



# A Year of *Change*

2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT

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# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Greetings from the OC Health Care Agency,

To say this is a time of great change is an understatement. Since the first of the year, the OC Health Care Agency (HCA) has focused on the efficiency and efficacy of what we do as an Agency and has been proactive in preparing for changes in healthcare and the way we do business. The HCA is funded by 160 different funding streams and each of these funding streams has different requirements for how we can use the funding. Some of our programs are federally mandated, some are state mandated, and some are determined locally. Although the programs and services we deliver have been impacted by reduced funding and resources, we continue working together to support the vital services that we are mandated to provide. We always have, and we always will.

Internally, the HCA Executive Leadership team has focused on several priorities this year including:

- Supporting staff with a focus on recruitment and retention
- Reviewing all processes, including agency policies and procedures, to ensure we work smarter, not harder
- Reviewing all procedures to ensure we are not wasting time or money
- Organizing the HCA to better support a proactive and not a reactive health care philosophy
- Establishing and maintaining open lines of communication between leadership and staff.

Externally, our focus remains on ensuring that we meet all mandates for our funding and service delivery. We are also shifting programs that are redundant, that are the responsibility of other entities, or that don't serve the needs of our residents. These decisions are made with Agency leadership, our fiscal team, county and community partners, and our County Executive Office. The HCA regularly advises the Board of Supervisors of such changes and meets with our labor union partners as appropriate.

The vision and mission of the HCA remain focused on partnering with the community to deliver responsive, sustainable services that promote a healthy Orange County.



**Veronica Kelley, DSW, LCSW**  
Director, OC Health Care Agency



During this time of great changes, the **OC Health Care Agency** remains focused on partnering with our community to improve your quality of life wherever we meet.



### Safeguarding Privacy

County-HCA Information Technology safeguards critical health data and IT infrastructure, ensuring compliance, continuity, and resilience across public, behavioral and environmental health care operations. By protecting systems and information, it upholds and strengthens trust, privacy, and service availability for both county government and residents.

### Saving Lives

A man sitting on a park bench feels sudden pain in his chest and a friend calls 9-1-1. While being driven in an ambulance we've inspected to a nearby hospital we've designated, he receives life-giving medical care by paramedics who are following the medical policies we've established and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT/s) we've certified.



### Connecting Health, Wellness and Other Resources

Your behavioral health and wellness depend on many things, including knowing where to go or who to call when you need help. Whether you are a parent, child, student or young adult, bad days happen. But you are not alone. You can find resources near you and that meet your needs or connect with a navigator to help, by calling us at 1-855-OC-Links and gets directly connected to a program that can help.

**OC Links** <sup>24/7</sup>  
855-OC LINKS  
(855-625-4657)



JAIL



### Preventing Disease Spread and Treatment

A nurse screens a new arrestee for medical, mental health, and substance use issues, and discovers an infectious disease. We diagnose, treat, and ensure they are linked to services before release.



-  Administrative Services
-  Behavioral Health Services
-  Correctional Health Services
-  Public Health Services
-  Specialized Medical Services



### Giving New Families a Great Start

A pregnant woman or parenting person learns how to cook nutritious meals and is provided resources on accessing food resources for the family. We provide health education including, prenatal and post-natal topics, safe sleep habits for infants, drowning prevention, harmful effects of second-hand smoke and traveling safely in a car seat. We provide nutrition information and the benefits of breastfeeding as well as the importance of childhood vaccines. We also issue the newborn's official birth certificate.



### Combating Stigma

A man attends a local event and starts talking with people who are wearing lime green ribbons. He learns they're supporting and educating on behavioral health awareness; and for the first time he doesn't feel embarrassed about the way he's been feeling. They direct him to [OCNavigator.org](http://OCNavigator.org) where he can explore more resources and learn more about the help available in his community.



### Helping Our Local Businesses

An entrepreneur looking to build or remodel a food facility or public pool, saves time by using our Electronic Plan Submittal services. Restaurants, markets, bars, cottage foods, or public pools that need renewed annual Health Permits, along with fees for body art, and underground storage tanks can also be paid through our online portal.



### Protecting Your Safety

A surfer catches a wave of clean ocean water that we monitor and test. She dries off and grabs a sandwich made with ingredients that have been safely stored and prepared in a beach café kitchen we inspect.





