



Director's Desk

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Director

Nothing could be better for DHS and the services we provide than to have those on the frontlines, patients and

staff alike, leading the change that they know we need and want to see happen. After all, no one knows better than our patients and front-line staff what is working and what isn't, and where we can and need to improve. The people who know the work best are those who do the work and those who receive the services. Thus, it's thrilling to read about some of the hands-on, staff-led projects going on in our system, including this month's article on the Rancho Works Café & Gift Shop (thankfully enhanced by a recent generous donation from the Christopher and Dana Reeves Foundation), the expansion of

phlebotomy services at La Puente Health Center and the launch of another Patient and Family Advisory Council in the San Gabriel Valley Health Center Group (SGVHCG) portion of the Ambulatory Care Network.

I'm also excited to share with you in this month's Spotlight, a focus on our Department's clinical laboratory optimization project. This project is a core element of our efforts to streamline and enhance the degree of collaboration and "system-ness" of our clinical services, to the benefit of facilities and patients alike. We hope the Spotlight issues help raise awareness of important initiatives across the system. My thanks to Mala Nanda, DHS Director of Strategy and Operations, Diagnostic Services, as well as all of the laboratory leadership across the Department, for their tireless work in moving us closer to the core lab model that is the goal of the optimization project. If you have any questions about how lab services will be improved as a result of this project, please reach out to any of DHS' laboratory leadership.

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Rancho Works Café & Gift Shop Receives \$50,000 Grant from Christopher and Dana Reeves Paralysis Foundation

By Michele Berro, OTR/L, OT

The Rancho Works Café & Gift Shop received a 2019 High Impact Priority Quality of Life grant from the Christopher and Dana Reeves Foundation to support employment training of persons with paralysis. The Rancho Works Café & Gift Shop, a part of the Occupational Therapy Vocational Services continuum at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center, provides former patients with an opportunity to return to work in a supportive work environment. Located just off the main lobby in the new Outpatient Building at Rancho, the Café & Gift Shop provides a menu of affordably priced, healthy food choices, and handcrafted novelty items to serve the needs of patients, staff, visitors and the community. Handcrafted items such as greeting cards, jewelry, soaps and ceramics sold at the gift shop are created by patients referred to the Occupational Therapy Vocational Services program with the goal of returning to work. As a non-profit, all proceeds from the Rancho Works Café & Gift Shop go back into the program while providing opportunities for former patients to go back to work or engage in productive, meaningful activities.

At the Rancho Works Café & Gift Shop, recovery is pro-

moted by engaging the mind and body to practice learned skills in a work environment. In this setting, participants develop core self-management and work skills such as taking responsibility, following a schedule, time management, organization, appropriate work behaviors and teamwork. Workers are scheduled 4-6 hours per day to assist with the daily operations of the Café & Gift Shop including stocking shelves, monitoring inventory, cashiering and bookkeeping tasks. They are trained in safe food handling practices under a limited food preparation license and cottage food operation permit while also honing their professional behavior, work ethics and customer service skills. They learn how to write a resume, fill out a job application, and are provided with an opportunity to practice interview skills so they are prepared to search for outside employment. They can use their work experience in the program as a reference on their resume.

Following a life changing injury, adjustment to a disability and community reintegration are serious challenges that patients face. The skills that they learn in the Occupational Therapy Vocational Services continuum are beneficial for making a successful transition to becoming productive and contributing members of the community. The Rancho Works Café & Gift Shop is designed to enable participants of all diagnoses,

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abilities and backgrounds to regain a sense of self-worth, well-being, and healthy routines through engagement in physical and cognitive activities in an actual work setting. The program also fosters a sense of belonging and feelings of purpose while working alongside others toward the common goal of returning to gainful employment. It empowers individuals through personalized goal setting and individualized work plans to gain the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to maximize their work performance and improve their quality of life.

The Christopher and Dana Reeves Foundation grant will be used to expand employment training at the Rancho Works Café & Gift Shop by increasing the number of workers hired and providing supportive services to participants as they transition to jobs outside of Rancho. Through collaboration with our Independent Living Center and State Department of Rehabilitation partners, participants will receive employment services from the time they begin their Occupational Therapy program that will continue until they find competitive employment that is appropriate for them in the community.

