



Director's Desk

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Happy new year! I can't believe we are already through the first month of the new year! Among the highlights of January every year is a chance to celebrate the legacy of one of our nation's finest: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King was instrumental in shedding light on the ways in which we as individuals and a nation so often de-value and degrade human life, and helping to pave a road for us to treat all people with the dignity and respect and opportunities they deserve. There's no more fitting time then to celebrate the DHS facility that bears his name: the Martin Luther King, Jr. Outpatient Center located in South LA.

Yolanda Vera, the CEO at MLKOC, does an outstanding job in her column below highlighting several of the unique services on the MLK Campus, ranging from traditional clinical services (such as primary care, specialty care, surgeries, and diagnostics), to community-based programs such as medical-legal partnerships, partnerships with public health, mental health services, sub-

stance use services, food security efforts, among others. And the building (both programmatic and physical) is not close to complete! MLKOC continues to expand its services to vulnerable patients and communities. Over the coming months, the County will be breaking ground on a new Child and Family Wellbeing Center which will offer larger and more patient-centered space in which we can serve children involved with the DCFS system. Work is already also underway on renovating the old MLK Hospital into a Behavioral Health Center, which will host a variety of primary care, mental health, public health, and substance use services, as well as vocational training opportunities. These and other efforts to build up comprehensive services serving the residents of South LA are a wonderful way to honor the legacy of Dr. King.

Finally, I am extremely pleased that we have surpassed the 90% mark for staff who have completed Just Culture training. Thank you! I hope you found this introductory training to be helpful and informative and that it is shaping your thinking about what it means to work in a fair workplace. Our Just Culture champions will continue to roll out additional opportunities to learn about what it means to work in a Just Culture environment so be on the look-out. My best to you this 2019.

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Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Legacy Every Day

By Yolanda Vera

On January 19, the MLK Outpatient Center (MLK OPC) celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday by helping Supervisor Ridley-Thomas host his 27th Annual Empowerment Congress event on its campus. There were 800 attendees. Dr. King lived his life serving others, especially the most vulnerable. The MLK OPC strives to honor its namesake's legacy every day by offering over 70 clinical services, an urgent care center, a full range of specialty clinic diagnostic and ancillary services and integrated social, mental health, substance use and justice-related services to residents in South Los Angeles. Significantly, the MLK OPC also works to be of service to the entire countywide DHS family.

For example, the MLK OPC lab provides services for Correctional Health, Juvenile Hall and the MLK Public Health Center. It performs HIV Viral load testing for all DHS facilities. It also performs GC/Chlamydia testing for most DHS facilities. It also participates in the Cal State Laboratory Scientist training program and has already trained approximately 20 students that are now working Countywide.

The MLK OPC Nursing team works to train the current and next generation of DHS nursing employees. It provides competency trainings for nurses from Hubert Humphrey Comprehensive Health

Center (CHC) and DHS Emergency Medical Services and provides CPR classes for staff from throughout the Ambulatory Care Network.

Ninety percent of consumers residing at the 100-bed MLK Recuperative Care Center were referred by DHS facility partners, including LAC+USC Medical Center, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center and Olive View-UCLA Medical Center. The MLK OPC also provides high quality substance use disorder treatment, pharmacy and other clinical support to the recuperative care consumers as well as access to free legal advice from the Whole Person Care sponsored Medical Legal Partnership.



Lab staff members at Martin Luther King, Jr. Outpatient Center

The MLK Psychiatric Urgent Care Center (PUCC), operated by Exodus, provides 24-hour psychiatric crisis stabilization services 7 days a week and MLK OPC provides health care services for PUCC patients. In FY 2017/2018 alone, MLK UCC received nearly 8,000 referrals from County and non-County hospital emergency rooms, law enforcement, mental health facilities and community based health organizations across the County.

MLK OPC Breast Imaging services, which received a Gold Rating from the American College of Radiology, has been a leader in breast cancer surveillance and treatment for South Los Angeles and

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DHS. It provides more than 4,000 screening and diagnostic mammograms a year, including services for Long Beach Comprehensive Health Center (LB CHC). It also performs biopsies for Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Hubert Humphrey CHC, LB CHC, Rancho Los Amigos and others. Dr. Mariapia Altavilla, Breast Imaging Section Chief, describes a recent patient, referred from Hubert Humphrey, who had to be advised she had breast cancer. She said, “We met with [the patient] and her two daughters to answer their questions on what to expect and how they could support her. It feels good to be able to provide our services and support to the entire DHS team.” MLK OPC is proud to follow Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s example by lending a hand to support our DHS mission and serving patients from throughout our Countywide DHS system.

Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD): Breaking the Cycle of Incarceration with Justice, Community, Harm Reduction, Health and Housing Partnerships

By Shoshanna Scholar

Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) is an innovative pre-arrest community-based diversion model that diverts individuals with repeated low-level drug or prostitution offenses at the earliest contact with law enforcement to case management and social services as an alternative to jail and prosecution.

Through this model, individuals with low-level drug and sex work offenses are diverted to harm reduction case management and housing services as an alternative to jail and prosecution prior to arrest and booking. Pre-arrest diversion is a critical intervention point as it prevents incarceration, reducing unnecessary trauma and expenses for people with low-level offenses.

For the past year and a half, the Office of Diversion and Reentry (ODR) has been spearheading a LEAD pilot program in South Los Angeles in an area around the 105 and 710 Freeway along the Long Beach Boulevard corridor comprised of the communities of Lynwood, Compton, Long Beach and unincorporated Los Angeles County. LEAD site partners include County agencies, departments and offices including the Sheriff, Probation, District



were homeless when they entered the program. Christ Centered Ministries opened the first dedicated LEAD women’s interim housing site, with the capacity to house 20 women referred through LEAD. As of January 2019, 53% of participants who were homeless when they enrolled in LEAD now have permanent supportive housing. Many LEAD participants were previously on the streets with their families. Housing provided through LEAD case management has also created a way for children and extended family members of LEAD participants to come indoors.

Recently, ODR began start-up activities for a second LEAD site in Hollywood. The Hollywood LEAD site is a partnership among the Los Angeles Police Department, Los Angeles City Attorney’s Office, Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office, ODR, community organizations and an evaluation partner from the Department of Preventative Medicine at the USC Keck School of Medicine. The Hollywood site is modeled on the South Los Angeles/Long Beach pilot and will focus on diverting individuals who have a history of opioid use. LA Community Health Project will provide harm reduction case management services for this LEAD site.

Building trust is critical to LEAD’s success. The harm reduction approach to case management allows participants to make the changes they want at the pace they are ready for. LEAD is also improving relationships between law enforcement and community members. Dedicated LEAD officers advocate in front of judges to support LEAD participants with legal issues, which has enabled participants to resolve open charges and move forward with employment and other goals. LEAD helps keep people out of jail, off the streets and connected to caring, compassionate and appropriate services. For more information on LEAD, please contact SScholar@dhs.lacounty.gov.



Attorney, Public Health, Mental Health, ODR, Housing for Health, City agencies, Long Beach Police Departments, City Prosecutors, service providers, advocacy organizations and community members. HOPICS, a division of Special Services for Groups, provides harm reduction case management services for the site.

Case managers, officers and prosecutors participate in a bi-weekly Operational Work Group (OWG) meeting to discuss participants’ progress and to coordinate care. OWG meetings support the collaborative relationship between operational partners and are also a forum for troubleshooting and adapting LEAD policies and practices.

Currently, there are 150 LEAD participants, 85% of whom

Just Culture Update Building a kind and fair workplace

By Arun Patel, JD, MD

CONGRATULATIONS – YOU DID IT! Over 90% of DHS employees have taken the required Just Culture trainings! Training over 20,000 people in one year has taken incredible collaborative work across the department, and we thank everyone for their help and participation.

In September 2017, DHS “re-booted” the Just Culture (JC) Program in partnership with the Labor-Management Transformation Council (LMTTC) and the other Health Agency departments. The intent of this work is to create a safe, kind, fair and just workplace culture in which everyone is respected, treated fairly, empowered to improve the system and fairly held accountable for their

actions other than those caused by system flaws. Just Culture can help improve the quality and safety of services DHS provides by creating a culture in which workforce members feel free to discuss problems, errors, adverse events and the like, knowing that the overall goal of the Department is to use such information to continuously improve the way we do our work.

Over the last fifteen months, our goal has been to expose all DHS staff to the basic concepts and principles of Just Culture through an online module, and to provide all supervisors and managers with a longer in-person educational session on the application of Just Culture and its role in achieving the workplace culture we desire. In total, over 20,000 DHS staff have been trained since late 2017. This includes 193 people identified as Just Culture Champions who completed a two-day intensive training to enable them to function as facility-based promotors, subject-matter experts, and/or trainers, 2,536 managers and supervisors and 290 line staff who completed a 3-4 hour in-person training session for managers and

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supervisors, and over 20,000 people who completed the short online education module.

