



## Director's Message

Dear OC Health Care Agency  
(HCA) Team,

**May is Mental Health Matters Month!** Our mental health deserves the same attention as our physical health but is far too often overlooked or ignored. The month of May presents us yet another opportunity to support our mental health and that of our loved ones, coworkers and community. This year's campaign theme is "Take Action for Mental Health."

Research shows that gratitude can help reduce stress and improve our physical and mental health. To explore how gratitude can lead to an enhanced sense of our mental well-being, I encourage you to participate in our "Visual Expressions of Gratitude"

... continued on page 3

## Peer-to-Peer

# Arlene Marten

Contributor: **Julia Mayuga**, Communications Intern

"The County of Orange (County) runs on the energy and efforts of many dedicated and loyal staff, all striving for the same mission. Even though it's hard to leave, I'm happy knowing the OC Health Care Agency (HCA) is in good hands, and I want to thank everyone for all they do every day." With those words **Arlene Marten**, Public Health Nurse III in Public Health Services, said goodbye, retiring after a 25 year career with the County. Several of her colleagues had nominated Arlene for the Peer-to-Peer recognition. "Thank you very much for this," said Arlene, "what an honor and kind gesture to end my service."

Arlene worked ten years as a nurse before joining the County. During her career with the HCA she worked primarily as a Field Nurse directly serving the vulnerable and underserved populations in their homes. "She made a wonderful impact on her clients and many continued to send her updates on how their families were doing," said one HCA

colleague. Arlene's coworkers said she taught and implemented new ways to change programs in a positive manner. She sponsored families during the holidays, guided families on how to take care of newborns, and supported clients through accessing care, often working on her own time.

... continued on page 3



## FEATURED ARTICLES

Mental Health Month.....	4
Medal of Valor Nominations ....	6
Emergency Medical Services Week.....	10
Nurses Month.....	12

## Director's Message

*continued from page 1*

contest by clicking [here](#). Please be on the lookout this month for more information from **Dr. Veronica Kelley**, Chief of Mental Health and Recovery Services, on ways we can actively support mental health.

This month, we also celebrate **National Nurses Month** and **Nurses Week (May 6-12)**. All of our nurses here at the HCA serve a variety of populations, helping to maximize population health and remove barriers that prevent these populations from getting the health care they need. This month, we say thank you to our nurses, who truly do make a difference for the community we serve. Learn more about Nurses Month at [nursesmonth.org](https://nursesmonth.org).

**HEALTH MATTERS:** The month of May is also an opportunity to recognize several additional health observances, including:

- **Emergency Medical Services Week (May 15-21):** This year marks the 47th anniversary of National Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Week. Orange County EMS (OCEMS) includes dedicated physicians, nurses, paramedics, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, law enforcement officers, lifeguards, communications personnel, emergency managers and educators. Thank you to our OCEMS community for ensuring direct access to quality emergency care to improve survival and recovery of those who experience sudden illness – your service is tremendously vital to our community.
- **Water Safety Month:** Drowning is the leading cause of accidental death for kids under five in Orange County. The Orange County Drowning Prevention Task Force, established in August 2015 to develop recommendations on methods and strategies to reduce drowning incidents and fatalities in Orange County, raises awareness on the issue of drowning and reminds parents and caregivers that it is preventable. Our Agency is a member of the OC Drowning Prevention Task Force and proudly supports May as Water Safety Month and May 21st as Water Safety Day. Click [here](#) to find a Water Safety Day event near you.

- **Hepatitis Awareness Month:** Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver. Did you know that there are several different viruses that can cause hepatitis? The most common types are hepatitis A, B and C. About 66% of people with hepatitis B are unaware of their infection and about 40% of people living with hepatitis C do not know they are infected. Take time this month to learn more about viral hepatitis [here](#).
- **Stroke Awareness Month:** Stroke is a leading cause of death in the country and causes more serious long-term disabilities than any other disease. Nearly three-quarters of all strokes occur in people over age 65 and the risk of having a stroke more than doubles each decade after age 55. Do you know the signs and symptoms of a stroke? Click [here](#) to test your knowledge and learn the correct ways to spot a stroke and respond quickly.
- **Healthy Vision Month:** According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people with vision problems are more likely than those with good vision to have diabetes, poor hearing, heart problems, high blood pressure, lower back pain and strokes, as well as have increased risk for falls, injury and depression. The month of May is a reminder for us to make it a priority to take care of our eyes by getting a comprehensive dilated eye exam to check for common eye problems. Learn more [here](#).

