



COOK COUNTY  
HEALTH

# SYSTEM NEWS

May 2023

## Letter from the CEO

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Dear Cook County Health friends and partners,

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Over the last few weeks, we have had a series of events and public outreach to highlight the importance of focusing on one's overall wellness, including mental health.

Across the U.S., the topic of mental health has been thrust into the spotlight recently and, unfortunately, it has come on the heels of several tragic incidents. In health care we have been sounding the alarm about a mental health crisis for many years. We need to destigmatize reaching out for help and increase understanding of what to look for early on. This is particularly important for young people.

The rate of unemployment is higher among U.S. adults who have mental illness (7.4%) compared to those who do not (4.6%). Meanwhile, high school students with significant symptoms of depression are more than twice as likely to drop out compared to their peers, and students aged 6-17 with mental, emotional or behavioral concerns are 3 times more likely to repeat a grade. That's why Cook County Health is working to improve access to care in communities that need it the most.

In February, we announced the recipients of our Building Healthy Communities Grants, funded through Cook County Government's ARPA funding.

Cook County Health and our Cook County Department of Public Health have provided \$16 million in grant funding to support community organizations' mental health, positive youth development and food security programs.

In the first quarter of this grant program, our partners already made great achievements. In all, thanks to this grant funding, more than 43,000 people have received food security support, nearly 1,500 people have benefited from mental health services, and more than 1,200 children and teens have been served in positive youth development programs.



These are significant numbers for the first quarter of work, and most importantly represent real people who are getting the services they need to live healthier lives, not only physically but also mentally and emotionally.

Today, representatives and clients from several organizations joined Cook County leaders to discuss the impact of the grants. You can watch the press conference [here](#).

Cook County Health is proud of the work we are doing to improve mental health in Cook County, offering comprehensive care with a team of experts who are able to connect patients with the resources they need – regardless of their ability to pay.

I hope you are able to share some of the information and services below with your clients and communities as we work together to destigmatize mental health care and increase access for all.

Sincerely,



Israel Rocha, Jr.  
CEO

## Cook County Health Prepared for End of COVID-19 Public Health Emergencies

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While the state and federal COVID-19 public health emergencies (PHEs) expired on May 11, Cook County Health will continue to support its patients, communities, and staff during the transition, as it brings several changes to health-related policies and services.

“I want to thank all the first responders and health care workers who went above and beyond during the pandemic to provide essential, and high-quality health care to our most vulnerable communities,” Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle said. “As we adapt to this post-pandemic era, we remain committed to ensuring access to equitable and compassionate care for residents across the County.”

The PHEs allowed Medicaid members to maintain their health coverage through the pandemic. Now, after three years of continuous coverage, members will need to renew their coverage with the State of Illinois through a process called redetermination. Redetermination resumes this month on a rolling basis and will last through April 2024. Medicaid members will have to complete and return their redetermination paperwork by their individual due date. Members can log in to manage their benefits at [abe.illinois.gov](http://abe.illinois.gov).

To support individuals in this process, Cook County Health has created resources for Medicaid members, health care providers, and community-based organizations in seven languages, available at [cookcountyhealth.org/redetermination](http://cookcountyhealth.org/redetermination). Those with questions can also call Cook County Health’s Financial Assistance line at 312-864-8200 to speak to a financial counselor.

“If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is that an individual’s health, and the health of our family, friends, and neighbors, are integral to a thriving and productive society,” said Cook County Health CEO Israel Rocha. “We are doing all we can to ensure that people have access

to the health care they need, and that they can retain the health benefits for which they are eligible.”

With the end of the PHEs, the cost of COVID-19 vaccinations and tests may no longer be fully covered. Cook County Health has administered more than 1 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine and 440,000 COVID-19 tests and the health system is dedicated to providing vaccinations and tests to all without barriers.

John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital of Cook County and Provident Hospital’s Sengstacke Health Center will continue to offer community COVID-19 vaccinations and tests. To make an appointment, call 833-308-1988.

Patients can also continue to receive tests and vaccinations at Cook County Health **community health centers**. For patients with insurance, vaccinations and tests will be processed through their health plan. For uninsured patients, Cook County Health will continue to provide vaccinations and tests at no cost.

“It is important to note that while the public health emergencies are expiring, COVID is still very much with us,” said Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, Chief Operating Officer of the **Cook County Department of Public Health** (CCDPH). “Hospitalizations and deaths are decreasing, but we must continue our commonsense measures to protect our health and the health of those around us. This includes masking when appropriate, avoiding interactions with individuals who are sick, practicing good hand hygiene, and staying up-to-date on your vaccinations.”

