



# SYSTEM NEWS

**November 2019**

## Letter from the CEO

Dear Cook County Health Friends and Partners,

During the recent budget hearings, I discussed my concerns about the rising rate of charity care that is not matched by new revenue sources being taken on by Cook County Health.

While caring for the uninsured has always been part of our historical mission, the amount of charity care that CCH provides, without a new revenue source, may be reaching a breaking point. In 2020, it's estimated that we will provide nearly \$409 million worth of charity care.

We cannot continue on this trajectory.

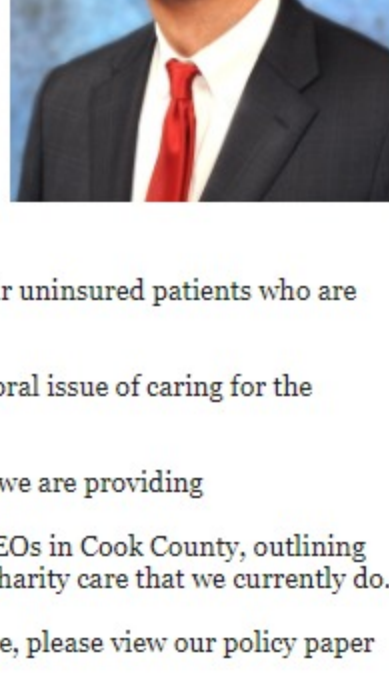
At the end of October, I spoke with the City Club of Chicago about my concerns. You can watch the video [here](#), but here are some of the issues I highlighted:

- How other health care organizations increasingly send us their uninsured patients who are undergoing expensive treatments
- Ways other hospitals in Cook County can contribute to the moral issue of caring for the uninsured
- Work CCH is doing to find money to support the charity care we are providing

Following the talk at City Club, I sent a letter to the 65 hospital CEOs in Cook County, outlining how CCH cannot continue to bear the disproportionate share of charity care that we currently do.

To better understand the work we are doing regarding charity care, please view our policy paper [here](#).

Sincerely,  
Dr. Jay Shannon, CEO, Cook County Health

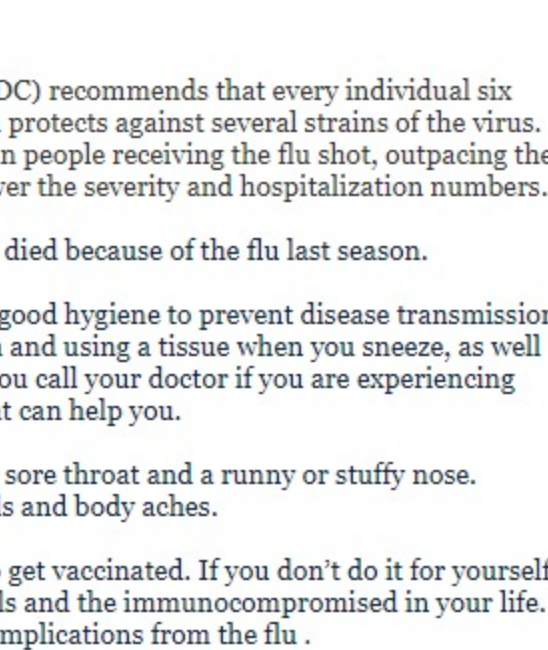
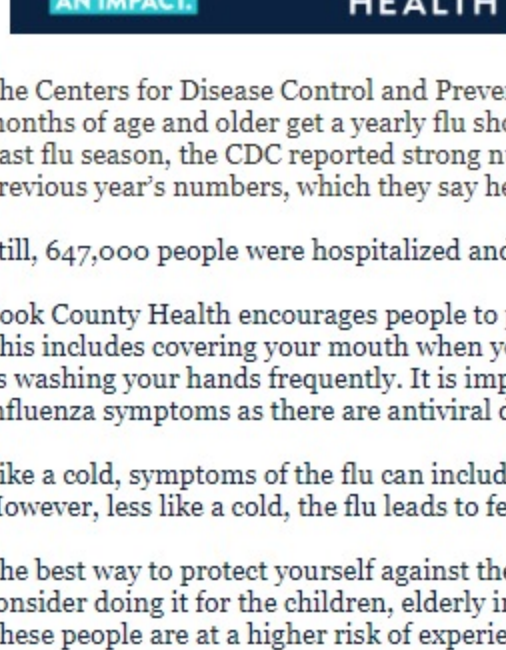


## Cook County Health Board Receives High Marks for Transparency from Civic Organization

City Bureau, a nonprofit civic journalism lab recently released its [Open Government Report Card](#) after analyzing more than 100 government agencies that serve the Chicago area about how they conduct public meetings.

