



Health Program for Uninsured Marks Milestone

By Michael Wilson



Maria Olivera doesn't qualify for health coverage under the Affordable Care Act. The 65 year old widow and grandmother battles arthritis, high cholesterol and the wear and tear from a decade working in the garment industry. She isn't eligible for Medi-Cal, Medicare or subsidized private insurance because she is undocumented. According to a 2015 UCLA Center for Health Policy research report, "Which Californians Will Lack Insurance under the Affordable Care Act?" there are an estimated 460,000 individuals in Los Angeles County who are uninsured due to their immigration status. Many churn in and out of hospital emergency rooms or neglect chronic medical conditions. Because Olivera is a resident of Los Angeles County and

meets the program's income criteria, she qualifies for My Health LA (MHLA), a coverage program for low-income, uninsured and uninsurable adults and children that launched last October. The program is no-cost, and enrollees select a medical home clinic from a participating community partner agency from which they will receive ongoing primary care over the next year. She now gets regular care at the Clinica Monsignor Oscar A. Romero in the Pico Union area of Los Angeles, one of 53 nonprofit agencies contracted with the Department of Health Services to provide services to MHLA participants. As of October 2015, the first full year of the program, over 135,000 people were enrolled in the program. She receives free preventive and primary

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A Message From the Director



I am writing this column from my temporary office at Olive View-UCLA Medical Center.

I have spent the last two weeks as an attending, seeing inpatients on the medical service. It has been a wonderful experience. If you told this urban Brooklyn boy that he would one day work at a hospital where people pass by on horseback, I would have told you that would be impossible.

However, nestled into the mountains is this gem of a hospital, caring for vulnerable patients in a warm family atmosphere. Nurses, doctors, and the other members of the great Olive View staff have been incredibly helpful directing me, as I stand lost in the hallways trying to figure out where to find a patient.

Part of the job of being here these past two weeks is seeing how well the staff have adapted to ORCHID, our new electronic health record. With implementation of ORCHID, 90% of DHS is on the same computer system. In fact, from my Olive View office I was just able to check the record of a patient who receives their care at Harbor-UCLA. What a change! This Fast FACTS includes stories about wonderful things going on throughout DHS and with our community partners, including My Health LA, Housing for Health, and our CIT coaches.

Best wishes.

High Quality
Patient Centered
Cost-Effective Health Care

From Dr. Katz

FAST FACTS



The MLK Outpatient Center accepts the 2015 Best Patient Safety Pilot Project award for its pilot initiative to improve safe prescribing in the outpatient setting.

Safety Conference Draws Hundreds

By Marife Mendoza, RN

The 11th consecutive DHS Patient Safety Conference and Awards Ceremony was held at the California Endowment for Healthy Communities in September. This year's conference theme was "Speaking Up for Safety at DHS" – aimed at encouraging workforce members to be safety agents by promoting a "safety first" culture and to say it when they see it. The conference was well attended by over 200 frontline staff, middle managers and executive leaders.

Highlights of the 2-day conference were keynote presentations by Regina Holliday, Suzanne Beyea and Matthew London on

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transparency in healthcare, the importance of speaking up to improve continuous delivery of safe and quality care, and organizational approaches on workplace violence, respectively. There were also presentations on Just Culture and event reporting using safety intelligence.

Several facilities were presented with awards for developing innovative safety programs. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Outpatient Center won the Best Patient Safety Pilot Project award of \$10,000. The Best Patient Safety Management Level Award of \$4,000 was given to Dr. Hyung (Henry) Kim, and the Best Patient Safety Staff Level



Painting on the 2015 Patient Safety Conference Theme, “Speaking Up for Safety at LAC-DHS”

Award of \$3,000 was given to Edgar Lazo, both of the LAC+USC Medical Center Emergency Department. Olive View-UCLA Medical Center won the Best Patient Safety Team award of \$6,000 and was also given the glacial recognition award for the Best Patient Safety Implemented Project. Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center and Harbor-UCLA Medical Center won recognition certificates for the Best Patient Safety Poster Displays.