**CULTURE MATTERS:** This month, we recognize the following cultural observances:

- **Jewish American Heritage Month:** May was first proclaimed as Jewish American Heritage Month back in 2006 by President George W. Bush. Much of our American culture, history and achievements have been impacted by contributions from the Jewish American community. To my Jewish American colleagues, I celebrate you. Please take a moment to learn about the history and influence of the Jewish American experience [here](#).
- **Asian American & Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month:** Asian American and Pacific Islander refers to cultures across the entire Asian

## Peer-to-Peer

*continued from page 1*

"I always wanted to be a nurse 'to help people.' For 35 years, I have been able to do just that. Best of all, I never had two days that were ever the same," said Arlene. "It may sound corny but there is nothing more rewarding than seeing your efforts pay off in someone else's life."

Her style impacted her colleagues as well who gave Arlene the nickname "Sunshine." As coworkers put it, "For all her knowledge, skills and attributes, the most amazing gift is Arlene's ability to be a caring and supportive leader for her team. She brings the sunshine to work and makes your day brighter. Her sense of humor and supportive nature especially during a gloomy time, all made the days brighter."

Arlene was also a leader. She was the first PHN assigned to work on the COVID-19 Long Term Care Facility Team (LTCF) in March 2020, although she had no experience in epidemiology or disease control. She quickly became a mentor while facing the pandemic first hand, and she trained new volunteers, worked long hours, and worked the COVID-19 outbreaks. "In my final role on the LTCF I found my renewed spirit of service supporting my community and teammates through a pandemic," said Arlene. "This final role took me full circle in serving the entire lifespan of individuals in our community."

Arlene said it was a privilege meeting and working with many true heroes during her career. "I'm leaving now having friends in Epidemiology, the Public Health Lab, the HCA Clinics and not to mention my 'adopted' LTCF family that carried me through 2 of the hardest years of my profession." As for the future, Arlene said she'll enjoy wine, traveling, and looking forward to taking care of grandbabies but until then, she'll volunteer at local children's hospitals.

Congratulations Arlene on your career and recognition and "thank you" for your service. Best wishes to you always!

continent—including East, Southeast and South Asia—and the Pacific Islands of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. Many of our colleagues, including myself, are of Asian American and Pacific Islander descent, with unique life experiences and journeys. One way to celebrate AAPI Heritage Month is by learning more about the history, traditions and culture of Asians and Pacific Islanders. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Here are some additional health and cultural observances to note for the month of May, click on each link to learn more:

- May 5: [World Hand Hygiene Day](#)
- May 5: [Cinco de Mayo](#)
- May 8: [Mother's Day](#)
- May 8-14: [National Prevention Week](#)
- May 8-14: [National Women's Health Week](#)
- May 17: [International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia & Biphobia](#)
- May 31: [World No Tobacco Day](#)

Health and culture matter here at the HCA. There are many observances that are recognized across the world and throughout the year. If you know of a health or cultural celebration that you would like to be acknowledged in a future message, please feel free to send an email to [hcacomm@ochca.com](mailto:hcacomm@ochca.com). Thank you team for your support and understanding!

Stay Well,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clayton Chau MD". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

**Dr. Clayton Chau, MD,  
PhD, MASL**  
HCA Director



# SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS MONTH IN MAY

The OC Health Care Agency (HCA) is leveraging several resources in support of Mental Health Matters Month (MHM). Mental Health and Recovery Services (MHRS) has provided a calendar of MHM events in Orange County (OC) which can be found on the Stigma Free OC website [here](#). You'll also find on the website that you can "Take the Pledge" to be [Stigma Free in OC](#).

The HCA now offers navigation for services in one location through OC Navigator. The website places health, wellness and other resources in OC just a click away. Users can answer a few questions to get started, browse topics, and connect with a trained navigator through OC Links 24/7. You can visit OC Navigator by clicking [here](#). The Take Action for Mental Health campaign is focused on three key actions: check in, learn more, and get support. The Take Action campaign is designed to encourage you and someone you care about. You can check it out [here](#).