The Cook County Health Board was one of only four organizations to receive an 'A' grade. Organizations were graded on transparency and accessibility to public meetings.

## Cook County Health Urges Residents to Get the Flu Shot



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that every individual six months of age and older get a yearly flu shot, which protects against several strains of the virus. Last flu season, the CDC reported strong numbers in people receiving the flu shot, outpacing the previous year's numbers, which they say helped lower the severity and hospitalization numbers.

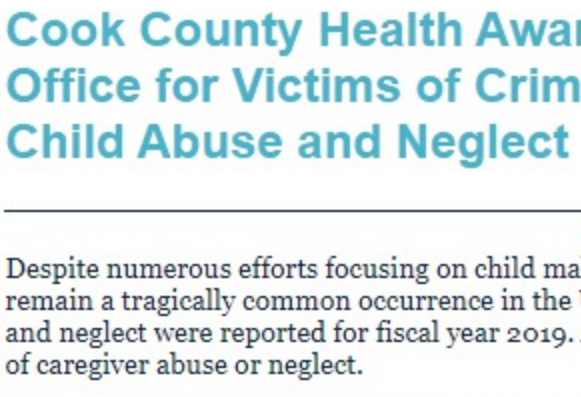
Still, 647,000 people were hospitalized and 36,400 died because of the flu last season.

Cook County Health encourages people to practice good hygiene to prevent disease transmission. This includes covering your mouth when you cough and using a tissue when you sneeze, as well as washing your hands frequently. It is important you call your doctor if you are experiencing influenza symptoms as there are antiviral drugs that can help you.

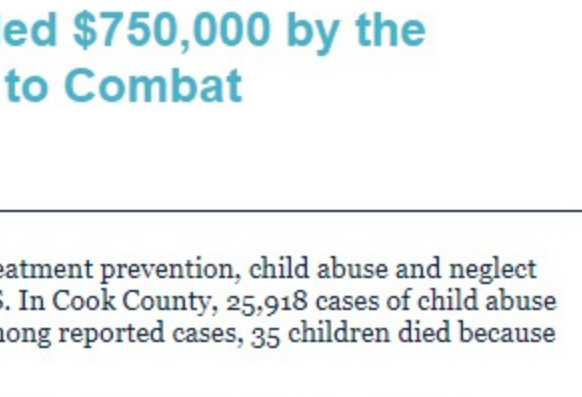
Like a cold, symptoms of the flu can include cough, sore throat and a runny or stuffy nose. However, less like a cold, the flu leads to fever, chills and body aches.

The best way to protect yourself against the flu is to get vaccinated. If you don't do it for yourself, consider doing it for the children, elderly individuals and the immunocompromised in your life. These people are at a higher risk of experiencing complications from the flu.

## Cook County Health Holds Trauma Forums to Discuss Work and Research



Dr. Faran Bokhari discusses the work of the Cook County Health trauma unit.



Justin Mis, trauma program coordinator, teaches two attendees the proper use of a tourniquet during a Stop the Bleed® training.

Cook County Health is proud to have the oldest comprehensive trauma unit in the country. For more than 50 years, CCH's trauma unit has cared for thousands of patients when they needed the highest levels of care.

Last month, CCH held community forums at the Douglas Park Fieldhouse and Kennedy-King College to share the daily work of the trauma unit, discuss summer violence statistics and talk about groundbreaking research.

To watch the forum presented at Kennedy-King College, click [here](#). The video includes presentations on two of our upcoming research trials, Emergency Preservation and Resuscitation and the Prehospital Airway Control Trial.

CCH's trauma team also led a [Stop the Bleed®](#) training. Stop the Bleed® is a nationwide campaign that encourages bystanders to become trained, equipped, and empowered to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives.

