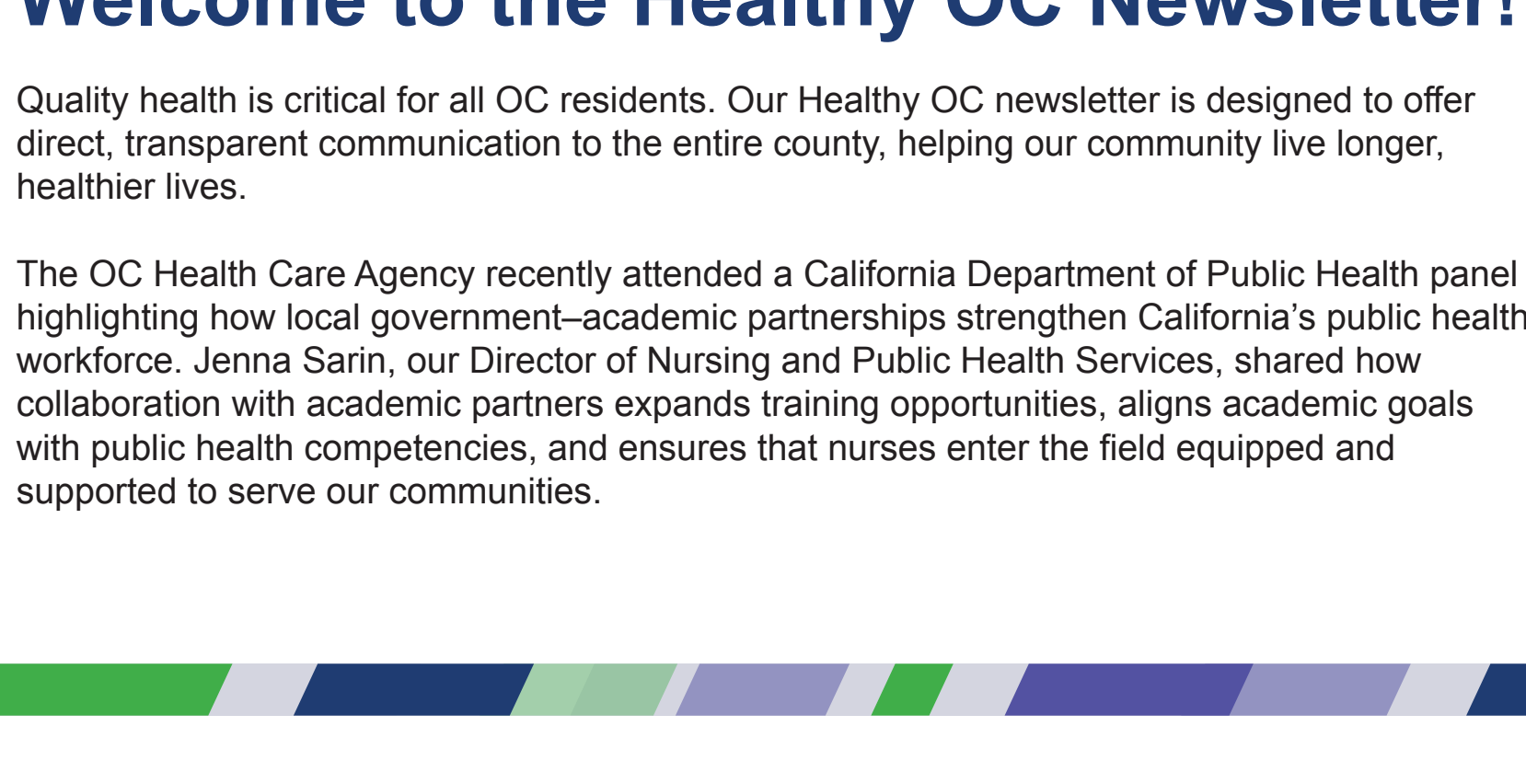


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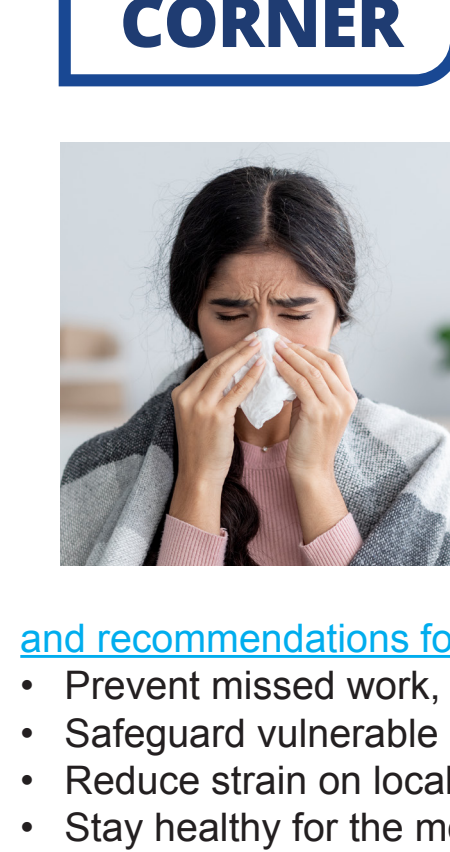
September 2026



Welcome to the Healthy OC Newsletter!

Quality health is critical for all OC residents. Our Healthy OC newsletter is designed to offer direct, transparent communication to the entire county, helping our community live longer, healthier lives.