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and NAMI-OC provide a variety of resources, events and opportunities to share stories. You can find links to events, a toolkit and a "share your story" section by clicking [here](#). For more on NAMI services in OC you can visit [here](#).

## StigmaFreeOC

 **Links**<sup>24/7</sup>  
**855-OC LINKS**  
(855-625-4657)  
Behavioral Health Services Line

 **Navigator**

 **NAMI**  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
Orange County

## CELEBRATING MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

# TAKE ACTION

FOR MENTAL HEALTH

 **CHECK IN**

 **LEARN MORE**

 **GET SUPPORT**

TAKEACTION4MH.COM

# "Thank you" COVID-19 VACCINE TASKFORCE

The OC Health Care Agency (HCA) celebrated the work of the COVID-19 Vaccine Taskforce and said "Thank you" to members of the Taskforce for the collaboration in rolling out COVID-19 vaccines in Orange County (OC). HCA Director **Dr. Clayton Chau** said the Vaccine Taskforce served as a model to the state. "Health officers across the state heard about our Taskforce and called us to ask how we got everyone to come and work together," said Dr. Chau. "They asked what our goals were and how were we accomplishing them. We did some great things by targeting vaccinations to underserved and underrepresented communities and to the general public. I am proud of the lives we saved through our efforts."

Dr. Chau said going forward he hopes to leverage the collaboration of the partnership in order to move OC towards improved health and wellness beyond COVID-19. Information on the Taskforce is available on the HCA website [here](#).



Certificate of Recognition presented to members of the COVID-19 Vaccine Taskforce.



The County of Orange said "thank you" to members of the COVID-19 Vaccine Taskforce. Pictured here L-to-R: **Dr. Regina Chinsio-Kwong**, County Health Officer; Dr. Jasjit Singh, CHOC Hospital; and Chairman Doug Chaffee, Supervisor Fourth District.



County of Orange "Operation Independence" coins which were presented to members of the Vaccine Taskforce.





## NOMINATIONS

The commitment and collaboration of the OC Health Care Agency (HCA) to address homelessness and mental health needs in the community has been recognized by the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD). The OCSD nominated three Mental Health and Recovery Services (MHRS) clinicians for the Sheriff's Medal of Valor awards, for their work with deputies on the Sheriff's Behavioral Health Bureau (BHB) Co-Responder team ([team](#)). Clinicians **Christopher "Topher" Harvey**, **Ruby Navarro** and **Marisa Haley** were recommended for the OCSD's Certificates for High Recognition for their work with the BHB team.

The OCSD praised the HCA and Agency Clinicians, "The HCA's involvement and commitment to this

program is vital to its success. The Clinicians in the BHB care for our community. They frequently answer calls from deputies in the field even during hours they are not at work. All of these clinicians have a sense of teamwork, which leads to the necessary chemistry for this small team environment. It is this type of interagency partnership that moves us closer to accomplishing our shared mission."

The MHRS Clinicians called the nomination, "an incredible honor and privilege," and said, "collaborative efforts are most successful when stakeholders share a vision and work towards a common goal. Thanks also to **Vanessa Thomas**, Division Manager, and **Nicole Garcia**, for partnering with the Sheriff's department during the planning phase of the BHB.

**Erika Punchard**, Service Chief II, for her insight and continued support of the partnership as the BHB continues to evolve. **Beau McCraney**, Service Chief I, for clinical supervision and insights regarding team cohesion. And thank you to the OCSD and the deputies we ride with, exposure to your work culture has had the most profound and positive impact on our lives and work. We are so proud to represent Mental Health and Recovery Services. Our combined efforts make a difference, and we have three Medal of Valor nominations to prove it!!!”

In its first year of operation the team conducted over 300 follow-ups to mental health related crisis calls. The team has been involved with notable incidents, such as talking a depressed woman off a bridge and preventing a suicide. They successfully deterred several people from hurting themselves and encouraged many that life is precious and worth living. This work necessitates the involvement of mature, hardworking personnel, who are skilled in identifying mental illness and highly trained in de-escalation techniques.