Cook County Health has also updated its masking and visitor policies with the end of the PHEs. Effective May 15, masking is optional for many patients, staff, and visitors. Staff will continue to wear masks when providing direct patient care or when in an occupied patient room. Masks remain required for anyone with flu-like symptoms, visitors in patient rooms, and in high-risk areas in Stroger and Provident Hospitals (e.g. cancer clinic, NICU). Patients may also request that a staff member wear a mask while assisting them.

For COVID-related information, including testing and vaccine info, as well as updates about masking and visitor policies, people can visit our **[COVID-19 information page](#)**.

## FAQs about Cook County Health’s Bridge Clinic

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As part of Mental Health Awareness Month, we are highlighting the work of Cook County Health’s Bridge Clinic.

Cook County Health is proud to offer an **array of services** to help individuals with substance use disorder. Dr. Juleigh Nowinski-Konchak, addiction medicine specialist, answers some questions about Cook County Health’s rapid access Bridge Clinic.

### **What is the Bridge Clinic?**

The Cook County Health Bridge Clinic is a low-barrier entry or re-entry point into substance use disorder care. It is located in the Ruth M. Rostein Core Center, and also works with patients via telehealth. It is open to any Cook County resident seeking substance use disorder care.

### **What kinds of care and services are provided at a Bridge Clinic?**

The care is patient-centered and team-based. A medical provider is available to address substance use disorder needs, including starting medications for addiction treatment. Primary care and psychiatric care services are available directly or via linkage. A recovery coach and community health worker provide critical recovery support services, including motivational enhancement, addressing myths regarding medications for addiction treatment,

helping the patient celebrate early victories such as cutting down on substance use, addressing transportation barriers, and providing warm handoffs to partners and other levels of care, such as residential treatment.

### **How does the Bridge Clinic help people who are in recovery or have substance use disorder?**

Accessing and optimizing health care services can be difficult to navigate, especially if someone is unhoused and without a cell phone, after release from jail, or after a non-fatal overdose. The Bridge Clinic is a stable entry point that patients know is there, will welcome them in as many times as they need, and will provide evidence-based, non-stigmatizing care directly and through partners. Since COVID, the clinic operates in-person and via telemedicine, which extends our reach, capacity and patient satisfaction.

### **What is the goal of the Bridge Clinic?**

The goal is to break down barriers for patients to engage in substance-use disorder (SUD) care. Waitlists, transportation, navigating complex care systems – these issues can derail patients' intentions or prevent them from ever starting their path towards recovery. The bridge clinic aims to break this down, meet patients where they are at, link them to SUD care, harm reduction and support services.

[Click here](#) for details about accessing care through the CCH Bridge Clinic.

## **Cook County Health Hosts Virtual Discussion on Mental Health**

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Cook County Health held a Facebook Live this month to discuss the importance of mental health care. Experts in psychiatry, social work and family medicine answered questions about asking for help, resources that the hospital can help patients connect with, and more.

Click [here to watch](#).

## **The Housing Authority of Cook County and Cook County Health partner to place behavioral health care coordinators in public housing communities throughout suburban Cook County**

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On May 16, 2023, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle announced that, thanks to a partnership with Cook County Health (CCH), the Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC) has added behavioral health care coordinators to 18 HACC public housing communities. Thanks to federal funding provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), HACC behavioral health care coordinators will play a proactive role in ensuring that Housing Authority residents receive resources that foster mental health, physical health, and will also provide referrals to other healthcare resources when necessary. This includes case management, therapy/counseling, housing stability support and workforce development.

[Click here](#) to learn more.



## Cook County Leaders Discuss Mental Health Services

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Cook County Health CEO Israel Rocha joined Cook County leaders to discuss resources and the mental health challenges in the county coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more [here](#).

## Cook County Health is Hiring

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## Provident Nursing Job Fair

**SIGNING BONUS**  
For  
Select Positions!

**When:**  
**Tuesday,  
June 6<sup>th</sup>**  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM CST

**Where:**  
**PROVIDENT HOSPITAL OF  
COOK COUNTY**  
500 E 51<sup>st</sup> STREET  
CHICAGO, IL 60615  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor

- Job Details**
- Competitive salaries!
  - Hiring for Registered Nurses:
    - Intensive Care Unit**
      - \*Clinical Nurse I
    - Emergency Room**
      - \*Clinical Nurse I
    - Perioperative**
      - \*Certified Surgical Technologist
  - Various shifts available at Provident Hospital of Cook County

- Interviewing**
- Must apply for each hiring fair job posting you wish to be considered for **and** attend the fair.
  - Qualified candidates are interviewed on-site on a **first come - first served** basis.
  - Interviewees selected for hire receive same day contingent offers on a **first come - first served** basis while vacancies remain.
  - Please bring your resume.

Questions? Call **312-864-0430**.