405  
West Fifth Street



# Our Organization

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

*Partnering with the  
community to deliver  
responsive and sustainable  
services that promote a  
healthy Orange County.*

# OUR LEADERSHIP



**Veronica Kelley,**  
**DSW, LCSW**  
AGENCY DIRECTOR



**Lorraine Daniel,**  
**MPA**  
ASSISTANT AGENCY  
DIRECTOR



**Ian Kemmer,**  
**LMFT**  
DIRECTOR, BEHAVIORAL  
HEALTH SERVICES



**Joanne Lim,**  
**MSN, RN**  
DIRECTOR, CORRECTIONAL  
HEALTH SERVICES



**Jenna Sarin,**  
**MSN, RN**  
DIRECTOR, PUBLIC HEALTH  
AND NURSING SERVICES



**Mindy Winterswyk,**  
**DPT, PCS**  
DIRECTOR, SPECIALIZED  
MEDICAL SERVICES



**Regina Chinsio-Kwong,**  
**DO**  
COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER

# OUR FACILITIES



## The OC Health Care Agency's 3,096 staff work in 34 facility locations throughout Orange County, including two new facilities:

### Marine Way Campus

In April, the HCA officially opened the Marine Way Campus, a sleek, modern space that houses four major Divisions under one roof:

- Public Health Laboratory (23,500 ft<sup>2</sup>)
- Community and Nursing Services (12,500 ft<sup>2</sup>)
- Emergency Medical Services (15,000 ft<sup>2</sup>)
- Agency Operations Center (AOC) (7,500 ft<sup>2</sup>)

### James A. Musick Facility

In November 2024, the OC Sheriff's Department opened a new facility that houses minimum and medium-security incarcerated persons under a new supportive model of services, which enhances safety and greater access to health services. HCA's Correctional Health Services team successfully implemented medical, mental health, dental and pharmaceutical services within this new facility.



Marine Way Campus



Marine Way Campus



Marine Way Campus



# OUR COMMUNITY

## Advisory Committees

- American Academy of Pediatrics' Committee of Infectious Diseases
- Behavioral Health Advisory Board
- California STD/HIV Controllers Association
- California Tuberculosis Controllers Association
- County Nutrition Action Partnership
- Emergency Medical Care Committee
- Health Care Coalition
- HIV Planning Council
- Jasper Ray Foundation Advisory Board
- National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, Board of Directors
- OC Community Health Improvement Plan Steering Committee
- OC Community Health Improvement Plan Workgroups
- OCTA E Bike Safety Plan Stakeholder Committee
- Oral Health Collaborative
- Orange County Immunization Coalition
- Orange County Perinatal Council
- Orange County Prevention Network
- Orange County Transportation Authority Next STEP Safe Routes to School Steering Committee
- Population Health Collaborative
- Providence Mission Hospital Community Health Committee
- Ryan White Quality Management Committee
- STI Coalition Orange County
- Tobacco and Vape Free OC Coalition





# Significant Achievements

*Driving Innovation*  
*Sustainability & Opportunity*  
*Partnership & Collaborations*  
*Outreach & Education*  
*Awards & Recognition*  
*Team Development & Culture*  
*The Challenges of Change*

*“Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower.”*

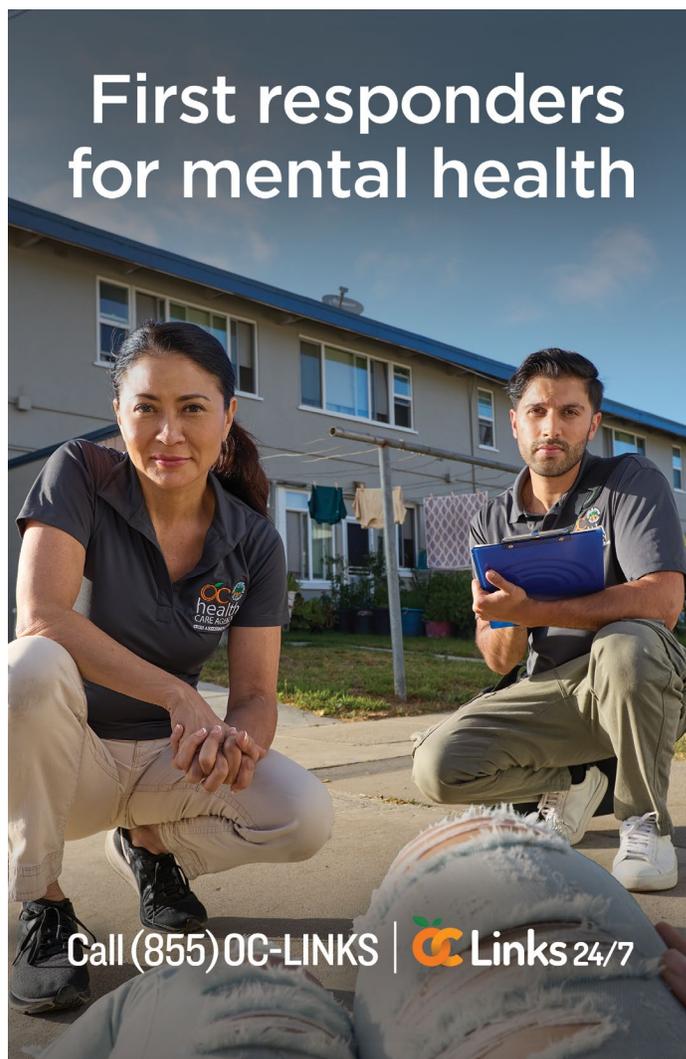
- STEVE JOBS

## First Responders for Mental Health

Behavioral Health Services (BHS) launched a broad-reaching public education media and outreach campaign designed to educate the OC community how to request a mobile crisis response and other services within the crisis continuum. The campaign is designed to educate our community to call OC Links as the first call to get care during a behavioral health crisis. Clinicians staff OC Links Behavioral Health line 24/7 and are able to dispatch a mobile crisis response team to anyone, anytime, anywhere within the County to receive urgently needed behavioral health care.