La Puente Health Center Phlebotomy Service “Has Drawn Blood!”

By Rosalinda Villalobos

The drive from La Puente Health Center (HC) to El Monte Comprehensive Health Center (CHC) is 7.3 miles. To travel this distance in the usual traffic conditions and have blood drawn could require an hour. La Puente HC patients also experience other challenges to reach El Monte CHC: lack of private or public transportation, child care and other family responsibilities and challenges with taking time off from work. La Puente HC staff had to implement a service that would improve patient access, have a positive effect on clinical outcomes, enhance patient satisfaction and improve retention rates.

On July 1, 2019, La Puente HC staff developed a goal to provide on-site phlebotomy services. They knew this would substantially improve patient access to a vital service and improve compliance with PRIME and HEDIS scores, timeliness of laboratory results, and increased patient satisfaction.

Spearheaded by SGVHCG Services Nursing Director, Jorge Urquizu, RN, the multidisciplinary and multi-facility Ambulatory Care Network team established the phlebotomy service at La Puente HC. Included in this team is Melanie Osby, MD who serves as the Laboratory Director of Martin Luther King, Jr. Out-

patient Center and El Monte, Roybal and Hudson CHC Laboratories.

On June 18, 2019 La Puente HC opened its Phlebotomy Station. Debra Nevarez, RN, Nursing Supervisor for La Puente HC and El Monte CHC shared, “La Puente HC draw service has drawn blood!” Mr. Ernest Espinoza, Director, SGVHCG said, “(The) first blood draw at La Puente has been accomplished. Thanks to everyone who helped to make this happen. This will be a great service enhancement for our patients.”

The La Puente HC Phlebotomy Service is currently open two days a week. La Puente HC staff report that patients are very pleased and satisfied with the Phlebotomy Service located on-site.

La Puente HC’s Phlebotomy Service has improved patient access by ensuring their patients obtain timely care from the right provider in a convenient location. The teamwork, camaraderie, collaboration and strategic use of our internal multidisciplinary and multi-facility team members contributed to the success.

SGVHCG Leadership is proud of the entire team’s accomplishment and is grateful for all the assistance received from our ACN and DHS colleagues.



Initiatives

San Gabriel Valley Health Center Group Establishes Patient Family Advisory Council

By Rosalinda Villalobos

As part of the DHS initiative, Gateways, along with the Patient and Family Centered Care Partners, the San Gabriel Valley Health Center Group (SGVHCG) launched the first Patient Family Advisory Council (PFAC) in the Ambulatory Care Network on June 17 with three adult advisors and one child patient advisor.

The SGVHCG PFAC Committee meets weekly to develop the infrastructure, mission and goals to engage the voices of their patients and families through the PFAC. The multidisciplinary team from both El Monte CHC and La Puente CHC explored the enhancement of direct interaction and face-to-face communication to improve the patient experience in the health center group. The PFAC considered the challenges in successfully recruiting a diverse population by developing applications and flyers in three languages: English, Spanish and Chinese. The charter, agendas and minutes are in English and Spanish.

The PFAC applied a novel recruitment effort of face-to-face outreach in the facility lobbies after distributing fliers in Patient Appointment Notice Letters. This face-to-face outreach resulted in nineteen applicants. The PFAC then began the exploration of the patient experience and patient centeredness in a completely bilingual (English/Spanish) meeting. The PFAC’s initial Patient Advisors are Eugenia B. Amaya de Diaz, Jose Diaz, Sergio Quintanilla and Alejandra Barajas Tinoco.

Eugenia B. Amaya de Diaz has been a patient of El Monte CHC since 2016. She is a wife, mother and works as a customer services representative. She enjoys playing guitar. Her motivation in participating in PFAC is to express concerns and learn more, “I hope we can do something great about this,” said Ms. Amaya de Diaz.

With parental consent, Jose Diaz eagerly accepted being a Patient Advisor and will add a child’s perspective to the PFAC.

Sergio Quintanilla utilizes multiple DHS facilities. As a patient of EL Monte CHC, he is interested in learning to better navigate the DHS system to access health care services. “Texting and including a hyperlink to the My Wellness Portal in the text reminders would improve patient scheduling of appointments and access to care,” says Mr. Quintanilla.