**MUST SUBMIT AN ONLINE APPLICATION TO BE CONSIDERED!**

**APPLY TODAY**  
[cookcountyhealth.org/join-our-team/](http://cookcountyhealth.org/join-our-team/)

**COOK COUNTY HEALTH**  
cookcountyhealth.org

**ADDITIONAL PARKING:** Candidates can park at the Cook County Provident Hospital parking garage located at 505 South Forestville Ave (behind Provident Hospital) for \$5.00. Handicapped parking is also available at the front of the hospital for free. When you arrive, please look for Job Fair signage and CCH staff.



## Nursing Job Fair

**\*SIGNING BONUS**  
for  
Select Positions!

**When:**  
**Thursday,  
June 8<sup>th</sup>**  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM CST

**Where:**  
**COOK COUNTY HEALTH  
PROFESSIONAL BUILDING**  
1950 WEST POLK STREET  
5<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CHICAGO, IL 60612

- Job Details**
- Competitive salaries!
  - Hiring for:
    - Main Operating Room**
      - \*Clinical Nurse I (RN)
      - \*Certified Surgical Technologist
      - OR Schedule Board Coordinator
      - Nurse Coordinator II (Operating Rooms / Post Anesthesiology Recovery Administration)
    - Ambulatory Procedures Unit – Endoscopy**
      - \*Clinical Nurse I (RN)
    - Med Surg**
      - \*Clinical Nurse I (RN) **<New Grads Welcome!**
      - \*Patient Care Support Nurse
      - Telemetry Monitor Technician
  - Various shifts available at John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County.

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**COOK COUNTY HEALTH**  
cookcountyhealth.org

**ADDITIONAL PARKING:** Candidates can park at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center garage located at 1100 S. Hamilton for \$2.00 and may use the CCH Employee Shuttle service to 1900 W. Polk St. (across from Professional Building driveway) free of charge. The shuttle runs every 15 – 20 minutes. When you arrive, please look for Job Fair signage and CCH staff.



## Pharmacy Job Fair

**SIGNING BONUS**  
for  
Select Positions!

**When:**  
**Thursday,  
June 8<sup>th</sup>**  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM CST

**Where:**  
**COOK COUNTY HEALTH  
PROFESSIONAL BUILDING**  
1950 WEST POLK STREET  
5<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CHICAGO, IL 60612

- Job Details**
- Competitive salaries!
  - Hiring for:
    - Pharmacy Technician**
  - Various shifts available at John H. Stroger, Jr., Provident, Central Fill (Mail order), and Cermak Health Services (Corrections Facility) of Cook County.

- Interviewing**
- Must apply for each hiring fair job posting you wish to be considered for **and** attend the fair.
  - Qualified candidates are interviewed on-site on a **first come - first served** basis.
  - Interviewees selected for hire receive same day contingent offers on a **first come - first served** basis while vacancies remain.
  - Please bring your resume.

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## Cook County Health in the News

**WBEZ91.5**

**Daily Herald**  
Suburban Chicago's Information Source





**WBEZ:** [Cook County Health is bracing for a financial storm to pay for migrants' health care](#)

**Daily Herald:** [Experts warn of costlier COVID care as emergency declaration ends](#)

**Fox 32 Chicago:** [Cook County doctor weighs in on end of Covid-19 public health emergency](#)

**Telemundo Chicago:** [Reinscripción a Medicaid: beneficios de salud para latinos e inmigrantes](#)

**Chicago Sun-Times:** [Spread the word on how to renew Medicaid coverage](#)

**WTTW Chicago:** [700,000 Illinoisans at Risk of Losing Medicaid Coverage: How to Prepare for Eligibility Checks, Navigate Health Care Resources](#)

**NBC 5 Chicago:** [Dog Attack Survivor Reunites With Trauma Team Who Saved Her](#)

**CBS News:** [Cook County Health to receive \\$900,000 to help premature babies at Stroger Hospital](#)

**ABC 7 Chicago:** [Tips for Mental Health Awareness Month from Cook County Health doctor](#)



**Cook County  
Health is hiring!**

To learn more about  
a career with CCH,  
click here!



**COOK COUNTY  
HEALTH**

Visit our website at [cookcountyhealth.org](http://cookcountyhealth.org)

If you would like to invite a representative from CCH to attend a community event, please send an email to [events@cookcountyhhs.org](mailto:events@cookcountyhhs.org).

To provide feedback on CCH Community News, update your contact information, or unsubscribe, please email Marcelino Garcia, Director of Community Affairs,

at [mgarcia6@cookcountyhhs.org](mailto:mgarcia6@cookcountyhhs.org).

Cook County Health | 1950 West Polk Street, Chicago, IL 60612

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