## 911 Diversion Project

In March of 2024, the HCA, in partnership with the OC Sheriff's Department, launched a program to better serve those experiencing homelessness or behavioral health disorders. OC Sheriff's Department 911 Dispatch triages non-violent and non-criminal behavioral health-related calls for service to determine if they can be diverted to OC Links, the 24-hour, 7 days a week Behavioral Health Line, an entry point for the HCA's continuum of care providing information, referral, linkage, screening, homeless outreach, and dispatching of mobile crisis response teams. 911 Dispatchers, using a series of intake questions, triage calls to determine if a deputy response is required. If the call is determined to be non-violent and non-criminal, dispatch will transfer the caller to OC Links, where they will be connected with a trained navigator and assisted with a warm hand-off to behavioral health resources and/or a dispatch of a mobile crisis response team. Last FY 2024/25, approximately 109 calls were diverted from the OC Sheriff's Department to OC Links, increasing the chances of these individuals entering and strengthening connections to behavioral health resources versus the legal justice system.



## Bi-directional Data Exchange

The HCA's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) developed a groundbreaking process that exchanges patient data bi-directionally, sending the EMS electronic patient care record (ePCR) into the receiving hospital's Electronic Health Record (EHR) and receiving patient outcome data back —streamlining communication, reducing manual entry, and enhancing patient care.

### Electronic Plan Check Submissions

Environmental Health (EH) launched an electronic plan submission portal providing a more efficient, timely and convenient process for food and pool facilities to submit construction plans, drawings and supporting documents to ensure they comply with codes and regulations. Over 97% of plans are now being submitted electronically.

### Inpatient to Outpatient Notification System

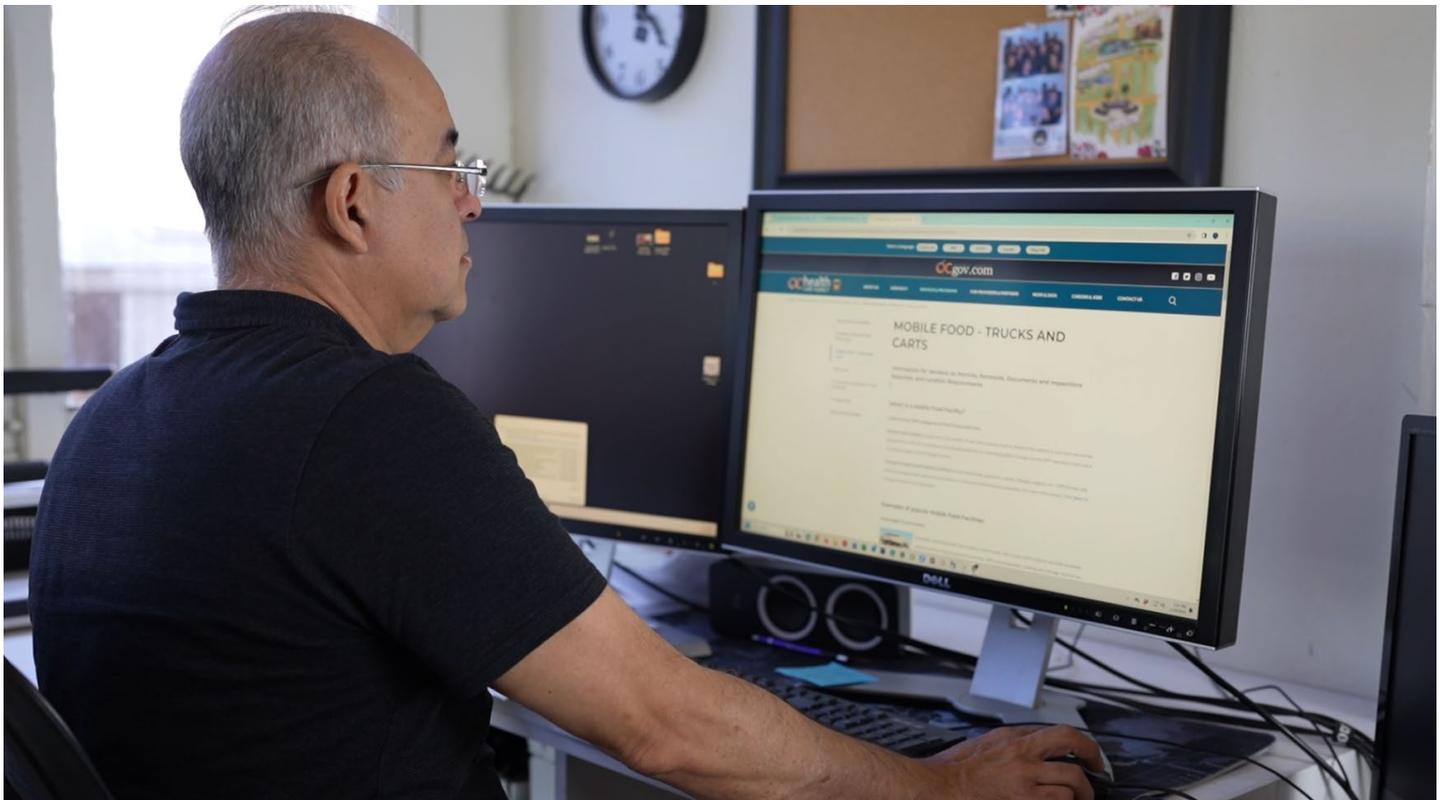
BHS has a notification system in place designed to inform outpatient providers about client admissions to acute psychiatric inpatient units. This project aims to enhance communication and collaboration between inpatient and outpatient treatment teams, ultimately fostering better continuity of care, reducing recidivism, and improving discharge planning.

