




## Director's Message

Dear OC Health Care Agency (HCA) Team,

Over the past year and a half, COVID-19 has had an overwhelming impact on the physical health of many in our community. With cases and hospitalizations now rising again due to the Delta Variant, we are still having to take every precaution we can to prevent the spread of infection, including masking indoors, avoiding crowded spaces, and maintaining physical distancing whenever possible, among others. Let's not forget, however, that many of us have also had to cope with the mental effects of this pandemic, such as worry, stress, anxiety, and depression, both in our

*... continued on page 3*

## Peer-to-Peer

### William "Will" Crittenden

"After leaving the Marine Corps I was looking for a job where I could make an impact in the community. I soon realized that working with the County of Orange (County) would allow me flexibility and the opportunity to help others." That's how Peer-to-Peer recipient **William "Will" Crittenden**, Service Chief II, with the Jail to Community Re-Entry Program (JCRP), transitioned from serving his country to serving his county. "My first job with the County was with Veterans Services. Working with Veterans was a unique experience, but I felt like I needed a greater challenge. I found the challenge working with Behavioral Health Services in the Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) program the Crisis Assessment Team and the Psychiatric Emergency and Response Team. After working with these programs, I realized I could make a greater impact as a supervisor."



Will has been with the County for about a decade. After promoting through the ranks he likes where he's currently serving in Correctional Health Services (CHS). "I don't see myself as doing anything individually but rather as part of a team. I work with four other Service Chiefs at CHS who are great at what they do. Our Service Chief team includes: **Dr. Addie Tsujiuchi, Coletta Franciscus, Cathy Speckmann and Geoff Glowalla**. They are all seasoned supervisors who drive the mental health services

*... continued on page 10*

## FEATURED ARTICLES

- OC Crisis Response
- System Forum ..... 2
- Office of Suicide Prevention.....4
- 5 Things You Need to Know ..... 4
- COVID-19 Clinic at OC Fair .....6

# OC Crisis Response System

**W**ith support of the Orange County (OC) Board of Supervisors (Board) Mental Health Ad Hoc Committee, represented by Board Chairman Andrew Do and Supervisor Lisa A. Bartlett, OC Health Care Agency (HCA) Behavioral Health Services (BHS) staff, in collaboration with MindOC staff, hosted a two-day summit focused on the OC Behavioral Health Crisis Response System. The two-day event was kicked off with opening remarks from Chairman Do and Vice Chairman Doug Chaffee from the Board of Supervisors; OC Sheriff Don Barnes; OC Health Care Agency Director **Dr. Clayton Chau**; MindOC CEO Marshall Moncrief; and the Orange County Behavioral Health Director **Dr. Jeffrey Nagel**. Invitations to the summit were sent to key stakeholders across OC, including: city managers, police chiefs, OC Sheriff Department (OCSD), Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC), family advocates (NAMI), Mind OC and OC HCA leadership. Forty-five stakeholders were able to attend this event.

Law enforcement are often called (via 911 or other means) to respond to individuals who are in a behavioral health crisis. This is a resource intensive response, and cities across the nation are looking at different models to respond to these situations effectively and efficiently. In OC, some cities are engaging in initiatives centered around the [CAHOOTS](#) model (based on work done in Eugene,



Oregon), as well as OCSD who is utilizing the Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) approach. Both of these approaches are national models, but individual models across different cities could lead to confusion and diffusion of messaging around how families can access mental health crisis services.

In light of the competing models, the two-day mental health crisis continuum summit focused on: (1) presentation of our existing system of crisis response and national models (Day 1), and (2) soliciting feedback and developing consensus around the strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results that we want as a community (Day 2). The feedback from the cities and hospital association will look at how we can integrate the different efforts in order to have a coordinated approach across the county.

Following input from key stakeholders, Behavioral



# m Forum



Health Staff will incorporate the feedback and develop a template for mapping attainable action items and bring the recommendations generated by community stakeholders to the Board of Supervisors Mental Health Ad Hoc Committee for their review, input and direction.

1. Dr. Chau leads a Q&A session after the CAHOOTS model presentation. 2. Board of Supervisors Chairman Andrew Do provides opening remarks at the Crisis Response System Forum event

**Anthony Padilla,**  
Administrative Manager I, Behavioral Health Services - Contributor



## Director's Message

*continued from page 1*

professional and personal lives.

When we talk about mental health, suicide prevention has to be included. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide was responsible for more than 47,500 deaths in 2019, with 12 million American adults seriously thinking about suicide, 3.5 million making a planned suicide attempt, and 1.4 million attempting suicide that same year.

