

June 2021 Letter from the CEO

PRIDE SPECIAL EDITION



As you know, Cook County Health is committed to to ensuring equal access to care for anyone who needs it, regardless of race,

Dear Cook County Health friends and partners,

immigration or insurance status, and gender or sexual identity. During Pride Month, as we approach the celebration of the 1969 Stonewall Uprising, we embrace this time to acknowledge the accomplishments and support the rights of LGBTQ+

individuals. It is especially critical for us as a health care organization to reflect on where we have been and how we can continue to improve the care our LGBTQ+ patients receive. This includes addressing the barriers that keep them from seeking out health care. This month, we are going to begin distributing gender pronoun buttons to our patients and staff. The buttons let others know how an individual would like to be identified and is one way we can build gender inclusivity

throughout our system. For too long, members of the LGBTQ+ community have faced barriers to health care and have been marginalized or disenfranchised when they do seek care. By making these buttons available to all within CCH, we hope to cultivate a culture that is welcoming and affirming to LGBTQ+ individuals. Our staff is dedicated to enhancing the representation of LGBTQ+ voices in our health system. One example of this dedication is a group of emergency department residents who developed a team to support minority patients and staff, who you will read more about below.

on the front lines of caring for patients impacted by HIV/AIDS, opening one of the first HIV clinics in the Midwest. Seeing the need for multidisciplinary care for patients with HIV/AIDS,

CCH and Rush University Medical Center opened the Ruth M. Rothstein CORE Center in 1998. More than 20 years later, the CORE Center has grown into one of the largest HIV care centers in the Midwest and our HIV services have expanded through the Cook County HIV Integrated Programs (CCHIP), which includes Austin CBC Initiative, South Suburban HIV/AIDS Regional Clinics (SSHARC), the CORE Center and Provident Hospital.

services, prevention and education programs, and opportunities to participate in research. CCHIP continues to expand initiatives to routinize and optimize screening for STIs, improve access to PreP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) and linking and re-engaging people living with HIV to care, working to decrease stigma and putting services and supports in place to help patients stay retained in care and achieve viral suppression.

The CORE Center uses a medical home model to offer patients all the services they need under one roof. Services include primary and specialty medical care, dental care, social and support

Health recently named Shannon Andrews as our inaugural Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer. Read more about Ms. Andrews along with other great stories below. Sincerely,

Equity and Inclusion Officer

organization.

and available to every patient and every care team member. Ms. Andrews will work with CCH leadership to develop and implement programs that enhance diversity and demonstrate proven results, creating a positive care environment for patients and a positive work environment for CCH employees. She will lead efforts to build on the hospital's dedication to the communities it serves and ensure increased

Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer.

serving as the Chief Procurement Officer for the City of Chicago where she was responsible for purchasing goods and services, expanding MBE/WBE activities and opportunities and implementing strategies to streamline, standardize and improve procurement cycle times. Ms. Andrews holds a Bachelor of Arts in English from Hampton University. She is a member of

Shannon Andrews has joined Cook County Health as our inaugural

change by advocating for diversity, equity and inclusion across the

In this new role, Ms. Andrews will help develop a system and strategies to ensure that Cook County Health's culture and programs are open

accomplishments and commitment to equity. LGBTQ+ Care and Inclusivity in Cook County Health **Primary Care**

How do Cook County Health clinics work to ensure LGBTQ+ patients, particularly transgender patients, feel comfortable when they come in the doors? Caring for patients who identify in any of the LGBTQ+ categories is an essential component of our mission, and a source of pride for our clinical staff. At CCH, we expanded patient options for

records include a patient's preference for verbal expression of their name. Our staff are also more routinely adding their preference in their signature line for communication. We will soon have buttons that patients and staff alike can wear to signal their pronouns. The organization's intention to respect our patients' preferences is a clear and

Are there specific health concerns that LGBTQ+ patients face? Every patient is unique and deserves to have a personalized health care plan. Sexuality, reproductive health and hopes or plans for the future are common themes we address with many of our patients. Caring for patients in a comprehensive manner works best when we focus on a

We not only stand in solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community, we are here to fight for equity and address the injustices our patients suffer. Everyone needs a primary care doctor who knows them and cares for and cares about them; especially for those suffering from or at-risk for adverse health experiences.

Inclusivity The Cook County Department of Emergency Medicine is working to improve experiences for patients and staff. Dr. Ashlea Winfield is the Chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and Assistant Program Director in the

Held focus groups with LGBTQ+ residents to explore ways to promote a more inclusive

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Developed a lecture series and simulation patient scenario, "Caring for the Transgender Patient or Non-Binary Patient in the Emergency Department" in conjunction with the Department's Social Emergency Medicine Committee. Created the Diversity Externship Scholarship for fourth-year medical students that supports ethnic, racial, sexual and gender minorities

our LGBTQ+ patients, why we as health care workers often contribute to conditions that make this population less likely to seek care, and how we can fix that," Dr. Winfield said. "We also have to be intentional about promoting an environment of safety for LGBTQ+ patients and staff. As a department we are working to do this all year round, not just during Pride month."