### iConnect Laboratory Web Portal (LWP)

On February 13, 2025, the Public Health Laboratory launched the iConnect LWP to streamline test ordering and results reporting for external clients. Previously, requests came in on paper and results were faxed. The new portal allows for electronic test ordering and result delivery, improving accuracy and speed.

### Data Access and Reporting

Implemented Microsoft Power BI to serve as a tool to help develop dashboards to centralize and visualize key agency metrics, enabling real-time data-driven decision-making across programs. This innovation, when fully utilized, improves reporting efficiency, reduces manual data handling, and empowers leadership with actionable insights.



# SUSTAINABILITY & OPPORTUNITY

*“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”*

- JANE GOODALL

## **State of the Art Public Health Laboratory**

The Public Health Lab moved from its 40-year-old Santa Ana site to a state-of-the-art facility in Irvine, improving public health emergency readiness by co-locating with EMS and Public Health Nursing for better coordination. The lab includes a biosafety level 3 space with a fully automated system to regulate air pressure and maintain negative pressure, along with pass-thru autoclaves for safe handling of biohazardous waste. It meets federal standards for testing *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, *Brucella* spp., and agents of bioterrorism.

## **Staff Expansion, Cross-Training and Case-load Adjustments**

The Public Guardian department was able to fill many critical positions and reduce the vacancy rate from 26% to 5%. This allowed the program to rebalance the supervisor-to-staff ratio, rebalance caseloads, and expand cross-training opportunities between the Probate and Lanterman Petris Short (LPS) Units. This resulted in the Deputy Public Guardians having a stronger skill set to serve the clients.

## **Technical Cross-Training for Operational Resilience**

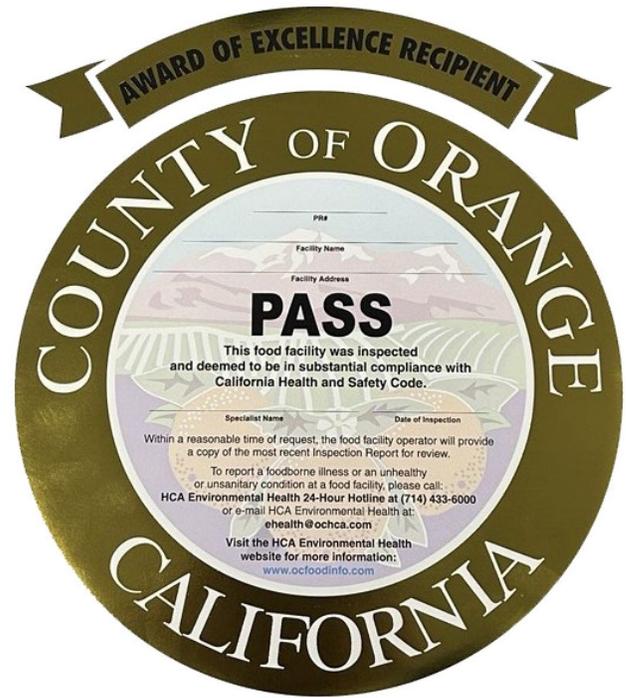
Introduced a cross-training initiative within the IT department across functional teams such as system support, applications, databases, and support roles to build redundancy, improve service coverage, and provide staff with greater growth opportunities.