Alejandra Barajas Tinoco and her family have been coming to El Monte CHC since 2001. Ms. Tinoco enjoys art and painting, volunteering her talent as a muralist at her children’s school. She is interested in participating in PFAC because as she says of El Monte CHC, “They saved my life!”

As the PFAC Members continue to explore opportunities to enhance their health care delivery system, they are discovering that with courage and strength, the first step sets the coordinates to what lies ahead.

2019 CPE Day Addresses Trauma-Informed and Spiritual Care

By Fr. Chris Ponnet, BCC Director, Department of Spiritual Care at LAC+USC Medical Center, Pastor/Chaplain of St. Camillus Center for Spiritual Care

On July 31, 2019 over 50 board certified educators, chaplains and intern students gathered at the California Endowment Center for an annual event sponsored by St. Camillus Center for Spiritual Care, Interfaith Department of Spiritual Care LAC+USC Medical Center and ACPE Interfaith Professional Chaplains Training Educators. Those who attended represented 9 clinical hospitals/sites in southern California. The focus of the day was "Trauma-Informed Care and Spiritual Care." The day opened in interfaith reflection by Rev. Cheri Coleman an ACPE Educator at Loma Linda VA and closed in prayer by Fr. Chris Ponnet, Director of Spiritual Care at LAC+USC Medical Center.

"Trauma-informed care involves helping practitioners understand how client and patient trauma shape medical, psychological, and communal experience and affect the provision and outcomes associated with care. I had the privilege to hear the team from Repair speak about trauma informed care last fall. It was very well done and timely information. Trauma impacts us every day, either directly or through those seeking spiritual care and healing. This is an important and timely learning opportunity," said Rev. Cheri Coleman, MDiv., BCC, ACPE Certified Educator.

The day's events began with an Introduction to Trauma Informed Care by Beth Ribet of Repair, Susie Hess of Trauma-Informed LA and Kande Lewis of Positive Results Corporation. After lunch, speakers included Samia Bano of Academy of Thriving and Cantor Fran Chalin. The presentations led the group to talk about the experience with trauma as chaplains and supporting medical hospital staff and families that also experienced trauma in their own lives. The event is always a time for networking among the interns across the region and an opportunity to catch up with colleagues who serve as supportive fellow chaplains and educators. Trauma informed care and spiritual care is about the holistic care of staff and their families who experience one trauma after another whether it be a shooting, cancer, burns, fetal demise along with cultural traumas of racism, hate discrimination and much more. The tools of trauma informed care begin with creating safe places, sacred spaces, where feelings are honored, and emotions are seen as signs of health, balance and courage.



Rev. Rambhoru Brinkman of Urban Interfaith ACPE Center Director and Fr. Chris Ponnet of St. Camillus Center for Spiritual Care began these educational days many years ago to educate, network and create a safe place to process our own trauma and blessings in trauma, hospice and the settings of deep human emotions. For more information visit crisisprevention.com, repairconnect.org and StCamillusCenter.org.

Disaster Preparedness – Family Communication Plan

By Contributing writers, LA County Health Services — EMS Agency/DEC Program

In disasters, communication networks such as mobile phones and computers with internet are at risk of failing. Weather incidents, power failures, natural disasters like earthquakes and floods can cause portions of the electrical grid to fail. Hacking and planned power grid shutdowns are other risks that can cause lapses in communication as well.

If a situation dictates that you must evacuate work, home or a vacation site, a communication plan for all family members is essential in case you are separated. A clear communication plan helps to eliminate frustration and confusion and may assist in reunification.

Take time to sit with your family and discuss the importance of a plan, then complete and distribute the plan. Keep it simple - print key information on a small laminated card/paper and place it in your purse or wallet so it is available for quick

reference.

If your plan is not laminated, fold and place it in a small zip lock bag to protect it. Put a copy in your car's glove box or along with a cache of supplies in your vehicle's trunk. A personal supply list will be featured in the next preparedness article.

The following link provides a useful form to build a personalized family communications plan: https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1530826217620-10775bfc5d7600be8e6b88308b24d8c/P1094_CreateYourFamilyEmergencyCommunicationPlan_070318.pdf





DHS SPOTLIGHT

Lab Optimization

August 2019

Why is Lab Optimization important?