Photo L-to-R: Captain AJ Patella, **Erika Punchard**, Commander Nate Wilson, Deputy Anthony Villanueva, **Christopher Harvey**, **Ruby Navarro**, **Marisa Haley**, and Captain Bill Burk

## ATTEND A WATER SAFETY CHALLENGE DAY EVENT ON MAY 21!

Contributors: **Kelly Soemantoro**, Public Health Services (PHS), Program Supervisor  
**Sammy Petrich**, PHS Communications Specialist

Drowning is the leading cause of accidental death for kids under five in Orange County (OC). The OC Drowning Prevention Task Force in partnership with Stop Drowning Now is pleased to announce the 2022 Water Safety Challenge! The Task Force, of which the OC Health Care Agency is a member, is supporting Water Safety Challenge Day events throughout the county on May 21.

“This event will be a great opportunity for families to learn and practice water safety in a fun and supportive setting,” said **Kelly Soemantoro**, Program Supervisor. “Not only am I excited to help promote Water Safety Challenge Day, but as a parent of a 6 year-old, we look forward to participating each year! Come, participate and learn!”

Visit the [website](#) to find an event near you. The Water Safety Challenge, developed by Stop Drowning Now, is a fun, interactive and comprehensive water safety day designed to teach children important water safety lessons such as how to do a safe water rescue, how to properly use life vests, how to swim to the side and more importantly, helps parents identify their child’s particular strengths and weaknesses in the pool.







## A CONGRESSIONAL “THANK YOU” TO OC4VETS PROGRAM

The OC Health Care Agency's (HCA) OC4Vets Program welcomed Representative Young Kim, (R.-CA 39), for a tour of the Orange County Veterans Service Office. HCA services provided through this Mental Health and Recovery Services early intervention program, include screening and assessment, individual counseling, case management, peer support, employment and housing support services, referral and linkage to community resources. The Congresswoman met with County of Orange staff and County-contracted providers who serve vets and she thanked them for their commitment to helping those who served our country. The HCA provides these services to all veterans and their family members regardless of discharge status, era or branch of service.

HCA Program Manager **Christina Weckerly Ramirez** provided the Congresswoman with insight into

OC4Vets. “Peer navigators, who are military connected or veterans themselves, are able to build trust with the veterans served here,” said Christina. “The shared experience helps reduce barriers for veterans to get the support they need to transition into civilian life or address behavioral health needs connected to their military experience,” she added.

“The recognition for the OC4Vets program and the staff who serve is very much appreciated,” said Division Manager **Mark Lawrenz**. “We are proud of the work being done.” More information on County services for veterans can be found by visiting the Network of Care for Service Members, Veterans and Their Families <https://orange.networkofcare.org/Veterans/>.

(Pictured Above) L-R: **Mark Lawrenz**, Division Manager; **Christina Weckerly Ramirez**, Program Manager; and Rep. Young Kim, (R-CA 39)





OC Environmental Health staff shared the importance of recycling during Earth Day events in April. Photo 1 is **Jane Oh** at the Parque del Mar in San Clemente on April 23 where she promoted the Used Oil Recycling and Harbor Bilge Pad Exchange for Earth Day. Photo 2 has **Alicia Sagal** (left) and **Sarah Orndorff** (right) in the City of La Habra Public Works at their April 16 Earth Day Event where they provided Used Oil Recycling education to more than 300 residents. Photo 3 shows **Minh Le** who joined Waste Management in Irvine to drive home the recycling message. For more on used oil and oil filter recycling in Orange County visit [www.ocusedoil.com](http://www.ocusedoil.com).



## REDUCING FOOD WASTE

### SMART STORAGE

Contributor: **Patricia Stabile**, Public Health Nutritionist II

Every year we mark Food Waste Prevention Month in Orange County. Smart food storage means less food waste. More than 40% of food in the United States is wasted each year, and improper food storage contributes significantly to this food waste. Many people are unsure how to store fruits and vegetables, which can lead to premature ripening and, eventually, rotten produce.

#### How to store your produce and make it last:

**What goes inside the fridge** – Apples, berries, and grapes. When ripe, citrus fruits, melons, peaches, nectarines, plums, avocados, pears, tomatoes, and almost all vegetables and herbs.

**What stays outside the fridge** – Bananas, mangos, papayas and pineapple are stored in a cool place; potatoes and onions in a cool, dark place; basil and winter squash are stored at room temperature.

**More tips** – Some fruits give off natural gases that speed up the spoilage of other nearby produce. Store bananas, apples and tomatoes by themselves and store fruits and vegetables in different bins. Consider storage bags and containers designed to help extend the life of your produce. To prevent mold, wash berries just before eating.