Finally, Harbor-UCLA’s “Gold” and “DESC” patient safety video teams received \$1,000 for their Patient Safety Video submissions. Congratulations to all winners. We are looking forward for another successful conference next year!

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care, and medications. If she needs to see a specialist, her primary care doctor can make a referral to DHS.

Having healthcare coverage through MHLA means she no longer has to spend \$60 for a visit and another \$50 for prescriptions that she used to at another clinic. “It’s hard to pay the high costs of healthcare here because our salaries are low, rent is high, food is high, plus the costs of gas, insurance and raising children.”

MHLA program director Amy Luftig Viste says the program is important from both cost and quality of care perspectives. “It doesn’t make sense to rely on emergency departments and urgent care clinics to be the primary source of care for a person with a primary care issue,” she says.

“We can help them be well before an urgent care or emergency visit is needed.” The County has partnered with community clinics since 1995 when the Public Private Partnership (PPP) program was created to improve access to primary care. Community clinics typically have deep ties to the communities they serve and long histories of serving low-income, immigrant populations.

When it launched last year, the program formerly known as Healthy Way LA Unmatched was renamed and revamped under a managed care structure with a focus on participant enrollment, consistent medical homes, and care management of the patient by clinics. Community partner agencies, which were formerly reimbursed on a fee for service basis, are now paid a flat monthly rate for each enrolled participant. All agencies in the MHLA program, with the exception of a few clinics located in the Antelope Valley area, are federally-qualified health centers (FQHCs) or FQHC Look-Alikes, meaning they are eligible for federal grants, able to participate in 340B discounted drug pricing, and have strong administrative oversight.

“Care coordination is so important under this model,” adds Luftig Viste. “The nature of managed care is that you pay for patients who never use services and you also pay for complex patients who generate costs that exceed payment. There is a greater pressure on clinics to better manage the patient to control costs and deliver optimal care.” The MHLA program office ensures the provision of quality care through regular audits of medical records, site reviews, and careful evaluation of encounter data submitted monthly by clinics for their MHLA enrolled patients. Next February, the program will roll out “phase two” of pharmacy services that will allow MHLA patients to access drugs at retail pharmacies throughout the County.

Olivera comes to Clinica Romero about once every couple of months and has been given a good bill of health on this visit. She tells neighbors and friends about MHLA and believes many undocumented residents are more alert today to available resources, but stay silent out of fear. “People should come out of the shadows and not be afraid to ask for resources.”

MHLA is funded by a \$61M grant from the Board of Supervisors.

Housing Program First-of-a-Kind in the Nation

By Corrin Buchanan, MPP

The Housing for Health division recently launched a new effort called Breaking Barriers, a collaboration with the LA County Probation Department to provide a rapid-rehousing program through the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool (FHSP).

The FHSP is a supportive housing rental subsidy program designed to secure quality affordable housing for people experiencing homelessness. Breaking Barriers connects probationers who are homeless to housing, case management, and employment services, with the goal of ending homelessness and reducing recidivism.

Brilliant Corners, the agency which operates the FHSP, is charged with finding units and making rental subsidy payments. As program participants increase their income, their contribution towards rent increases and over a two year period the rental subsidy

ends so that participants take over the rent and transition in place.

Brilliant Corners also provides intensive case management services, which include providing assistance in the housing process, securing educational and employment opportunities, and establishing connections to health, mental health, and substance abuse treatment services in the community. Specialized employment services are provided by Chrysalis.

This program, which is the first of its kind in the country, was launched with \$4.2 million in funding over two years from the Probation Department and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. The goal of the program is to serve 200-300 probationers over this period of time. An evaluation of the program will be conducted by RAND.



And One More Thing...

CIT Coaches and Co-Leads from the “Gateway to Health” Care Improvement Team in the Ambulatory Care Network (ACN) earned a Productivity and Quality Award (PQA) recognition this year by improving patient experience and access to primary care providers. The partnership-based Care Improvement Teams significantly

decreased patients’ wait time when calling the appointment centers, increased the percent of patients being registered by the time of their appointment, and almost doubled the percent of patients given appointments to their empaneled providers.

Read next month’s issue for more on PQA awardees in DHS.