Department of Emergency Medicine. She and the committee have worked towards promoting diversity within the Cook

pronouns and bias to faculty

- the LGBTQ+ community as a means of acknowledging the diversity of the LGBTQ+ community and the significant disparities and potential barriers to health care that can lead to poor
- This Pride Month, we recognize the valuable contributions of and stand in solidarity with LGBTQ+ Americans in their ongoing struggle against discrimination and injustice. Research suggests that LGBTQ+ individuals face higher rates of injuries, illnesses and

 Elderly LGBT individuals face additional barriers to health because of isolation and a lack of social services and culturally competent providers. LGBT populations have higher rates of tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use. We reaffirm our support of policies that promote equality for all people, including

LGBTQ+ youth and adults, in workplaces, health care, housing, religious organizations, marriage, and all aspects of life. We vigorously denounce discrimination in any form -<u>racism</u>, sexism, and on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity – as despicable

Virtual HIV Awareness Event with Cook County Commissioner Frank Aguilar

Join Cook County Health, other community organizations, and Cook County Commissioner Frank Aguilar for a virtual HIV Awareness Event on Tuesday, June 29 (English) and Wednesday,

June 30 (Spanish) at 6:30 p.m. for a discussion on the issues facing patients with HIV.

Re-imagining HIV Testing and PrEP Services During COVID-19 Cook County HIV Integrated Programs (CCHIP) is proud of its work as the Midwest's leader in HIV/AIDS care. COVID-19 has required us to re-think how to effectively and safely administer HIV testing and PrEP services and provide HIV/AIDS education for those who need it. While COVID-19 has grabbed much of the public's attention, the need for HIV testing and PrEP

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- Here is what Cook County Health's vaccine lead and infectious disease physician, Dr. Gregory There is still limited data about whether people living with HIV are at a greater risk of acquiring COVID-19. However, we do know that people with underlying medical conditions such as obesity, diabetes or those who have a smoking history are at an increased risk of getting a more

CCHIP illustrates their mission getting to zero HIV transmissions by promoting inclusivity within the LGBTQ+ community. We're proud to honor the advancements among our LGBTQ

We are reimagining our efforts to best deliver the needed care but will continue to target the We have joined up with the Cook County Health/Cook County Department of Public Health mobile COVID-19 testing units to provide HIV testing and PrEP services at certain We are partnering with other organizations that are administering COVID testing and

EVENTO VIRTUAL DE CONCIENTIZACIÓN SOBRE EL VIH.

6.30.21 6:30pm 8:00

El Comisionado Aguilar, el Departamento de Salud del Condado de Cook y organizaciones comunitarias del Distrito 16 los invitan a participar en una conversación sobre el VIH.

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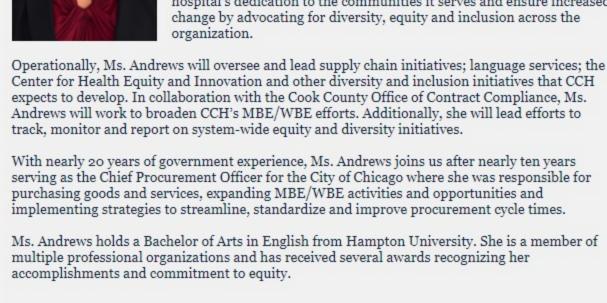
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Visit our website at <u>cookcountyhealth.org</u> If you would like to invite a representative from CCH to attend a community event, please send an email to events@cookcountyhhs.org.

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.

As we continue to look at ways to improve care for LGBTQ+ patients, we note the improvements in care for HIV and AIDS patients. This month marks 40 years since the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported the first cases of what would later be known as AIDS. CCH was

I am thrilled to announce that as part of our commitment to equity and inclusion, Cook County Israel Rocha, Jr. Shannon Andrews Named Cook County Health Chief





Q&A with Dr. Mark Loafman, Chair of Community and Family Medicine at Cook County Health

gender in the health record many years ago. Options for gender identity at the first contact with our staff, and at any point thereafter, include transgender, unspecified or unknown in addition to male and female. We also conduct training at staff orientation for how to communicate with