## Cook County Health Awarded \$750,000 by the Office for Victims of Crime to Combat Child Abuse and Neglect

Despite numerous efforts focusing on child maltreatment prevention, child abuse and neglect remain a tragically common occurrence in the U.S. In Cook County, 25,918 cases of child abuse and neglect were reported for fiscal year 2019. Among reported cases, 35 children died because of caregiver abuse or neglect.

CCH recognizes the urgency of this issue and has been awarded \$750,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime to closely study the problem. The grant monies will be dispersed over three years and will be used to put a strategic plan in place to reduce child fatalities and recurring injuries.

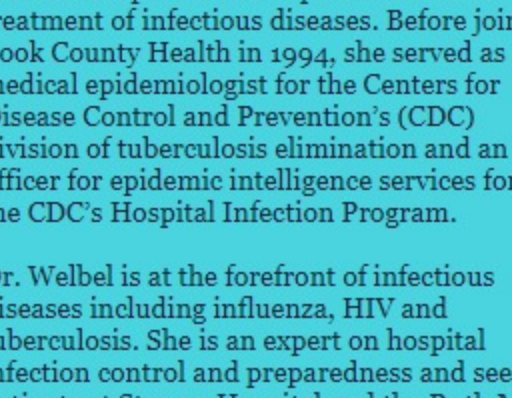
Together with the Chicago Children's Advocacy Center, CCH will bring together other critical stakeholders to form the Collaboration of Helpers Lowering Deaths of Children (Project CHILDO). Project CHILDO is aimed at reducing the incidence of child maltreatment across three Illinois counties, namely, Cook, Peoria and Vermillion.

"We now know child maltreatment leaves a lasting impact on both the physical and psychological health of victims for decades to come; these 'adverse childhood experiences' can even influence the health and well-being of future generations through our genes," said Dr. Marjorie Fajara, chair of child and family wellness for Cook County Health. "There is also a clear connection between child maltreatment and community violence. What we have is a complex public health problem that requires a coordinated, collaborative response by every agency and professional that comes into contact with vulnerable children and their families."

Using a public health model, the Project CHILDO collaborative will address the problem using effective primary prevention strategies through parenting education, a home visiting nurse program and referring families to a medical home. Innovative strategies using a simulation laboratory, regional unit-based multidisciplinary teams and telehealth technology will also be utilized to improve the assessment of information gathered during investigations.

## Cook County Health Celebrates Breast Cancer Survivors at Awareness Event

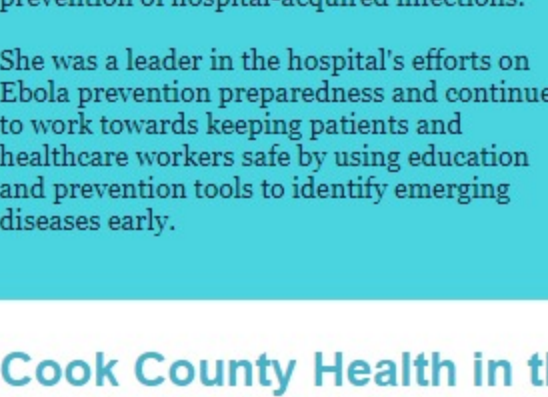
On October 18, Cook County Health hosted more than 150 women for its 12th annual breast cancer awareness event. Survivors and CCH patients currently undergoing treatment gathered together for music, dance and educational panels led by patients and clinicians.



Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle spoke about the comprehensive breast cancer services that Cook County Health provides.



Dr. Seimante Tamkus (r), chair of breast oncology, and Dr. Deimante Tamkus (l) were among the CCH providers that attended.



More than 150 women attended CCH's 12<sup>th</sup> annual breast cancer awareness event.



Women were encouraged to write messages of support on pink petals.

### Physician Bio:

## Dr. Sharon Welbel, System Director of Healthcare Epidemiology and Infection Control

Dr. Welbel is the director of hospital epidemiology and infection control and has extensive expertise in the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases. Before joining Cook County Health in 1994, she served as a medical epidemiologist for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) division of tuberculosis elimination and an officer for epidemic intelligence services for the CDC's Hospital Infection Program.