For more information on food waste prevention, please visit our CalFresh Healthy Living Newsletter on this topic [here](#).



# EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK

“Thank you” to the OC Health Care Agency (HCA) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) team and to the Orange County (OC) EMS community! We honor EMS personnel for their tireless dedication and professionalism to save and protect lives. The HCA was designated as the County of Orange Emergency Medical Services Agency 40 years ago this year by the Orange County Board of Supervisors in accordance with State law. This year commemorates the 47th anniversary of National EMS Week which runs from May 15 to 21 with the theme “EMS: Rising to the Challenge.”

The EMS community in OC includes dedicated physicians, nurses, paramedics, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, law enforcement officers, lifeguards, communication personnel, educators, administrators, volunteers, the Emergency Medical Care Committee and its subcommittees, and the staff of Orange County Emergency Medical Services.

EMS Week also recognizes the collaboration of Orange County's specialty receiving centers, fire service providers, ambulance service providers, training programs, lifeguard agencies and our Health Care Coalition of Orange County community partners. Each of these community partners came together with the HCA's Operations Center, rising to the challenge to ensure the well-being of health care workers and residents of OC by distributing more than 38 million units of personal protective equipment, medical supplies and vaccine during the pandemic.



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May 15-21

## A SNAPSHOT OF ORANGE COUNTY EMS

- Orange County has a mature and dynamic EMS system with an EMS Director **Tammi McConnell** and a full-time Medical Director and Deputy Health Officer **Dr. Carl Schultz** complemented by a strong leadership team and program professionals with EMS expertise.
- The members of EMS teams, whether career or volunteer, engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education to enhance their lifesaving skills.
- OCEMS partners with many community organizations year-round to promote injury prevention and increase public awareness and education in the areas of cardiopulmonary resuscitation, car seat safety, fire safety, water safety, bicycle helmet safety, first aid training, disaster preparedness, and provides blood pressure checks at various locations throughout OC.

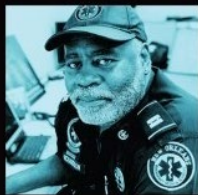


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# EMS WEEK



## 2022

### Rising to the Challenge

#### EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (OCEMS)

- The Orange County Emergency Medical Care Committee, its subcommittees, and the staff of OCEMS are committed to effective collaboration that promotes system improvement and overall coordination.
- HCA participation in the development and exercising of medical response plans for catastrophic disasters and public health emergencies is managed through the Emergency Management Section of OCEMS.
- Orange County's EMS network includes 7 base hospitals, 25 emergency receiving hospitals, 13 cardiovascular receiving centers, 4 trauma centers, 9 stroke-neurology receiving centers, 12 fire departments, over 20 law enforcement agencies; 21 basic life support ambulance companies, and 1 air ambulance & multiple air rescue units.





MAY 2022

# YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Nurses play a pivotal role in caring for people in our community. You may think of nurses as those who provide direct care to those in a hospital setting, but many other types of nurses contribute to safeguarding the health of our residents. At the OC Health Care Agency (HCA), we have nurses who serve a variety of populations, helping to maximize population health and removing equity barriers that prevent these populations

from getting the health care they need. Across all of our service areas, nurses exercise compassion for their patients, helping to understand their needs, delivering care and support to them, connecting them to resources and helping to educate them on how to care for themselves better. Get to know a few of our nursing professionals at the HCA below!



**CECILE TRUONG** serves as a Supervising Public Health Nurse and Coordinator for the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. According to Cecile, the nurse's role can cover a wide range of responsibilities. "When people think of nursing, they immediately think of hospital settings," says Cecile. "But there's so much more to it – public health, school health, research, forensics, occupational health, education and marketing, and so forth." With 33 years of service behind her, Cecile shares that "nursing is both an art (heart) and a science (mind). Nurses should have a fundamental respect for human dignity and an intuition for a patient's needs, and use critical thinking to make judgment based on both objective data, such as test results, and subjective data, such as a patient's biological, physical and behavioral needs."

