



## Director's Desk

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Acting Director

Social determinants of health involve a broad set of factors and conditions that affect their overall health. It includes things

such as the safety of the neighborhoods in which we live, education levels, employment, and social support, just to name a few. These factors have a tremendous impact on our health status; far more than the medicine itself. DHS is striving to pay more attention to these forces: screening for them when patients present for care, improving our ability to connect patients to resources within DHS and in the broader community, funding services such as housing that we know impact health. One factor highlighted in June's Pulse is access to healthy food, sometimes referred to as "food security". Our nutrition status is incredibly important in helping us stay fit and regain health after we've been sick. But oftentimes, patients don't have sufficient income to purchase high

quality food. CalFresh, California's food stamp program, can help with this problem. Through an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card, CalFresh allows patients to purchase food at a grocery store. While many low-income neighborhoods lack adequate high quality grocery stores – programs like CalFresh is one important part of the solution. As described in the article below, our clinics (such as Humphrey) are increasingly making patients aware of this benefit to which they may be entitled.

I also want to recognize the Patient Access Center teams across DHS and their ongoing work in improving our patients' ability to access care in an efficient, timely, and easy manner. I love the five principles: Patient-Centered, Visit-Ready, One Health System, Engaged Employees and Continuous Improvement. This is a model for all of us! Finally, congratulations to the Coastal Health Center Clinics for achieving the highest rates of influenza immunization this past season (for the second year in a row)! By getting immunized, or wearing a mask if one isn't immunized, we can keep our patients and one another healthy during flu season. Congrats to all of the Coastal clinic teams!

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## Second Annual Humphrey Synergy Health Fair and CalFresh Awareness Month Kick-off Event a Great Success

By Princess Obienu, M.P.H.

Since its inception in 2016, the Humphrey Synergy Advisory group has been exploring innovative approaches to help underserved Hubert Humphrey patients and surrounding communities achieve their optimal holistic, healthiest selves. As part of this effort, we hosted the 2nd Annual Humphrey Synergy Health Fair and CalFresh Awareness Month Kick-off Event on May 3, 2018. We collaborated with the Los Angeles County Departments of Health (DHS), Public Health (DPH) and Mental Health (DMH), the Department of Public Social Services and many community based organizations (CBOs). The overall goals of the partners are to improve and enhance access to community health resources, and promote health and wellness among the Hubert



Humphrey patients and surrounding communities. An essential related role is to combat food insecurity and food injustice. These have been identified as major precursors to obesity and associated chronic diseases and debilitating conditions in South



Los Angeles. South Los Angeles has been identified as a "Food Desert". A food desert is a geographical area with limited access to fresh produce and minimally processed food.

The event was well attended by current and prospective Humphrey patients and community members. During the event, we shared information on available health and community resources in Hubert Humphrey vicinities. We secured and disseminated a variety of wellness related gifts to event participants. We distributed more than 2,000 pounds of fresh produce at the event thanks to the astounding generosity of our partners like the Seeds of Hope, Imperfect Produce, and many others.

We're so delighted and grateful to have hosted about

(See 'SYNERGY' on 2nd page)



30 vendors with various health resources and giveaways at this year’s event. Our Humphrey patients and community participants received free health screenings for a range of conditions, immunizations and more. Multiple vendors and community partners participated in the event including: the CalFresh Mobile Unit, Toy Loan Program, Mexican Consulate Office, LA Care, WIC, DPH Immunizations (MLK), American Cancer Society, DPH Childhood Lead Prevention, DPH Environmental Health (Humphrey), DHS Women’s Health, WDACS, Department of Consumer Affairs, DMH Patient’s Rights Office, EveryTable, LA

Public Libraries, Market Match, DPH Nutrition, DPH Substance Abuse Prevention and Control, Imperfect Produce, 211 LA, Morrison’s Kitchen, American Red Cross, World Harvest Foodbank and HIV Mobile Screening.

Participants had an opportunity to interface with our Physical Therapy staff who conducted posture checks. Humphrey Health Education & Nursing were in attendance to share health promotion and disease prevention literature on health and wellness. Participants could also have a dental screening through our oral health unit and gained a better understanding of our administrative functions by meeting with our Financial Services folks. The kids that attended the event enjoyed face painting and other fun activities. Participants had an opportunity to get assistance in completing a CalFresh application, which is a vital resource to fight food insecurity.

We look forward to making next year’s event even more successful and useful to our patients and community members. For more information on the event, or how to join the Humphrey Synergy group, please contact, Princess Obien, M.P.H. - Humphrey Synergy Co-Chair & Event Coordinator at [pobien@dhslacounty.gov](mailto:pobien@dhslacounty.gov) or (323) 897-6244. “We are better together!” And Together our vision is becoming our outstanding reality.

## Employee Health Services Influenza Vaccination Excellence Award

By Erika Sweet, RN, MSN, NP COHN-S

The 2017-2018 influenza season had a greater than expected severity than in previous years. As a healthcare worker, you can help protect your patients, co-workers and family members by getting vaccinated each year.

The Coastal Health Center Clinics comprised of Long Beach, Bellflower, Torrance and Wilmington Health Centers had the highest employee vaccination rates for the second consecutive year. Dr. Hal Yee, DHS Chief Medical Officer, presented Dr. Jeff Barbosa with a commemorative plaque to recognize his staff’s accomplishment. This season, the Coastal Clinics vaccinated 88% of employees with an overall compliance rate of 100%. The Coastal Clinics leadership and staff are to be commended for their continual commitment to patient safety as demonstrated by these results.



(Left to right) Thuy Banh, Dr. Jeffrey Barbosa, Patricia Jimenez, Dr. Hal Yee, Dr. Alexander Moy, Dr. Maryam Kazemzadeh, Erika Sweet

The next flu season will be upon DHS in a few months. Support your facility and keep your patients and co-workers safe through onsite compliance efforts and planning. Your facility could be the next recipient of the excellence award!

## Patient Access Adopts Principles to Guide Our Work

By Shari Doi

In 2016, DHS began a redesign process to bring core aspects of patient access work together into one department called Patient Access or Patient Access Centers (PACs) with central oversight from the Office of Patient Access (OPA). Patient Access encompasses the critical functions of call center appointment scheduling, financial/pre-screening, registration and patient relations work, which was previously dispersed under units such as Patient Financial Services, business offices, administration and managed care offices.

The [Patient Access leadership team](#) created a shared set of 5 Principles, anchored in the DHS mission and strategic initiatives. These principles are: *Patient-Centered, Visit-Ready, One Health System, Engaged Employees* and *Continuous Improvement*.

In April and May of 2018, over 800 Patient Access staff across DHS engaged in discussions around these principles in a 6-week roll-out featuring one principle per week. Teams participated in huddles, staff meetings, and conference calls engaging in interactive discussions, flipcharting, and storyboards to capture what each principle means in action, improvement ideas and

questions. Staff were also encouraged to visit the [DHS OPA SharePoint site](#) to take part in a dialogue via blogs for each Principle. Over **150 comments** were posted by staff across DHS, many sparking replies and “likes”. The rollout concluded with a staff survey. Response to the survey was tremendous! Over 50% of staff participated with broad representation from all sites. Significantly, fully 80% of respondents believed that the huddles/team meetings were the most effective communication method used in the rollout, followed by emails, handouts and the OPA website.



Future planning for the vital Patient Access process will include workflow standardization, introduction of the Patient Access Dashboard and additional training and development for our staff. Please check-out [our website](#) to learn more about these Principles!