The Orange County Board of Supervisors (Board) has supported a number of suicide prevention programs and initiatives over the years, such as the [Be a Friend for Life](#) and [Help is Here](#) campaigns. As you will read more about in this newsletter, they have directed the creation of a new Office to further support these countywide efforts. With that said, I am grateful to announce **Dr. Bhuvana Rao** as the Division Manager for the new Office of Suicide Prevention within Behavioral Health Services. The Office of Suicide Prevention will focus on increasing awareness and accessibility to available resources, coordinating suicide prevention efforts at the HCA, and taking the lead in our Agency's stigma-reduction efforts related to mental illness.

The creation of the Office is timely, in light of the week of September 5 being designated as National Suicide Prevention Week and World Suicide Prevention Day recognized on September 10. These dates allow us to remember that suicide is preventable and that there are specific ways we can support one another in prevention, including: understanding the signs, knowing how to talk to someone we know who may be contemplating, and knowing where to reach out for more resources and support.

Let's continue to support one another in doing what we can to prevent suicide. Learn more at [suicideispreventable.org](https://suicideispreventable.org), view a calendar of suicide prevention awareness events throughout this month at [stigmafreeoc.com](https://stigmafreeoc.com), and remember that the Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-8255) is available 24/7 to anyone who might be thinking about suicide or concerned about a loved one who might be at risk.



Stay Well,

**Dr. Clayton Chau, MD, PHD**  
HCA Director and County Health Officer

# Announcing the Office of SUICIDE PREVENTION

The OC Health Care Agency (HCA) is excited to announce the creation of the Office of Suicide Prevention (OSP). This is a timely announcement since September is when the HCA promotes suicide prevention awareness. One suicide death is too many, and Orange County (OC) averages about 330 suicide deaths a year. To address this issue, the Orange County Board of Supervisors (Board) has supported a number of suicide prevention programs and initiatives over the years. On March 12, 2019, the Board directed the HCA to allocate funds to create a countywide suicide prevention initiative with the goal of increasing awareness and accessibility to available resources.

On October 6, 2020, the Board directed the County Executive Officer and the HCA Director to create an Office of Suicide Prevention to further support these countywide efforts.

**Dr. Jeffrey Nagel**, Orange County Behavioral Health Director reflected that “The Office of Suicide Prevention will coordinate suicide prevention efforts at the HCA and interface with local and statewide initiatives to identify and facilitate the implementation of evidence-based and promising suicide prevention activities in OC. This Office will also take the lead in the HCA’s stigma-reduction efforts related to mental illness.”

**Bhuvana Rao** (pictured) was promoted to the position of



**Bhuvana Rao**  
Division Manager,  
Office of Suicide Prevention

Division Manager over the OSP said Jeff. “Bhuvana brings a wealth of experience and knowledge into the position, having served for the past seven years as the Program Manager overseeing all contracted programs within the Behavioral Health Services Prevention and

## 5 Things You Need to Know About

On August 26, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a health advisory against the use of a prescription medication called ivermectin, used to treat certain infections caused by internal and external parasites, for prevention or treatment of COVID-19. Here are five things you need to know about ivermectin:

**1** Ivermectin is not currently authorized or approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for treatment of COVID-19.

**2** Human exposures and adverse effects associated with ivermectin reported to poison control centers have increased in 2021 compared to the pre-pandemic baseline. These reports include increased use of veterinary products not meant for human consumption.

Intervention Division, including services such as the OC WarmLine, Suicide Prevention Crisis Line and Survivors Support Services.”

**Mark Lawrenz**, Division Manager, Prevention and Intervention said Bhuvana will serve as subject matter expert on suicide prevention and stigma-reduction, and he looks forward to partnering with the OSP in these efforts, “Stigma is a primary barrier resulting in untreated/delayed mental health treatment, resulting in devastating consequences including suicide.”

Bhuvana said she is honored to serve as the HCA lead and liaison in the coordination of suicide prevention efforts, “including the Community Suicide Prevention Initiative (CSPI), and the distribution of Federal, State and Local resources pertaining to suicide

prevention and stigma reduction.” Bhuvana said the OSP will coordinate data collection and analysis efforts around this topic.

The Week of September 5th is National Suicide Prevention Week, and World Suicide Prevention Day is on September 10th. This year’s theme is “Supportive Transitions,” which reminds us, during this time of many transitions, that disruptions can have a profound impact on our mental health. “Positive coping skills, resilience and connectedness to family, friends and community can act

as protective factors to help us navigate transitions (Each Mind Matters),” said Bhuvana. The Office of Suicide Prevention has created a calendar of suicide prevention awareness events, which is available on the homepage of the Stigma Free OC website at: [www.stigma-freeoc.com](http://www.stigma-freeoc.com).