**DOM APOLONIO** is a Comprehensive Care Nurse in Juvenile Health Services and has been working for 24 years on the night shift in Juvenile Hall. As part of his job, Dom renders medical care to the juvenile population as a Registered Nurse. He says he takes pride in being able to provide medical care with compassion and respect to incarcerated youths. "On a few occasions, I hear comments from some of the youths that I attend to that they aspire to be nurses someday," shares Dom. "They ask if I like my job as a nurse or how to get into nursing in general. It's very gratifying for me to be able to give advice and positive reinforcement and encouragement knowing they want to better their lives and futures. It also serves as an inspiration and a constant reminder for me to be the best nurse I can be for them."





**BARATHA SIREGAR** (not pictured) has worked as a Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) for Adult Correctional Health Services for 15 years, providing care to incarcerated patients. He also works as a psychiatric Registered Nurse for a local hospital, serving mostly the homeless population. When asked about one thing he enjoys in his nursing roles, he says, "Helping those who found themselves at the lowest point of their lives."



**DEANA SCARBERRY** has been with the HCA since May 2019 and serves as a Behavioral Health Nurse at the Santa Ana Substance Use Disorders (SUD) clinic, assisting regularly with screening and opening clients for services. "When I started with SUD, I conducted medical detox evaluations for the County," says Deana. "Our clinic is now transitioning over to providing Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) services which will be very beneficial for our clients." She finds nursing very rewarding, especially being able to support someone during a vulnerable time in their life and make a positive difference. "I also love that nursing is so diverse and there are countless opportunities to find an area you really enjoy."

**NAVNEET KAUR** serves as a Behavioral Health Nurse in the field-based Program of Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) Anaheim program in Mental Health and Recovery Services. She has five years of service at the HCA and her job is to assist clients with medication administration and management, treatment plans, observe client's progress, consult with psychiatrists and other health professionals for the coordination of care, and offer support and psychoeducation to clients and their families to help improve the chance of a successful client outcome. When asked what she likes about her job, Navneet shares, "There are many things to enjoy about my job or in the nursing profession. The one thing I enjoy the most is I get to save lives and make a difference, no matter how small that difference may be and I am so fortunate to be able to do that."



**KAREN SIMERLINK** has been with the HCA for six years, starting out in the Children and Youth Behavioral Health/Prevention and Early Intervention Division as a Behavioral Health Nurse. During the pandemic, Karen volunteered at the Super Point of Dispensing sites (PODS) with the Disaster Response Team to provide COVID-19 vaccines to the community. "It was while working at these PODS that I realized I wanted to continue to provide services as a Public Health Nurse," says Karen. She has since transferred over to Employee Health Services as a Public Health Nurse, welcoming the challenge of the fast-paced and constantly evolving environment. "From pre-placement testing and COVID-19 contact tracing, to administering flu vaccines and tuberculosis testing, being a Public Health Nurse is extremely rewarding. I enjoy meeting and interacting with County employees from the onset of their County career and beyond."

**CHRISTOPHER MILLS** has spent approximately five years with the HCA, all with the AOABH Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) working as an LVN/MHS, and has 15 years of experience working in mental health services. At the CSU, his main job is admitting clients for crisis services from local emergency rooms or directly from the community via the Crisis Assessment Team (CAT), police/Sheriff's Department, and walk-ins. "I wear many hats as a nurse at the CSU," says Christopher. "I monitor for any medical concerns, administer medications, maintain therapeutic rapport, assist with discharge planning and follow-up appointments. I entered the nursing field to help people and, in my opinion, people with mental health concerns are in great need of our assistance. I enjoy every aspect of the care we provide here at the CSU and as a nurse in general."





# EQUITY

## MAKING THE IMPLICIT – EXPLICIT

Contributor: **Wesley Shain**, Staff Specialist, Office of Population Health and Equity

The Office of Population Health and Equity (OPHE) and Office of Project Management and Quality Improvement (OPMQI) teams collaborated with the Institute for Healthcare Improvements (IHI), a key consulting partner, to prioritize the next phase of the Equity in Orange County (EiOC) Initiative. After the three-day session, the teams are moving forward with new ways of thinking, doing, and conceptualizing the work that's needed to advance health equity in Orange County (OC).

"The goal for us is really to support laying the foundation for the Orange County community to address social determinants of health that impact health inequities," OPHE Director **Hieu Nguyen** said. "If we can do all of that, then our vision is really to create a healthier, more resilient, and equitable Orange County."