## Collaborative Care for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

California Children's Services (CCS) prioritized outreach, education, and partnership with intra-agency programs, community partners, and providers who have pivotal roles in the health and well-being of children and youth with special health care needs. Some highlights include:

- Whole Child Model Overview Training to local hospitals, physicians, and Health Networks (co-presenters with CalOptima Health).
- Overview of the CCS Program presentation at the Orange County Health Care Agency Community and Nursing Services Division All Staff meeting.
- Medical Therapy Program presentation to Unlimited Possibilities.
- Medical Therapy Program networking with Children's Hospital of Orange County specialty providers.
- Developed close collaboration with Kaiser and CalOptima Health Whole Child Model leadership, the Regional Center of Orange County, Health Bridge, and HCA's PHS Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health (MCAH) program.



### Award of Excellence Gold PASS Seal

This updated program recognizes food facilities that meet the highest standards of food safety by passing two unannounced inspections with no major violations. The new gold standard promotes public trust, encourages continuous improvement, and reflects HCA's commitment to protecting community health.

### Leveraged State Funding Sources to Support Unfunded Patient Care

Medical Services (EMS) secured funding from the California Department of Health Care Access and Information and Tobacco Settlement Revenue to contract with providers who:

- Serve indigent and trauma patients
- Offer uncompensated care for essential Medical services
- Deliver services to 24 clinical sites where patients would otherwise go untreated

### IT Asset Lifecycle Optimization

Utilized an enhanced asset management and auditing process, improving tracking accuracy and extending the lifecycle of devices through reuse and reallocation. This has supported sustainability goals while reducing procurement demands.

# PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

*“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success.”*

- HENRY FORD

## **Orange County Community Health Improvement Plan (OC CHIP)**

The HCA published the 2024–2026 OC CHIP Plan update—a community-driven initiative addressing Orange County’s health needs. Serving as a roadmap to improve outcomes and promote health equity, the plan is based on population and neighborhood-level data that highlight disparities by geography, race/ethnicity, gender, immigration status, sexual orientation, age, and ability.

## **Medical Services and Pharmacy Billing**

In preparation for the CalAIM roll-out, Correctional Health Services (CHS) successfully initiated contract negotiations focused on the appropriate application of medical services and pharmacy billing, as well as the provision of medications upon release from jail facilities. Additionally, CHS established a partnership with Orange County Managed Care Plans to implement enhanced case management for justice-involved individuals following their release.



## **OC Multidrug Resistant Organism (MDRO) Data Exchange System Creation**

An exciting development for OC, in the Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI) world, is the creation and implementation of the OC Multidrug Resistant Organism (MDRO) Data Exchange System, an electronic information exchange system that streamlines interfacility communication regarding patients infected/colonized with an MDRO between healthcare facilities. Timely, accurate notifications help reduce exposure and prevent the spread of these organisms.

### Fentanyl Test Strip Distribution

Juvenile Health Services (JHS) upgraded its existing Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) program by implementing education services for all youth regarding the risks of Fentanyl use/overdose, collaborating with BHS to provide adjunct support services for patients, and participating in the Naloxone Distribution Project through the Department of Health Care Services in receiving Fentanyl Test Strips for distribution.

### Proposition 36 Integration

The Substance Use Disorders team along with the support of the Forensics and Justice Involved team implemented Proposition 36, in collaboration with the OC Courts, District Attorney, and Public Defender. From Dec 27, 2024, through June 30, 2025, the program has had:

- 519 Prospective Participants referred for evaluation, of those, 302 completed evaluation and 217 declined evaluation
- 123 pleaded into the program, 7 of those terminated due to non-compliance

### Payment Reform

The HCA implemented payment reform and amended all eligible Behavioral Health Plan provider contracts to begin the Fee-For-Service model as part of the CalAIM initiative in OC.

### Partnership with The Managed Care Plans (MCP), CalOptima Health and Kaiser Permanente

Behavioral Health Services has been strengthening collaborative relationships with CalOptima Health and establishing new partnerships with Kaiser Permanente focused on improving health outcomes for shared members, in particular improving Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measures related to follow up after emergency department visits. The initiative includes establishing data exchange protocols and improving communication timeliness to meet National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA) guidelines.



# OUTREACH & EDUCATION

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”*

- MARGARET MEAD

## Community Outreach, Resource Fairs, and Education

The HCA prioritized outreach opportunities to OC individuals to promote the breadth of services and resources available to our community. From educational workshops, vaccination clinics, outreach events, and resource fairs, teams from Public Health Service and Behavioral Health Services engaged with OC residents in the following ways:

- Behavioral Health Services attended 329 outreach events at OC schools, cities, community fairs, conferences, and large-scale festivals to promote the importance of behavioral health and wellness and offer information and resources for support. These events are used to expand awareness of the OCNavigator.org resource platform and the OC Links phone line available for immediate mental health crisis support or connection to alcohol or drug treatment programs.
- The Communicable Disease Control Division provided vaccine accessibility and immunization outreach at 21 on-site vaccine clinical events to offer vaccines within shelters, community groups, and for unhoused individuals.
- The Community Nursing team attended 37 different health fairs and Back-to-School events located at schools, cities, community-based organizations (CBOs), and other government agencies to share information on maternal and child health, trauma-informed outreach, lead poisoning prevention, and aging/senior wellness.
- Health Promotion and Community Planning attended 174 cultural festivals and wellness events throughout Orange County, including health and wellness fairs and special events at Libraries, fairs, CBO locations, and schools to share information about chronic disease prevention, oral health, injury prevention, nutrition, tobacco cessation, and other public health services.
- The Clinical Services Division attended nine events to promote STI treatment and testing services, stigma reduction, PrEP, PEP, and other prevention services to college student populations, LGBTQ+ wellness events, and CBO events.



