



COOK COUNTY HEALTH

ISRAEL ROCHA, JR.
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MAY 27, 2022

Employee Recognition

Congratulations to CCH physicians **Drs. Larissa Unruh, Sadhana Dharmapuri, and Kenneth Soyemi** for publishing a research paper (attached) in PLOS ONE, a premier, open-access, peer-reviewed journal published by the Public Library of Science. The article, "Health disparities and COVID-19: A retrospective study examining individual and community factors causing disproportionate COVID-19 outcomes in Cook County, Illinois" was released this month and provides important data and commentary on the need to broadly address issues of health equity. The researchers found that race "is a significant factor for COVID-19 related mortality in Cook County... data indicate that many of the deaths were not inevitable but were the byproducts of ingrained structural inequality resulting in diminished opportunities. We hope that the lessons from this study can help illuminate the persistent inequalities in our country so that, as a society, we can better address these issues."

Nurses Month

As part of a full month of activities celebrating CCH nurses, Cook County Health held its annual **Nurse Excellence Award Ceremony** on May 13. Several CCH nurses were honored for their contribution to CCH and beyond. Congratulations to all the winners!

Leadership: Blaine Stringer MSN, RN, CEN, NE-BC, Medical Surgical Nursing

Volunteerism: Joyce Ogunti, RN, BSN, Emergency Services Nursing

Rising Star: Anu Thomas, RN, General Medicine/Oncology-Unit

Community Care: Martia Brown, RN, BSN, Englewood Health Center

Clinical Nursing: Regina Lapcevic, RN, BNS, Adult Cardiology-Clinical

Education and Mentorship: Cheryl D. Eadie, DNP, RN, Senior Instructor

Correctional Health: Augustus Alabi, RN, Cermak Health Services

Patient Care Support: Rosemary Salas, MA, Orthopedics, ACHN

Cook County Health has a longstanding reputation for excellence in **medical research and innovation**, which was on display at this month's **Institutional Research Day**. Physicians across a multitude of specialties highlighted their research projects and winners were selected by a multidisciplinary committee.

Congratulations to the winners!

Dr. Daniel Riggins, Internal Medicine

Dr. Preston Banoub, Surgery

Dr. Viviana Barquet, Surgery

Dr. Teresa Evans, Trauma & Burn

Dr. Dae Yong Park, Internal Medicine

Dr. Maha Elsebaie, Internal Medicine

Dr. Ufuk Vardar, Internal Medicine

Dr. Antonia Nemanich, Emergency Medicine

Dr. Miao Jenny Hua, Internal Medicine

Thank you to the Research Day committee for your time and effort:

Man Hwa Estelle Hu, Librarian

Dr. Steve Aks, Emergency Medicine/Toxicology

Dr. Michael Hoffman, Internal Medicine

Dr. Juleigh Nowinski-Konchak, Preventive Medicine

Dr. Katayoun Rezai, Infectious Disease Medicine

Dr. William Trick, Collaborative Research Unit

Dr. Elena Gonzalez, Dermatology

Dr. Jenny Hua, Preventive Medicine

Dr. Prasanth Lingamaneni, Internal Medicine

Dr. Rochelle Rennie, Family Medicine

Dr. Hafeez Shaka, Internal Medicine

Errick Christian, Emergency Medicine

Activities and Announcements

COVID-19 Update

Cases are continuing to rise throughout the region although hospitalizations remain relatively low.

CCH has administered more than 1 million vaccine doses and is preparing for FDA approval of COVID vaccines for children under 5 which is expected next month. 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](#). A summer promotion is being planned to increase vaccine rates across all populations.

CCH has earned more than 20,000 COVID media hits since the beginning of the pandemic with an advertising value of more than

IMPACT 2023 Focus Areas 1 and 5

Mental Health Awareness

On Thursday, May 19, 2022, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, Cook County Commissioner and CCH Board vice-chair, Cook County Commissioner Bill Lowry and CEO Israel Rocha held a press conference to discuss the County's plan to expand mental health services. Later that evening, Cermak Health Services participated in a virtual forum to discuss the importance of mental health care.

