral and mental health services for children engaged with the Illinois Department of Human Services, Healthcare and Family Services, Children and Family Services, Juvenile Justice, Public Health, and the State Board of Education.
- The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services [announced copays and coinsurance for Health Benefits for Immigrant Adults and Seniors](#) (HBIA/S) would take effect February 1. For non-emergency inpatient hospitalizations, a \$250 copayment/stay would apply, and for non-emergency hospital outpatient services or ambulatory surgical treatment center services, a 10% coinsurance of what HFS would pay the provider would apply. A copay on non-emergency ER services that was part of an announcement last summer was removed.

HBIA/S provides Medicaid-like coverage to low-income immigrants 42+. Program enrollment was frozen last year and remains closed at this time.

Starting January 2024, HBIA/S enrollees have been moving into Medicaid Managed Care. Most of the HBIA/S enrollees living in Cook County have been/will be auto-assigned to CountyCare, into a new program called CountyCare Access. CountyCare is currently the only MCO that has waived all copays and coinsurance for HBIA/S members.

Federal

- Both Chambers of Congress have left Washington for their President's Day/Winter recess. The Senate is scheduled to return Feb. 26 and the House on Feb. 28. Three legislative days after the House gavels back in, Congress must address a funding cliffs on March 1 and March 8. Meanwhile, conversations on emergency supplemental appropriations for Ukraine, Israel and potentially some immigration/border reforms are ongoing, though a breakthrough remains elusive.
- **FY 2024 Appropriations Process**

On Jan. 18, the House and Senate both passed the current CR through March 1 for some agencies and through March 8 for the rest, including agencies funded by the Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations bill. The staff for the House and Senate Appropriations Committees are reportedly working to craft funding bills written to the top-line levels recently agreed upon, leaving thorny questions on how to deal with controversial policy riders to Leadership.
- **Bipartisan Legislative Package Negotiations**

Both Majority and Minority Senate Finance Committee staff have indicated that negotiations are ongoing over a final health package, which could include elements of the Committee's mental health package (S. 3430) including a modest Medicaid inmate exclusion provision for SUD treatment upon incarceration, and a repeal of two years of the Medicaid DSH cuts. The package would likely also include the reauthorization of the SUPPORT Act and other extensions. The County continues to advocate for repeal or delay of the Medicaid DSH cuts, and substantial reforms to the Medicaid inmate exclusion.
- **Fiscal Commission Act**

On Jan. 18 the House Budget Committee reported out the Fiscal Commission Act (H.R. 577), which would set up a commission tasked with addressing the nation's long-term structural fiscal challenges, including the solvency of the Medicare Part A trust fund. Three Democrats joined the Committee's Republican members in endorsing the legislation. The bill's critics are concerned that a commission authorized under the bill could fast-track legislation that would impose severe cuts to the health care and social safety net programs, including Medicaid.
- **Essential Hospital Designation Legislation**

On Feb. 16, Reps. Lori Trahan (D-MA) and David Valadao (R-CA) introduced the Reinforcing Essential Health Systems for Communities Act, to create a definition "essential health system" in federal statute. According to America's Essential Hospitals (AEH), which has helped develop the bill, an "essential health system," must be a public or nonprofit hospital, which also meets one of these metrics:

 - A Medicare Uncompensated Care Payment Factor greater than or equal to 0.0005, which captures the amount of uncompensated care a hospital provides.
 - Deemed Disproportionate Share Hospital status, which reflects a high percentage of Medicaid and low-income patients and accounts for differences in Medicaid programs among states.
 - A Disproportionate Patient Percentage greater than or equal to 35 percent, which captures the amount of low-income Medicare patients, along with Medicaid patients, for which a health system cares.

No funding is authorized in the legislation, but AEH suggests the definition could be used by Congress when crafting future support for safety net or "essential" hospitals.

- **Biden-Harris Administration Action**

On Jan. 17, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) finalized a rule to improve the prior authorization process and electronic health information exchange. The rules will apply to state Medicaid and CHIP agencies and Medicaid managed care plans, as well as Medicare Advantage plans and ACA exchange plans. Beginning in 2026, covered payers must include a specific reason when denying requests, and publicly report prior authorization metrics. The rule will also require decisions on urgent requests within 72 hours and standard requests within seven calendar days.

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.

Through February 13, CCH's Fresh Truck partnership with GCFD resulted in 493 visits to CCH health centers – Arlington Heights, Austin, Belmont Cragin, Blue Island, the CORE Center, Cottage Grove, Englewood, 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 48,982 households, representing 161,985 individuals. 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 March include the following ACHN Health Centers.

- March 12 – **Provident Hospital/Sengstacke Health Center** – 500 E. 51st St., Chicago, IL 60615
- March 13 – **Cottage Grove Health Center** - 1645 Cottage Grove Avenue, Ford Heights, 60411
- March 15 – **Core Center** - 2020 W. Harrison St., Chicago, IL 60612
- March 15 – **Arlington Heights Health Center** - 3250 N. Arlington Heights Rd. Arlington Heights, IL 60004
- March 28 – **Blue Island Health Center** - 12757 S. Western Ave., Blue Island, IL 60406

Redetermination Events

Cook County Health and CountyCare are currently hosting a series of Rede events in the System's facilities, other FQHCs and community partners. Rede events target CountyCare members living in or close to the zip codes of the hosting site. Members receive calls, postal correspondence, email, and texts advising them of the event happening in their vicinity.