Dr. Welbel is at the forefront of infectious diseases including influenza, HIV and tuberculosis. She is an expert on hospital infection control and preparedness and sees patients at Stroger Hospital and the Ruth M. Rothstein CORE Center.

Dr. Welbel has been, and continues to be, the principal investigator of a number of studies on tuberculosis prevention and diagnosis and prevention of hospital-acquired infections.

She was a leader in the hospital's efforts on Ebola prevention preparedness and continues to work towards keeping patients and healthcare workers safe by using education and prevention tools to identify emerging diseases early.



## Cook County Health in the News



**Cook County Jail Program Helping Prevent Opioid Overdose Deaths By Providing Released Inmates With Naloxone**



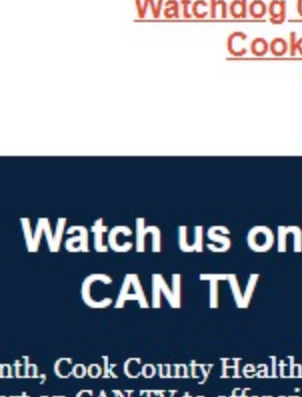
**Get a flu shot, doctors say, warning that this could be a severe season**



**DJ Casper, known for 'Cha Cha Slide,' celebrates beating cancer**



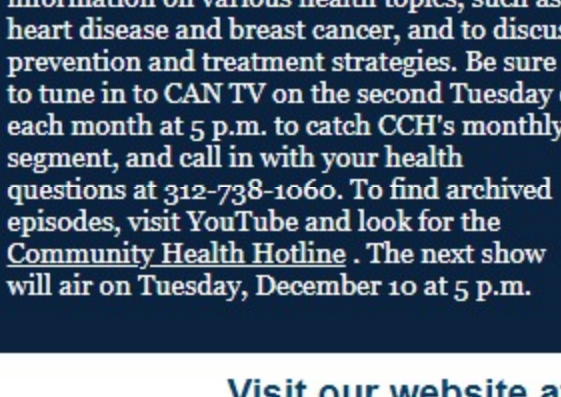
**Plans for Provident Hospital approved by state health board**



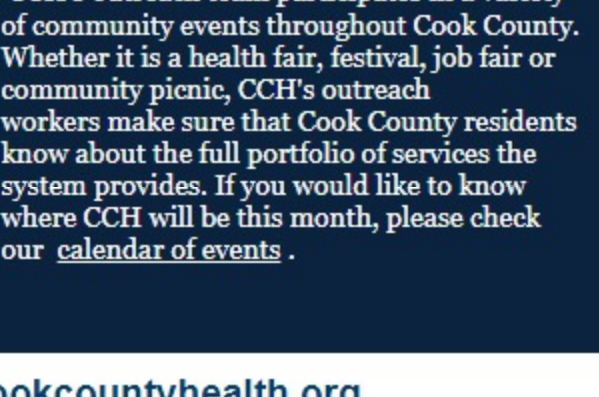
**Breast Cancer Survivor Gala Brings Together Hope, Community: 'You Are Not Alone'**



**Cook County Health CEO Calls on Other Hospitals to Increase Charity Care**



**Illinois leaders demand answers about ambulance diversion by hospitals: 'Something has to be done.'**



**11 updates on payer-provider relationships**

## WBEZ 91.5

**Watchdog Calls For More Transparency From Cook County's Inspector General**

**Watch us on CAN TV**

**Cook County Health in the Community: Upcoming Events**

Every month, Cook County Health features a guest expert on CAN TV to offer viewers information on various health topics, such as heart disease and breast cancer, and to discuss prevention and treatment strategies. Be sure to tune in to CAN TV on the second Tuesday of each month at 5 p.m. to catch CCH's monthly segment, and call in with your health questions at 312-738-1060. To find archived episodes, visit YouTube and look for the [Community Health Hotline](#). The next show will air on Tuesday, December 10 at 5 p.m.

CCH's outreach team participates in a variety of community events throughout Cook County. Whether it is a health fair, festival, job fair or community picnic, CCH's outreach workers make sure that Cook County residents know about the full portfolio of services the system provides. If you would like to know where CCH will be this month, please check our [calendar of events](#).

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 [mngarcia6@cookcountyhhs.org](mailto:mngarcia6@cookcountyhhs.org).