Despite all those accomplishments, we know that completing the initial training sessions is not enough to create a Just Culture. Ultimately, we want everyone at DHS to understand the basics of Just Culture with the expectation that staff will consistently apply these principles in their work units, daily operations and/or assignments and real-life work situations.

With the initial training push behind us, we are now working with the LMTC and the other Health Agency departments to further share information about Just Culture, and support its application throughout DHS and the Agency so that real culture change can be achieved and sustained. We will continue to develop and disseminate Just Culture education and discussion tools that can be used at the facility, unit and individual levels to help people learn more about Just Culture and its application. We will also continue to work with Human Resources and other administrative departments to develop ways to ensure a Just Culture approach to problems.

As we move forward, we count on leaders and workforce

members to be invested in the goal of a Just Culture, and to actively work to:

- Be open minded, respectful and maintain a positive attitude;
- Get involved in improving the system;
- Place value in learning and sharing what we learned with others;
- Communicate proactively and effectively;
- Take ownership of our own work and accountability of our actions (except those caused by system flaws); and
- Promote a working environment with trust, fairness and openness.

The offices of Patient Safety and Risk Management, as well as the local Patient Safety Officers, Risk Managers, and Just Culture Champions are all available as resources, and you can always email questions and comments to JustCulture@dhs.lacounty.gov.

Together, we can achieve a Just Culture that will benefit all of us who work at DHS and all the patients who receive our care!

Dr. Soma Wali, Olive View-UCLA Medical Center Chair of Medicine, Featured in American College of Physicians Publication

Dr. Soma Wali, Chair of the Department of Medicine at Olive View-UCLA Medical Center has been featured in an online profile for the American College of Physicians (ACP). Dr. Wali was introduced to the field of health at an early age by her father who understood the importance of improving health outcomes and opportunities for underserved populations. By combining her desire to become a doctor or teacher, she hoped to be able to contribute to the community in a meaningful way.

After receiving her undergraduate degree at UCLA, Dr. Wali attended the University of Illinois College of Medicine in Chicago and completed her residency at Olive View where she is currently Chair of the Department of Medicine. “I specifically picked Olive View-UCLA because it’s a county hospital,” says Dr. Wali to ACP, “I’ve devoted my career to serving the underserved.” Through her

residency, she was given the opportunity to be involved in academic medicine, applying both her passion for medicine and teaching.

During her time at Olive View, Dr. Wali has assisted in creating a new primary care residency track to encourage recruitment of students into the career. As noted in the article, she states, “You really had to be passionate about it to go into primary care. But now, with all the effort we’ve put into it, I’m happy to say that the best and brightest in medical schools are choosing internal medicine and primary care as a career choice, but the need is still significant.”

To read the full article, please visit <https://www.acponline.org/membership/medical-students/acp-impact/archive/january-2019/dr-soma-wali-on-dedicating-her-career-to-serving-the-underserved>.

Los Angeles County EMS Agency Creates MedAid, a Smartphone App, to Assist Paramedics in Correctly Dosing Medications

By Marianne Gausche-Hill, MD

Correct drug dosing in an emergency situation is critical in order to stabilize patients. However, drug dosing errors in adults and children are common in emergency settings, occurring in as many as 35% of drug administrations. The Los Angeles County (LAC) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency has developed a standardized formulary and associated Color-Coded drug dosing chart based on kilogram body weight to be used during the emergency care of pediatric (ages 0-14 years) and adult patients. This system, which utilizes a color-coded length-based resuscitation tape to determine weight for pediatric patients, and then the standardized formulary to pre-calculate dosages in milliliters was recently updated to reflect current evidenced-based practices and is predicted to eliminate more than 90% of errors.

The LAC EMS Agency recently received a grant from the County’s Quality and Productivity Commission via the Productivity Investment Fund to develop a smart device application called MedAid, which will allow over 6,000 Base Hospital personnel to order, and the almost 4,000 paramedics to confidently and safely administer the correct dose of life saving medication to the pediatric and adult patients suffering a medical emergency without having to calculate appropriate drug doses during stressful emergency calls. Perceptronics Solutions and the LAC EMS Agency have teamed up to produce the app, which is being beta tested now and will soon be released for use to paramedics and base hospital personnel. The app will be used to improve drug dosing accuracy, which will result in improved patient outcomes. An example of the app demonstrates how to efficiently determine the correct Epinephrine dosage for a toddler.