"We're looking internally at our operational processes and how we can align with our community and listen

to our community voices to make sure that indeed we're playing our part in addressing systemic inequities." **Karin Kalk**, Director, OPMQI, stated. "This starts with the Compass Assessment, which all employees are invited to complete." You can find the Compass Assessment on the HCA Intranet <https://intranet.ochca.com/director-office/compass-assessment/>.

The Equity in OC Taskforce now meets monthly to align and leverage OC's health and equity efforts. For more information please visit [www.equityinoc.com](http://www.equityinoc.com).

(Pictured Above) Standing L-to-R: **Deborah Diaz De Leon**, Administrative Manager (AM) II; **Anthony Perera**, AM II; Nikki Tennerman, IHI; **Esther Lee**, Staff Specialist; **Rosemary Solis**, Office Specialist; **Karin Kalk**, Director OPMQI.  
Front L-to-R: Ninon Lewis, IHI; **Wesley Shain**, Staff Specialist; Paul Howard, IHI; **Ryan Natividad**, AM I; **Jill Lubarski**, Staff Specialist; **Hieu Nguyen**, Director OPHE.



# Dr. Margaret Bredehoft's BULLETIN BOARD



With National Public Health Week behind us, **Dr. Margaret Bredehoft**, Chief of Public Health Services has a few take-away messages she wanted to share. This year's theme "Public Health is Where You Are" was meant to highlight the many essential services our Public Health Services (PHS) Division performs across the County of Orange (County) for our community. Whether it's in County facilities, at Community Based Organizations, in the schools and churches of Orange County (OC), parks, beaches, restaurants, pools or hotel parking lots; our PHS teams go where they are needed to serve our residents, businesses and visitors.

When asked what she thought was the most important message for this year, Dr. Bredehoft said, *"COVID-19 showed us how, by working together with a shared vision, we are much more effective. We need to align our vision WITH the community and Agency-wide to get shared results! We also need to incorporate public health messaging as a core business strategy."*

She also revealed an upcoming service PHS plans to implement in the near future. *"We are excited to launch the "End The HIV Endemic" with a focus on the transgender population,"* said Dr. Bredehoft. *"Providing for the needs of this unique population with appropriate sensitivities and services will be at the core of this program."*

Dr. Bredehoft, or Dr. B as she is commonly known throughout the County, closed with a final message on the role of PHS in our community and the strategies in place to ensure the growth and evolution of services needed by our residents, *"our focus will remain on capacity building with shared strategic thinking, planning, and policy transformation."*

# RETHINK YOUR DRINK

Contributor: **Christine Baun**, Public Health Nutritionist II

**Choose Water First:** Calories from sugary drinks add up fast! Almost half of all sugar consumed in the U.S. comes from sugary drinks. Choosing water instead of beverages that contain sugar is a great first step in an overall healthy diet.

**Try these tips to help you drink more water:** Flavor it – Add fruit to your water such as lemons, limes and oranges. Drink throughout the day – Drink water at meal and snack times. Keep it nearby – Keep water at your desk or work area. For fun ways to Rethink Your Drink, visit [www.calfreshHealthyLiving.org](http://www.calfreshHealthyLiving.org).

Try making this Mango and Jalapeno water with your family.

## Mango and Jalapeno Water (serves 8)

### Ingredients

- 1 cup mango, chopped
- ½ jalapeno, sliced with seeds removed

### Preparation

1. Wash all produce.
2. Collect, slice, and measure all ingredients before starting to prepare the recipe.
3. Add all ingredients plus enough cold water to fill a 2-quart pitcher. Chill overnight in the refrigerator for the most flavor, and store in the refrigerator until ready to drink. The fruit will stay fresh in the water for up to 48 hours after being prepared.
4. After you drink the water, you can eat the fruit or blend it into a smoothie.



## VISION

Quality health for all.



## MISSION

In partnership with the community, deliver sustainable and responsive services that promote population health and equity.



## GOALS

Promote quality, equity, and value.  
Ensure the HCA's sustainability.  
Offer relevant services to the community.



## CONNECT WITH US

The **What's Up newsletter** is created and distributed monthly by HCA Communications. We welcome your ideas, input and/or insight into HCA people and programs. To contribute, comment or connect please email us at

[hcacomm@ochca.com](mailto:hcacomm@ochca.com) or call (714) 834-2178.

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