- March 4 – **North Riverside Health Center** – 1800 S. Harlem Avenue, North Riverside, IL 60546
- March 6 – **Belmont Cragin Health Center** – 5501 W. Fullerton, Chicago, IL 60639
- March 7 – **Friend Health** – 6250 S. Cottage Grove Avenue, Chicago IL 60637
- March 8 – **Englewood Health Center** – 1135 W. 69th Street, Chicago, IL 60621
- March 9 – **Christian Community Health Calumet City** – 364 Torrence Avenue, Calumet City, IL. 60409
- March 11 – **Austin Health Center** – 4800 W. Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60651
- March 12 – **Robbins Health Center** – 13450 S. Kedzie Ave Robbins, IL 60472
- March 13 – **Stroger Hospital** – 1969 W. Ogden, Chicago, IL 60612

- March 13 – **Primecare Health Center** – 5635 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60634
- March 14 – **Alivio Health** - 2021 S Morgan St., Chicago, IL 60608
- March 15 – **Arlington Heights Health Center** – 3520 N. Arlington Heights Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60004
- March 16 – **Christian Community Health Halsted** – 9718 S. Halsted, Chicago, IL 60628
- March 19 – **Cottage Grove Health Center** – 1645 S. Cottage Grove Ave Ford Heights, IL 60411
- March 19 – **Esperanza Health Center** – 4700 S. California Ave Chicago, IL 60632
- March 20 – **Provident Hospital** – 500 E. 51st Street, Chicago, IL 60615
- March 21 – **Friend Health** – 5635 S. Pulaski, Chicago IL 60629
- March 21 – **Care for Friends** – 5749 N. Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, IL 60660
- March 22 – **Englewood Health Center** – 1135 W. 69th Street, Chicago, IL 60621
- March 23 – **Christian Community Health South Holland** – 901 E. Sibley Blvd., South Holland, IL 60473
- March 25 – **Blue Island Health Center** – 12757 S. Western Avenue, Blue Island, IL 60406
- March 26 – **Lawndale Christian Health Center** – 3750 W. Ogden Ave., Chicago, IL 60623
- March 27 – **Stroger Hospital** – 1969 W. Ogden, Chicago, IL 60612
- March 28 – **Chicago Family Health Center** – 9119 S Exchange Ave Chicago, IL 60617

CCH 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.

The 2024 First Quarter topic presentations include the CCH’s Behavioral Health Programs, CCH’s Strategic Plan Update and CountyCare’s Health Benefits for Immigrant Adults (HBIA) presentation. In addition, the meeting provides updates on Cook County Health, Community Outreach, and each clinic’s programs.

Upcoming CAC meeting dates, including the 2024 schedule:

- Prieto: Tuesday at 1:00 PM: March 5, June 4, September 3, December 3
2424 S. Pulaski, Chicago, IL 60623
- Robbins: Tuesday at 1:00 PM: March 12, June 11, September 19, December 10
13450 S. Kedzie Road, Robbins, IL 60472
- North Riverside: Wednesday at 1:00 PM: March 13, June 12, September 11, December 11
1800 S. Harlem Avenue, North Riverside, IL 60546
- Englewood: Thursday at 1:00 PM - March 14, June 13, September 12, December 12
1135 W. 69th Street, Chicago, IL 60621
- Cottage Grove: Tuesday at 1:00 PM: April 23, July 23, October 22

1645 S. Cottage Grove Avenue, Ford Heights, IL 60411

- Provident/Sengstacke: Wednesday at 9:00 AM: April 10, July 10, October 9
500 W. 51st Street, Chicago, IL 60609
- Blue Island: Wednesday at 1:00 PM: May 15, August 14, November 13
12757 S. Western Ave., Blue Island, IL 60406
- Arlington Heights: Tuesday at 1:00 PM: May 21, August 20, November 19
3520 N. Arlington Heights Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60004

Event Participation in February and March:

Outreach staff have participated or will participate in the following events to promote both Cook County Health and CountyCare to attendees.

- 1) February 21, 2024 – Participation in the **Cook County’s Black History Month Digital Equity Event** which will be held at the Garfield Park Conservatory located at 300 N. Central Park in Chicago, IL 60624.
- 2) February 26, 2024 – Participation in the **Cook County’s Black History Month Digital Equity Event** which will be held at the JW James AME Church located at 907 Sixth Street in Maywood, IL 60153.
- 3) February 27, 2024 – Participation in the **Cook County’s Black History Month Digital Equity Event** which will be held at the Matteson Public Library located at 801 School Ave. in Matteson, IL 60443.
- 4) March 9, 2024 - Participation in **Austin Coming Together’s Austin Forward Together Community Summit** which will take place at the By The Hand Club For Kids located at 415 N. Laramie in Chicago, IL 60644.
- 5) March 11, 2024 - Participation in the **HAS Resource Fair** which will take place at the HAS building located at 1915 Roosevelt Road in Broadview, IL 60155.
- 6) March 23, 2024 - Participation in the **Village of Orland Park -Sportsplex Family Health Fair** which will take place at the Sportsplex located at 11351 W 159th St. in Orland Park, IL 60467.
- 7) March 27, 2024 – Participation in the **Prairie State College Resource Fair** which will take place at the college located at 202 South Halsted St. in Chicago Heights, IL 60411.
- 8) March 27, 2024 - Participation in the **Juvenile Probation Youth Summit** which will take place at the JTDC Auditorium located at 1100 S. Hamilton in Chicago, IL 60612.
- 9) January 26, 2024 - Participation in the **Pathlights Aging Organization Board Meeting**, located at Moraine Valley Community College located at 9000 W. College Pkwy in Palos Hills, 60465.