We serve passionately so that our communities can flourish. DHS laboratories (labs) provide an important service to each patient through clinical laboratory testing to obtain information about the health of a patient to aid in diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disease. The labs are most efficient when operating collaboratively as an Enterprise structure or “One Lab”.

What is Lab Optimization?

Lab Optimization is a multi-year process improvement effort to ensure:

- All patients have equitable access to medically necessary tests;
- Providers have a voice on available diagnostic testing and laboratory formulary;
- Laboratory personnel have opportunities to grow, develop, and achieve their full potential; and
- All laboratory resources are utilized effectively.



The DHS lab enterprise will meet its’ objectives while operating efficiently, leveraging costs, improving patient care, and acting as One Lab operating in multiple locations.

DHS has ten clinical labs operating across Los Angeles County that will align themselves through standardization or developing common processes as an essential component of optimization. We started the optimization process with a collaborative effort between staff representing all ten labs, Enterprise Application Management Office (EAMO), and Cerner to develop a shared understanding for “standardization” within the DHS Labs. This encompasses equipment, processes, reference ranges, availability of tests, and standardizing test results.

Historically, the ten labs made fairly independent decisions regarding equipment and processes. A significant focus of lab optimization is to create a culture in which we become effective at making decisions as an enterprise. The process of standardization at the labs is being accomplished via focused workgroups which are co-led by a clinical lead who is typically the area director at one of our laboratory sections, and an operations leader who is usually the technical / operations expert at another of our labs. Standardization of key elements is now a pre-requisite for acquiring new lab instruments and interfacing them with ORCHID.

The strategic intent of lab optimization is to eventually move to an integrated lab network where processes are streamlined, efforts are consolidated to reduce redundancy, and routine tests with low urgency are processed at regional labs located at

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LAC+USC and Harbor. These two large regional hospital labs will also handle more urgent, time sensitive testing for their own locations. The remaining labs can then focus on performing tests that require very quick turnaround for clinical management of patients and decrease time spent on routine testing. The integration of the DHS Enterprise Laboratories is expected to improve the fundamental quality of laboratory and clinical services to patients and clinicians through decreasing the complexity of laboratory services, enhancing the continuity of care for both patients and providers, creating a trustworthy and seamless stream of clinical data and test results, and decreasing overall laboratory costs.

Our initial priorities for optimization have been in support of the upcoming Martin Luther King Jr., Outpatient Center (MLK) lab move. The lab will be relocated elsewhere on the MLK campus due to repurposing of its current building. Task-forces have been established and focused on the transition of each lab platform to ensure testing, courier services, ORCHID changes, and communications are uniform and well coordinated.

What has been the impact of Lab Optimization?

The first ever truly standardized DHS lab deployment was completed whereby all labs have the same coagulation platform – equipment, orderables, test names, reference ranges, comments, and more.

Standardization of reference ranges and testing ranges ensures that patient testing can be trended even if the patient moves between facilities and has coagulation studies in different labs. The first ever standardization project in Blood Cultures in the microbiology lab was completed so that patient demographics are now automatically downloaded to the Blood Culture analyzers without manual processes.

In support of the upcoming MLK lab relocation, tests that were previously performed at MLK for Hubert H. Humphrey, Roybal and El Monte Comprehensive Health Centers have been seamlessly transitioned to Harbor-UCLA and LAC+USC without impact to patient care, thanks to collaboration and communication between the lab staff at these locations, EAMO team, courier services and providers at each of the impacted facilities.



Where do we go from here?

We are at the beginning of the standardization and optimization process and have a long road ahead. The next test platforms to be standardized include Urine Analysis, Microbiology, Chemistry / Immunoassay, and Blood gases. Work to make the MLK lab transition a seamless one for our patients will continue with a focus in the areas of Microbiology and Anatomical Pathology.



Acknowledgments

DHS-wide efforts to improve laboratory processes have been successful thus far thanks to the leadership of Lab Directors, Lab Managers, and facility Administration at each of our ten locations. Pro-active collaboration between the staff at all our labs, the EAMO team, IT and providers has been essential to our initial successes.



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