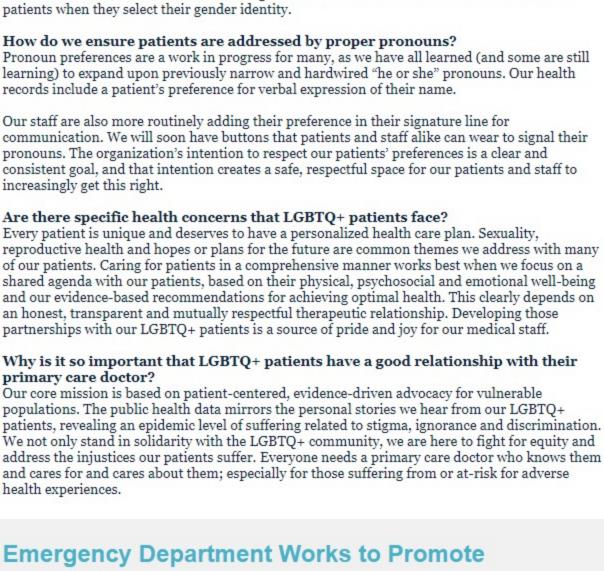
County Health emergency residency program and to foster inclusivity for racial, ethnic, sexual, and gender minorities. Among the initiatives to promote a more diverse and inclusive environment within the Department of Emergency Medicine, staff: Presented a lecture on gender

 Distributed pronoun buttons and shirts for emergency department staff Along with efforts to ensure minority patients, including LGBTQ+ patients, feel safe and comfortable in the CCH Emergency Departments, the group strives to foster an inclusive space for staff and to recruit underrepresented minorities in medicine. "We have to be intentional at CCH about discussing disparate health outcomes as they relate to

and a significant threat to the health of the public that must be addressed. Read CCDPH's LGBTQ+ statement <u>here</u>. Cook County HIV Integrated Programs to Sponsor Chicago Urban Pride

As part of our efforts:





Cook County Health Working to Remove Further

 Transgender individuals have a high prevalence of victimization, mental health issues, and suicide and are less likely to have health insurance than heterosexual or LGB individuals.

CCHIP will be joining Urban Pride to offer PrEP outreach services including HIV testing, COVID-19 testing, condom distribution, and

other CCHIP services at the Chicago Urban Pride Picnic on Sunday, June 27 at Jackson Park (Groves 19A & 19B, 6300 E. Hayes Dr.,

Commissioner Aguilar, Cook County Health and our 16th District

Partners invite you to join us in a conversation about HIV. He will touch on Hit Awareness, Health Equits, Prevention, Testing, & Tre Come and listen to health care providers and people touched by this di

Chicago) from noon to 8 p.m.

Pride Month

Barriers for LGBTQ+ Patients, Staff In recognition of 2021 Pride Month, Cook County Health is raising awareness about the importance of gender pronouns in health care. The health system will roll out the use of gender pronoun buttons as part of a larger initiative to ensure inclusivity and proper identification for staff and patients. Cook County Health supports efforts by the State of Illinois and Cook County Board of Commissioners to raise awareness and accountability in routine health care data collection for outcomes for patients. We are working to finalize CCH's compliance with the specifics of the legislation as well as looking at ways to enhance our service delivery to the LGBTQ+ community. From Cook County Department of Public Health: Staying Healthy During Pride Month and Beyond

deaths linked to years of societal stigma, discrimination, and denial of civil and human rights. According to Healthy People 2020, LGBT youth are 2 to 3 times more likely to attempt suicide, and are more likely to be homeless. Lesbians are less likely to get preventive services for cancer. Lesbians and bisexual females are more likely to be overweight or obese.

Cook County HIV Integrated Programs (CCHIP) is a proud sponsor of this year's Chicago Urban Pride. Urban Pride Chicago Week was founded in 1991. The celebration is designed to reflect the legacy and continuing accomplishments by people of color in the LGBTQ+ communities.

providing HIV testing and PrEP services as well. We will be piloting self-administered HIV testing later this fall, thanks in part to a donation from OraSure. Should people living with HIV get the COVID-19 vaccine? Huhn, has to say: severe case of COVID-19. This could include people with a compromised immune system like

friends, family, and colleagues this month during Pride celebrations. We stand together in greater understanding and unity.

Pride flags to patients.

services remains great and is especially urgent right now. south and west sides of the city, which have the greatest need.

patients with HIV, especially those not undergoing treatment. Some of the COVID-19 vaccines studies did include participants living with HIV, and the recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is that people living with HIV should get the COVID-19 vaccine. Cook County Health follows this practice. This includes all people living with HIV no matter their CD4 cell count or viral load. Patients who are not under current treatment should also get vaccinated. Bottom line, we encourage you to get vaccinated to protect yourself and your communities against COVID-19. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with your provider. Cook County HIV Integrated Programs Celebrates This month, Cook County HIV Integrated Programs (CCHIP) sites are handing out LGBTQ+

raising awareness of the important impact LGBTQ individuals have made historically within our communities often in the face of stigma, racism, and prejudice to overcome and achieve toward uth M. Rothstein