IMPACT 2023 Focus Area 5

Marketing Awards

My Shot Cook County continues to win national awards. The Healthcare Advertising Awards has awarded My Shot Cook County three golds and a silver for the My Shot and Trust Us campaigns, including a gold for total advertising campaign.

Additionally, CountyCare's We've Got You Covered campaign received a bronze in the category of Total Digital Marketing Campaign.

More about the Healthcare Advertising Awards can be found [here](#). HAA received more than 4,400 entries and gold awards were given to 512, silver awards to 320 and bronze to 249.



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 May 19, 2022, CCH's Fresh Truck partnership with the Greater Chicago Food Depository (GCFD) resulted in 388 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 an estimated 42,313 households, representing 139,547 individuals. Most of the individuals benefiting from the Fresh Truck screened positive for food insecurity at a CCH health center visit.

GCFD Fresh Truck Distributions

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

June 2 – **Austin Health Center** - 4800 W. Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60651

June 7 – **North Riverside Health Center** – 1800 S. Harlem Avenue, North Riverside, IL 60546

June 14 – **Cottage Grove Health Center** - 1645 Cottage Grove Avenue, Ford Heights, IL 60411

June 16 – **Englewood Health Center** - 1135 W. 69th Street, Chicago, IL 60621

June 21 – **Robbins Health Center** - 13450 S. Kedzie Avenue, Robbins, IL 60472

CCH Community Advisory Councils

Cook County Health Community Advisory Councils (CAC) include patients, community and religious organizations and serve as an opportunity to promote our services and receive important feedback from various stakeholders. The 2022 second quarter topic presentations include Cardiology, Stroke, Family Planning, and the CountyCare Rewards Program. In addition, updates on Cook County Health, Covid-19 Vaccination and Community Outreach are provided. Each clinic also provides an update on its operations at the meeting.

Upcoming CAC meeting dates, including the 2022 schedule:

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
1135 W. 69th Street, Chicago, IL 60621

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

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

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

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

Community Outreach

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

- June 1 Cook County Health and CountyCare promotion at the **Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation's Health Fair**, 79th and Racine to 79th and May in Chicago.
- June 4 Cook County Health and CountyCare promotion at the **South Side Summer Fest** at Comer Education Campus, Grand Crossing located at 7200 S Ingleside Avenue in Chicago.
- June 11 Cook County Health and CountyCare promotion at the **Apostolic Faith Church's Healing our Village event**, 3823 S. Indiana Avenue in Chicago.
- June 11 Cook County Health and CountyCare promotion at the **Sinai Community Institute and 25th Chicago Police District's 25th District Senior Expo**, 5555 West Grand Avenue in Chicago.
- June 18 Cook County Health and CountyCare promotion at the **Austin Community Juneteenth** sponsored by the West Side Ministers Coalition and will take place at Columbus Park, 5900 W. Adams in Chicago.
- June 18 Cook County Health and CountyCare promotion at the **Homewood-Flossmoor Juneteenth Festival** which is sponsored by the Homewood-Flossmoor School District and will take place at the Homewood-Flossmoor High School, 999 Kedzie Avenue in Flossmoor.
- June 23 CountyCare is hosting its quarterly **Enrollee Advisory Committee (EAC)** which is going to be held virtually at 12:00pm. The EAC is a way to bring 15 CountyCare members together to talk about the plan, what works and what needs improvement and to obtain feedback from the members on their care and other issues.
- June 29 CountyCare is hosting its quarterly **Community Stakeholder Committee (CSC)** which will be held virtually at 8:00am. The CSC is a way to bring 15 community organizations together to make a presentation on the plan, its resources and to obtain feedback on how to reach high-risk populations and to provide better services across Cook County.
- June 30 Cook County Health and CountyCare promotion at **Representative Lamont Robinson's Senior Appreciation** at the Paul G. Stewart Center, 400 E. 41st Street in Chicago.