Remember that resources, such as the Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-8255) are available 24/7 to anyone who might be thinking about suicide or concerned about a loved one who might be at risk.



## ut: IVERMECTIN

**3** Do not swallow ivermectin products that should be used on skin (e.g., lotions and creams) or are not meant for human use, such as veterinary ivermectin products.

**4** Signs and symptoms include gastrointestinal effects (nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and diarrhea), headache, blurred vision, dizziness, fast heart rate, and low blood pressure. Other severe nervous system effects have been reported, including tremors, seizures, hallucinations, confusion, loss of coordination and balance, decreased alertness, and coma.

**5** Seek immediate medical attention or call the poison control center hotline (1-800-222-1222) for advice if you have taken ivermectin or a product that contains ivermectin and are having symptoms.

# COVID-19 Clinic

## at Orange County Fair



OC Health Care Agency (HCA) staff were busy during the OC Fair by providing COVID-19 vaccinations to fair-goers. The clinic and others like it are the result of a community vaccine sub-task force that was created to address vaccine hesitancy and help develop strategies to meet the people where they live, work and play in order to provide them with information and options to protect themselves and those around them.

At the OC Fair and Event Center a booth was set-up in the Carnival of Products building. A small team, consisting of a pharmacy coordinator, vaccinator and administrative personnel to help with registration, offered health information, vaccinations, and a chance to win prizes as a token of appreciation to those who received the vaccine. The team vaccinated 160 fair-goers during the 12 days the booth was open. In addition to vaccines, the team offered clients an

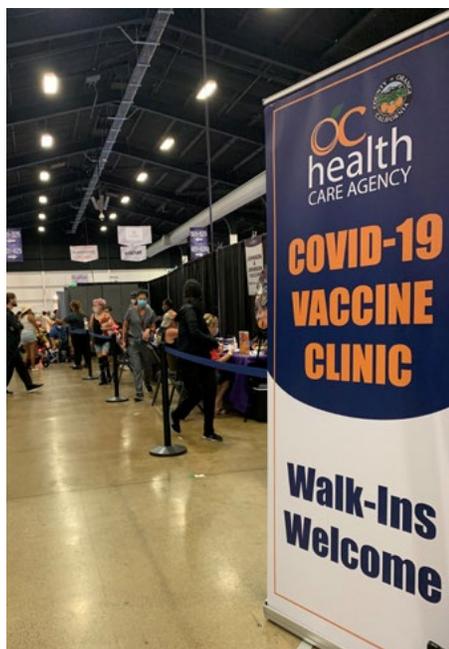
opportunity to spin a wheel to win Adventure City and Angel's Tickets, Girl Scout Cookies, or McDonald's gift cards.

Since the start of Operation Independence, which celebrated a milestone on July 4 by vaccinating at least 70% of the eligible population the HCA has ramped up vaccination efforts in response to the Delta Variant of COVID-19 which continues to spread. The HCA team is focused on three main areas:

- ★ State-identified equity ZIP Codes 92701, 92805, 92703, 92844
- ★ Census tracts among cities below 30% vaccinated
- ★ Cities with increasing test positivity rate

There are on average 30 similar vaccine clinic events per week at various times and locations throughout the county. Public events are listed and appointments can be scheduled on [Othena.com](https://www.othena.com).





## Reducing Food Waste: Looks Aren't Everything!

Imperfect produce are fruits and vegetables that are not the perfect size and shape, have blemishes and are not uniformly colored. However, imperfect produce still delivers the same taste and nutrition as their perfect partners.

The US Department of Agriculture estimates that a third of all produce from farmers goes uneaten. Purchasing and eating imperfect produce may help to change what grocers think the customer wants and reduce the food waste left in the farmers' fields.

Try these tips to help you reduce food waste:

1. **Cut up your own "Baby Carrots."** Packed "Baby Carrots" are just imperfect carrots that have been re-shaped.
2. **Broccoli stems are special!** Chop and add stems to soups, or peel & prepare the soft inner parts as a raw vegetable snack.
3. **Don't peel those funny shaped potatoes and yams!** Root vegetables and their skins are high in minerals and fiber.
4. **Use wrinkled tomatoes** for homemade pasta sauce or in soups.
5. **Use imperfect fruits** to whip up healthy smoothies. Make apple sauce from older or funny shaped apples.

**Patty Stable**, Public Health Nutritionist II - Contributor



# For Health

### SNACK HEALTHY!

Healthy snacking is important at every age. Choosing to snack on fruits and vegetables is a great way to get the nutrients you need while avoiding added sugars. This will keep you feeling energized between meals.

To make snacking on fruits and vegetables the easy choice you can:

**Prep ahead** – Wash and cut up fresh vegetables and portion them into reusable containers so they are ready to grab-and-go.