### The Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim Partnership

With the objective of driving awareness of HCA behavioral health resources and encouraging general mental wellness, BHS partnered with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim in a comprehensive contract including billboards, broadcast, stadium signage, and a robust outreach calendar of events. Outreach staff attended 37 games and special event booths, engaging fans and families with fun, festive, and educational materials featuring the OC Navigator resource platform. A customized Angels landing page on OCNavigator.org offered resources, tools, and positive messages of caring for your mental wellness. The partnership also included the opportunity to support underserved youth through special sporting events featuring Angels' players.

### Anaheim Ducks Partnership

The Ducks sponsorship featured broad-reach media, in-arena visuals, and in-game outreach special events. The package included promotional messages and broadcast interviews with BHS leadership to promote OC Navigator resources and behavioral health, helping reduce stigma and share positive messages about mental wellness. Outreach staff attended 19 activations and special events highlighting HCA resources and support.



### Opioid Workshops

BHS teams distributed 18,420 units of Naloxone to providers, stakeholders, and community members at different events as part of the County's effort to combat the Fentanyl crisis and as part of the Fentanyl is Forever campaign.

### Brain Wellness Symposium

In partnership with community and County partners, PHS's Community and Nursing Services hosted a full-day, full-event Healthy Brain Symposium and Resource Fair. This important event brought together clinical experts and medical providers to discuss Alzheimer's and related dementias—conditions that touch the lives of countless individuals and families. Attendees were provided vital resources to support those experiencing memory loss and cognitive decline, as well as their caregivers.

### HCA Career Fair

In partnership with over 40 staff representing the breadth of HCA programs and functions, the Human Resources team coordinated its first-ever Career Fair in July 2024. This event attracted close to 300 attendees and was successful in allowing prospective employees to learn not only about the agency's varied career paths but also to discover more about the services and programs offered by the agency. Additionally, attendees were able to access computers in the training center, search for job opportunities, and actively work on their employment applications. Additionally, the HR team helped over 70 individuals with individualized resume reviews and career guidance.



# AWARDS & RECOGNITION

*"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."*

- JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

## CSAC and NACO Award

The HCA Emergency Medical Services team won a California State Association of Counties (CSAC) award and a National Association of Counties (NACO) recognition for developing and implementing a bidirectional data exchange system innovated by the HCA to support providers serving emergent patients. Ninety percent of Orange County hospitals have implemented and are using the program, and the remaining facilities are currently onboarding the system.



## Gold Aster and Healthcare Advertising Award for the Fentanyl Campaign

The Fentanyl is Forever campaign earned a Gold Aster Award and a Healthcare Ad Award, both of which recognize national and international competition in health care marketing and outreach for creativity, message effectiveness, and overall appeal. The Fentanyl is Forever campaign has reached millions of residents, with powerful, multilingual stories, real community voices, and life-saving information about the dangers of fentanyl and the importance of naloxone.

## Outstanding CUPA Award to Environmental Health

At the 27th CUPA Training Conference, Environmental Health received two top honors: the Innovative Project of the Year for advancements in the hazardous materials database, and Supervising Specialist Susan Berg was named Individual of the Year for her exceptional leadership and regulatory excellence.



### **Woman of Distinction, Dr. Veronica Kelley**

HCA Director Dr. Veronica Kelley was recognized as a Woman of Distinction by State Senator Tom Umberg, D-Santa Ana, 38th District. The recognition, awarded during Women's History Month, honors women who live or work in the 38th District. Dr. Kelley was nominated and selected for her work in health services, which recognizes "Individuals dedicated to the enhancement of human health. Health services encompass disease prevention, health education/promotion, and the provision of health care."

### **Gold Program Certification in Regional Crisis Response**

Orange County's Regional Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) has been awarded Gold Level Certification through CIT International, the only Gold level Regional program Statewide, recognizing its outstanding commitment to partnerships, regional crisis response system development, and connection to law enforcement collaborations and community programs with the region. Orange County's CIT is a regional partnership among law enforcement and first responders, fire/EMS, behavioral healthcare and hospital providers, families, and client advocacy groups. The goals of CIT are improving safety for everyone involved with a behavioral health crisis, increasing connections to effective and timely behavioral health services, using law enforcement strategically during crisis situations, eliminating law enforcement as the de facto first line of response, and reducing the trauma that people experience during a behavioral health crisis, thus contributing to long-term recovery.