Legislative Update

Local

- On May 11, CCH, along with other County departments and agencies, appeared before the Cook County Human Relations Committee in response to Commissioner Kevin Morrison's *Proposed Resolution Requesting a Hearing in the Cook County Human Relations Committee to Discuss Violence and Systemic Barriers Against Cook County Transgender Residents*. Chris Balthazar, MA, Project Director from the Department of Psychiatry presented on behalf of CCH.
- On May 11, CCH appeared before the Cook County Health & Hospitals Committee to provide a COVID-19 and Contact Tracing Update. CCH CEO Israel Rocha, CCDPH Co-Leads Dr. Kiran Joshi and Dr. Rachel Rubin presented on behalf of CCH.
- At the May 12 Cook County Board meeting, President Preckwinkle introduced the appointment of Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck to serve as CCDPH Chief Operating Officer. The appointment will be considered by the Legislation and Intergovernmental Affairs Committee at a meeting expected to be scheduled in mid-June. If confirmed by the committee, the appointment will be presented to the County Board for ratification at the June 16 meeting.

Dr. Hasbrouck's professional background includes having worked for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) where he served as Senior Medical Officer in Chicago and later oversaw daily operations for CDC-Guyana, South America. Dr. Hasbrouck also served as Director of the Illinois Department of Public Health from 2012-2015. Most recently, Dr. Hasbrouck was Senior Advisor to the Secretary General for the Council of Healthcare Insurance in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

- On May 20 the Nominating Committee of the Board of Directors of the Cook County Health and Hospitals System (NomCom) met to consider candidates for nomination to the CCH Board of Directors. Four (4) Director terms are scheduled to expire in late fall 2022/early winter 2023 (Gugenheim, Munar, Prendergast, Koetting). Pursuant to County Ordinance, the NomCom is required to submit three (3) candidates for each vacancy to the County Board President for consideration. On May 23 the NomCom submitted ten (10) candidates to President Preckwinkle for consideration.

State

- The Illinois General Assembly adjourned in the early hours of Saturday, April 9. No additional session days have been scheduled, and the legislature is not expected to return to Springfield before the Fall 2022 veto sessions. Veto session dates have not been announced but will likely take place following the November 8 general election. Depending on the outcome of the statewide election, "lame duck" session days may also be scheduled for early 2023, prior to the inauguration of the 103rd General Assembly.
- The General Assembly passed a balanced budget for State Fiscal Year 2023 ([HB900](#)) that includes tax relief for working individuals and families and paying down debts to ensure long-term financial stability for the state. The budget bill appropriates the remaining \$1.12B in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated to Illinois, however, these funds do not need to be spent in FY2023. The bill also includes re-appropriations of capital grants originally authorized in the 2019 capital omnibus.

The Budget Implementation Bill ([HB4700](#)) provides additional details on implementing the FY2023 state budget, including language that creates the Pipeline for the Advancement of the Healthcare (PATH) workforce program, which supports and expands opportunities for individuals enrolled in public community colleges to receive education and credentialing for entry into a healthcare pathway; waives licensure fees for health professionals in the FY2023 fiscal year; and authorizes a 47% increase in community-based substance use disorder treatment and intervention services.

Legislators also passed a Medicaid omnibus bill ([HB4343](#)) that expands Medicaid coverage for low-income, non-citizens 42-54 years of age, adds new providers to the Medicaid program (certified professional midwives, acupuncturists, and certified peer support specialists), and directs HFS to apply for federal approval to implement 12 months of continuous eligibility for adults and allow for more individuals to be eligible for the ex-parte (passive) redetermination process.

Cook County Health had two primary legislative priorities in the Spring 2022 session:

- [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 also builds and strengthens 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. CCH co-led this effort with the Illinois Primary Health Care Association, which represents FQHCs statewide.

Status: HB4645 passed both chambers unanimously with dozens of provider associations, advocates, and individuals in support. The bill awaits signature by the Governor, with an effective date of January 1, 2023. While funding was not included in the FY2023 budget, CCH and our partners will be working to advocate for appropriations to be included in future budgets.

- [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: While SB3695 passed the Senate unanimously without any opposition, the bill was stalled in the House, due to the volume of bills and the shortened timeframe of the session. The House sponsor indicated that she would work with CCH to pass in a future session.