**Choose vibrant vegetables** – Colorful and crunchy raw vegetables are a healthy choice. Try dipping broccoli, zucchini sticks, or baby carrots in hummus, guacamole, or a low-fat yogurt sauce.

**Wash and enjoy** – Fresh fruit make a great go-to snack when you are looking for a quick sweet treat. Apples, pears, grapes, and bananas are always easy and fast.

**Keep healthy options handy** – Keep fruits and vegetables visible and within reach in the fridge or on the counter for a convenient anytime snack.



### Chickpea Dip with Fresh Vegetables

#### Ingredients:

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas (known as garbanzo beans), drained and rinsed | ¼ teaspoon salt                      |
| 3 garlic cloves  | ¼ teaspoon paprika                   |
| ¼ cup plain low-fat yogurt   | ⅛ teaspoon ground black pepper       |
| 1 tablespoon lemon juice   | 1 medium carrot, sliced              |
| 1 teaspoon vegetable or olive oil (or nonstick cooking spray)            | 2 medium celery stalks, sliced       |
|  | ½ cup snap peas                      |
|  | 1 medium head of cauliflower, sliced |

#### Directions:

1. Put the first eight ingredients into a food processor and blend until smooth. Serve at room temperature with vegetable slices and snap peas.

For nutritional information and additional recipes click [here](#).

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

# BHS Partnership with Goodwill Industries



Employment specialist Huy Trinh (center) recently provided assistance to Robert Masai (left) and Alexa Hipwell (right) through Goodwill's EWORKS program.

**H**ealth Care Agency Behavioral Health Services (BHS) and Goodwill Industries of Orange County were featured in an OC Register article (read [here](#)) for the Adult Supported Employment Works ([EWORKS](#)) program. BHS partners with Goodwill to assist individuals who are living with mental illness, with developing the necessary tools and skills to become employment ready. In the article, the Register reported that over an 18-month period during the COVID-19 pandemic, the program, “made roughly 3,000 calls to local employers. And in the fiscal year that ended (in June), EWORKS had nearly 300 active participants, with 84 full and part-time placements involved in gainful employment, and ten others in volunteer positions.”

The program is overseen by BHS said **Christina Shelby**, Contract Monitor. “At BHS, we partner and oversee the Goodwill Adult Supported Employment Contract to ensure that our clients are receiving high quality services. We

develop the outcomes for the program and assist in program development, as well as ensuring collaboration with referring programs.

Goodwill EWORKS has been a contract provider “for more than 14 years and specializes in assisting Adults who are living with mental illness that are receiving services through BHS County and Contracted Clinics. EWORKS provides necessary skills to gain competitive employment/volunteer opportunities, build interview skills, resumes and job skills. EWORKS has done an exceptional job at developing relationships with employers and assisting clients on the job while advocating for the client in their position (with their consent).”

Christina said BHS and Goodwill worked together during the pandemic to hold its first virtual graduation to celebrate those that obtained employment, as well as developing hybrid Job Club for participants to build employment skills remotely. “With years of success, BHS and Goodwill of Orange County will continue to provide employment opportunities and first-hand experience in the workforce for those who are living with mental illness.”

## Peer-to-Peer

continued from page 1

in correctional health. We all work together to improve the services patients receive in the Orange County Jails. Their motivation encourages me to work hard and make the JCRP program successful.”

The JCRP works on linking patients to programs in the community once clients are identified as being in process for release from incarceration. Will says the team works quickly and collaboratively to link clients to community-based programs. “I really enjoy working with experienced peer supervisors and a motivated clinical team. I’m very fortunate to be able to say that our team is supportive, driven and dedicated to the mission of our program. This is the most positive group of staff and supervisors that I have worked with since I’ve been employed with the County.”

Will says he and his team enjoys the challenges of thinking of creative ways to be even more effective linking clients to programs. He says he’s proud of the JCRP program and staff. “They work very hard to transition clients from incarceration to the community. We work with a very challenging population and our role involves coordination with various external programs. These are all complex tasks. Our staff do their job very well. They are all persistent and make a huge effort to link patients to community providers. I’m proud to be part of this innovative program and I want to continue to be part of making it successful.”

When Will has time, he says his hobbies include working and riding anything with a motor. He has a few project cars and motorcycles but not always enough time for them!

He does take time to thank his colleagues for being a cohesive team. “Although I appreciate being recognized for a portion of my work it really is the team that is making our program a success. From the Service Chiefs to the JCRP staff, we’ve worked diligently and remain committed to the program’s mission especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

**oc health**  
CARE AGENCY

**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. Thank you!