### **President California Public Health Nurses, Jenna Sarin**

Director of Public Health and Nursing Services, Jenna Sarin, was selected to serve as President of the California Directors of Public Health Nursing (DPHN) in 2024-25 and as Past President in 2025-26. The DPHN advocates for and advances public health nursing practice in California and addresses health equity by creating opportunities to build knowledge, skills, and resources for California's public health nursing leadership.

# TEAM DEVELOPMENT & CULTURE

*“The strength of the team is each individual member.  
The strength of each member is the team.”*

- PHIL JACKSON

## Agency Onboarding Initiative

A great start can set the tone for a successful journey, so the HCA has launched an exciting new Agency-Wide Onboarding Program. The new two-day program offers a big-picture view of the HCA’s mission, values, and structure; guided support through key County systems and processes; and an opportunity to hear directly from a wide variety of subject matter experts and agency leadership.



## Clinical Skills Day

In May, the HCA hosted the 4th annual clinical skills day to provide nurses and clinical staff an opportunity for education, networking, and a celebration to acknowledge the workforce expertise, commitment, and care in service delivery. The workforce development event is intended to teach, review and demonstrate critical skills and topics relevant to job duties to elevate the clinical excellence and skills development among the agency’s nursing professionals.



## Health and Wellness Coaching program

To support staff, the Behavioral Health Services (BHS) team implemented a Health and Wellness Coaching program to develop a well-rounded workforce that can provide more whole-person approaches to care.

## Employee Health Services (EHS) Mobile Events

The EHS team provided 99 mobile events, serving 1,715 employees with occupational health services. These events support health and safety in the workplace, while allowing employees to remain at their worksites to provide valuable services and care to Orange County communities.

## Team Building and Fun

- **Meet the Leaders** – Quarterly receptions hosted by HCA's Services Areas were held for staff to mingle, connect, learn about services and just have fun! Starting at the holidays, HCA's Director's Office hosted a holiday gathering in December, the BHS team followed in February with a Valentine's themed reception, and Administrative Services hosted a Cinco de Mayo celebration. SMS and CHS surfed into July with a Summer Vibe gathering, and PHS will get spooky in October with a Halloween gathering.
- **Denim Day** – Sometimes a simple pair of jeans can speak louder than words! Individuals and teams throughout the HCA wore jeans in honor of Denim Day on April 29 to raise awareness about sexual violence and to show support for survivors, and to promote education for prevention.
- **Anxiety Dance Challenge** – In a spirited effort to promote wellness, connection, teamwork, and stress relief, as well as to promote Mental Health Awareness Month, leadership and staff across the HCA joined the Anxiety Dance Challenge. Teams throughout the agency got creative, sharing their moves and good energy by submitting joyful videos in a contest to amplify the positivity and connection in all we do at the HCA. Through social media posting, we encouraged the OC community to join us in spreading the message of caring for mental wellness and stress relief.



# THE CHALLENGES OF CHANGE

*"The only constant in life is change."*

- HERACLITUS

## Federal Funding Cuts

Within a changing landscape, the HCA has taken measures to address the challenges caused by federal funding cuts initiated during the new administration. Since the beginning of 2025, the HCA has been thoroughly assessing current programs and identifying areas to enhance county services. By focusing on mandated services and reallocating resources, HCA is developing a more sustainable budget. Additionally, HCA continues to explore alternative funding sources, such as grants, private partnerships, and community initiatives. Our leadership is engaging with local stakeholders, including non-profits and community-based organizations, to promote collaboration and innovative solutions. Moreover, advocacy for

federal support through coordinated efforts with other associations (CBHDA, CHEAC, NACo, CSAC) can strengthen our efforts to restore funding. Ultimately, a strategic and community-centered approach will help us navigate these challenges while continuing to meet the health needs of Orange County.

- In response to reduced Federal grants, the HCA has closed some clinical services, including the Children's Clinic, Emergency Dental Clinic, and Family Planning, Access, Care, and Treatment facility. Connecting clients to alternative organizations and community services has been prioritized to address the needs of the most vulnerable populations.



## Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) Transition

As a result of CA voter approval of Proposition 1, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) is being replaced by the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) which aims to modernize California's behavioral health system by expanding services to include substance use disorder treatment, prioritizing individuals with the most serious behavioral health needs, and dedicating funding to housing interventions and the behavioral health workforce. This evolution has resulted in a variety of local prevention services being sunset as a new focus on outreach and linkage to specialty behavioral health care, early intervention for individuals at high clinical risk for developing a serious behavioral health condition, intensive outpatient services, and housing interventions are being prioritized across the state.