Other bills of interest CCH supported included:

- [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: While this legislation did not pass, authorizing language that provides Medicaid-like coverage to immigrant adults 42-54 years of age was included in the FY2023 budget, with coverage to start July 1, 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.

Status: While these individual bills did not pass, a \$10M appropriation was included in the FY2023 budget to support these efforts, which will be administered by the Illinois Department of Public Health.

Federal

- **FY 2023 Budget and Appropriations** – Congressional committees continue to hold hearings on the President's FY 2023 Budget Request. The House Appropriations Committee's deadlines for Members to submit Community Project Funding Requests has passed and work towards FY 2023 bills is underway, though it is highly unlikely that Congress will be able to finish all twelve annual bills before the start of the fiscal year October 1. One or more continuing resolutions are likely to be required, absent a significant bipartisan agreement on top-level amounts and controversial riders.
- **Health and Mental Health Legislation** – On May 18, the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which has jurisdiction over Medicaid and public health programs, marked up six pieces of bipartisan legislation, and sent

them to the full House for consideration. Of interest to Cook County Health and to the County, is a bill that would ease the Medicaid inmate payment exclusion for eligible juveniles in detention. H.R. 7233, the “Keeping Incarceration Discharges Streamlined for Children and Accommodating Resources in Education Act” or the “KIDS CARES Act” would require state Medicaid plans to provide youth in juvenile detention with mental, behavioral, and physical health services before and after their release from custody. The bill also aims to improve school-based health services by streamlining current administrative processes and improving student access. Repealing or easing the Medicaid inmate payment exclusion has been a long-term goal of CCH, Cook County, and allies such as the National Association of Counties and National Sheriffs’ Association.

At the same markup, the Committee approved H.R. 7666, the “Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Well-being Act.” This package of legislation would reauthorize mental health and substance use disorder programs at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to address substance use disorder (SUD) and improve mental health. Amendments approved at the markup include provisions reflecting H.R. 1351, the “Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment (MAT) Act,” which removes the requirement that practitioners apply for a separate Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) waiver to prescribe medically assisted treatment (e.g., buprenorphine) for SUD.

Other House committees and committees of jurisdiction in the Senate, including the powerful Senate Finance Committee, with jurisdiction over Medicare and Medicaid, are considering bipartisan mental health legislation, and advocates hope that consensus provisions can be passed this year.

- **Biden Administration** – On May 16, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) did not give states official notice that COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) would not expire sixty days later on July 15, 2023, the end of the current PHE. 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. Since the Administration has reaffirmed its commitment to give at least sixty days’ notice before allowing the PHE to end, most observers expect the PHE to be extended to mid-October.

HHS and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have asked the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to let certain entities, including state and local government workers and contractors and managed care plans, to communicate with enrollees by automated phone calls or texts without violating the Telephone Consumer Protection Act, in order to minimize coverage losses after the end of the PHE.

- **COVID Supplemental Appropriation** – The \$10 billion COVID response package continues to be stalled in the Senate, with Republicans demanding votes on amendments to block the Biden Administration from withdrawing Trump-era regulations, known as “Title 42,” used to bar asylum seekers due to public health risks. The Senate package would provide less than half the funding requested by the Administration and is limited to funding for the purchase of testing, vaccines and therapeutics and some preparedness funding for NIH. It did not include funding to replenish the HHS Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) program to reimburse providers for COVID testing, vaccination, and treatment for uninsured individuals, which ran out in early April.
- **Budget Reconciliation Bill (“Build Back Better”)** – Capitol Hill press are reporting that Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Senator Joe Manchin (D-W.V.) have been having informal discussions around advancing a smaller Budget Reconciliation package with some elements of the President’s Build Back Better agenda. No additional details or timelines have been reported.

Meanwhile insurers and other stakeholders are calling on Congress to include an extension of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace subsidies provided by the American Rescue Plan Act. The enhanced subsidies expire on January 1, 2023, and insurers need to be able to set rates this summer for publication in the fall—right before the mid-term elections. These provisions are particularly salient in the states that have not expanded Medicaid under the ACA.