## State of the Public Health in Orange County

County Health Officer Dr. Regina Chinsio-Kwong, DO (Dr. CK) delivered the first "State of Public Health in Orange County (OC) Address" to an audience of community providers and leaders with the overall message of, "Safeguarding Public Health is Everyone's Responsibility," and that public health can be done with prevention, promotion, protection and partnership. The webinar focused on health trends and priorities in OC; local challenges, initiatives and progress; opportunities to advance health in Orange County; and a vision for building healthier, more resilient communities. You can watch the webinar here: <https://tinyurl.com/OCHealthOfficer2025>. The data, statistics and information presented during the webinar is available on [www.ochealthinfo.com/healthcorner](http://www.ochealthinfo.com/healthcorner).



# The State of Public Health in Orange County

**PRESENTED BY**  
**Regina Chinsio-Kwong, DO**  
County Health Officer





### Programmatic Transformation of Electronic Health Records (EHR)

HCA Information technology and BHS management adapted and performed the re-configuration of the Electronic Health Record (EHR) system and related workflows, processing and reporting to support Medical modernization and transformation initiatives, including CalAIM and Fee-for-Service reimbursement models.

### DHCS Comprehensive Quality Strategy

BHS has been responding to significant changes in operations and quality management systems to meet the standards set by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) 's quality requirements. Changes include the integration of new Performance Measures (PM), Data exchange requirements, Managed Behavioral Health Organization (MBHO) standards, new External Quality Review (EQR) processes, and the implementation of required Evidence-Based Practices (EBP).





# 2025 Goals & Plans

*"If you can dream it,  
you can do it."*

*— Walt Disney*

## Administrative Services (AS)



As the HCA develops its three-year Strategic Plan and Performance-Based measurement system, the Administrative Services team will support the service area infrastructure by managing resources and facilities, streamlining processes and policies, ensuring compliance, controlling costs, negotiating favorable contracts, driving innovation, supporting recruitment, and enhancing staff relations and retention.

## Behavioral Health Services (BHS)

- Implement an integrated and centralized Community Planning Program framework that aligns community planning efforts with Behavioral Health Services and Public Health Services.
- Implement Senate Bill 43 at all designated inpatient and Crisis Stabilization Unit facilities. This will include training for first responders, Law Enforcement, and Inpatient Psychiatric Designated Facilities and Crisis Stabilization Units (CSU).
- Implement a BHS Navigation unit to assist with clients who are not engaged in services. This team will be field-based and will assist clients by meeting them where they are, providing resources, and helping to engage with the client to get them back into services.
- Open the Grant and MHSA Funded Be Well Irvine Campus that will provide 12 Sobering Center stations, 16 Adult Crisis Stabilization Unit recliners, 8 Adolescent CSU recliners, 15 Adult Crisis Residential beds, 16 adult male Substance Use Disorder (SUD) co-Occurring beds, 16 adult female SUD Co-occurring beds, 16 withdrawal management beds, 16 adolescent male SUD beds, 16 adolescent female SUD beds and 24 mother and child perinatal SUD beds.

## Correctional Health Services (CHS)

- Prepare for the full CalAIM rollout in early 2026. Align with state mandates and strategic priorities to implement Enhanced Care Management, Community Supports, and coordinated discharge planning for justice-involved individuals.
- Taking steps for accreditation by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC), fully embedding NCCHC's rigorous health-care standards within the Intake Release Center (IRC). Achieving this milestone affirms that HCA clinical practices, policies, and facilities meet nationally recognized benchmarks for quality, safety, and patient rights.
- Continuously review and optimize the allocation of staff and resources to deliver high-quality, enhanced patient care while maintaining alignment with budgetary constraints. This strategic approach ensures efficient use of personnel and funding, supports improved health outcomes for patients, and reinforces CHS's commitment to operational excellence and fiscal responsibility.



## Public Health Services (PHS)

- Build Capacity within all Environmental Health teams for major economic growth in Orange County:
  - OC Vibe
  - Disneyland Forward
  - John Wayne Airport General Aviation Improvement Project
  - Dana Point Harbor Revitalization project
- Launch a Data Management System for Public Health Records to address retention, improve security and compliance, and streamline access.
- Develop Tuberculosis Education and partnerships for evaluation and treatment within high-risk populations.



# Specialized Medical Services (SMS)

- Employee Health Services will add phlebotomy (blood draws) to our mobile occupational health services, resulting in improved flexibility, service customization, and cost savings for County departments.
- Public Guardian will focus on cost recovery of services rendered and will update all the PG operations' reference materials.
- A California Children's Services goal is to enhance the quality of care delivery to the clients and families it serves. The program tracks performance metrics on a regular basis, such as program eligibility, case/care management and coordination, Medical Therapy Program services, and transition planning for our adolescent clients. Performance improvement projects will be developed based on data collected throughout the year.
- The Medical Safety Net (MSN), per WIC 17000, provides emergency services for lawful county residents who do not have insurance and do not currently qualify for Medi-Cal. Recent changes to Medicaid legislation have resulted in an anticipated increase in the number of persons in Orange County who will require care through MSN.





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