The OC Health Care Agency recently attended a California Department of Public Health panel highlighting how local government-academic partnerships strengthen California's public health workforce. Jenna Sarin, our Director of Nursing and Public Health Services, shared how collaboration with academic partners expands training opportunities, aligns academic goals with public health competencies, and ensures that nurses enter the field equipped and supported to serve our communities.



National Recovery Month

September is National Recovery Month, a chance for all of us to share hope and celebrate the fact that recovery from substance use disorders is possible. With one in six people affected, these conditions touch many lives, and too often stigma keeps people from seeking the help they deserve.

Here are a few simple ways we can support recovery in our community:

- Build understanding: substance use disorders are chronic, treatable health conditions influenced by biology, environment, and life experiences – not personal moral failings
- Use hopeful, supportive language: choosing person-first wording like "person living with addiction" can reduce stigma and make it easier for people to reach out for help
- Know where to turn for support: [OCNavigator.org](https://www.OCNavigator.org) is a great resource for trusted treatment options and community services

Recovery truly takes a village. To help yourself, a loved one, or others in your community, attend or host a no-cost workshop with our Alcohol and Drug Education and Prevention Team today!

About Our Workshops

HEALTH CORNER

Protect Loved Ones This Cold and Flu Season!



As we head into fall and winter, respiratory illnesses like flu, COVID-19, and RSV circulate more easily – especially affecting infants, older adults, pregnant individuals, and people with underlying conditions. The good news is, simple steps can help protect you and those around you.

Vaccines are your best defense! Staying up to date on recommended flu, COVID-19, and RSV vaccinations is one of the most effective ways to prevent severe illness. By following the California Department of Public Health's [current guidance](#) and [recommendations for vaccinations](#), you can:

- Prevent missed work, school and special occasions
- Safeguard vulnerable loved ones
- Reduce strain on local hospitals and clinics
- Stay healthy for the moments that matter

Get Prepared



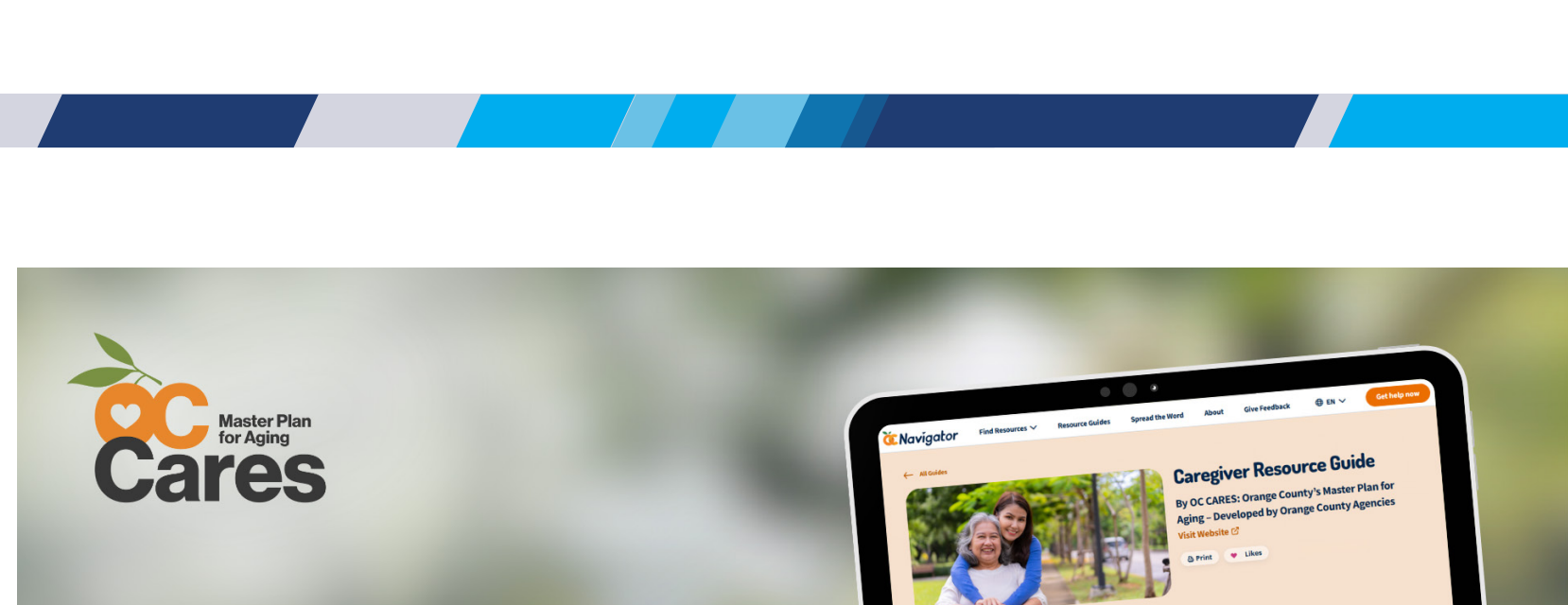
Suicide Is Preventable

September is National Suicide Prevention Month, a time for our community to come together to promote hope, connection and support. Suicide is preventable, and small acts of care – like checking in, having a conversation or sharing local resources – can make a lifesaving difference.

If you or someone you know is struggling, OC Links is available 24/7 at [\(855\) 625-4657](tel:8556254657) to provide compassionate support, referrals, crisis screening, and connection to mobile response teams. They're your first responders for mental health. If you're having thoughts about suicide specifically, you can also call the [\(877\) 968-2473](tel:8779682473) Suicide Lifeline.

Life's challenges can be difficult. But here in Orange County, help is always within reach. ♥

Connect to Help Now



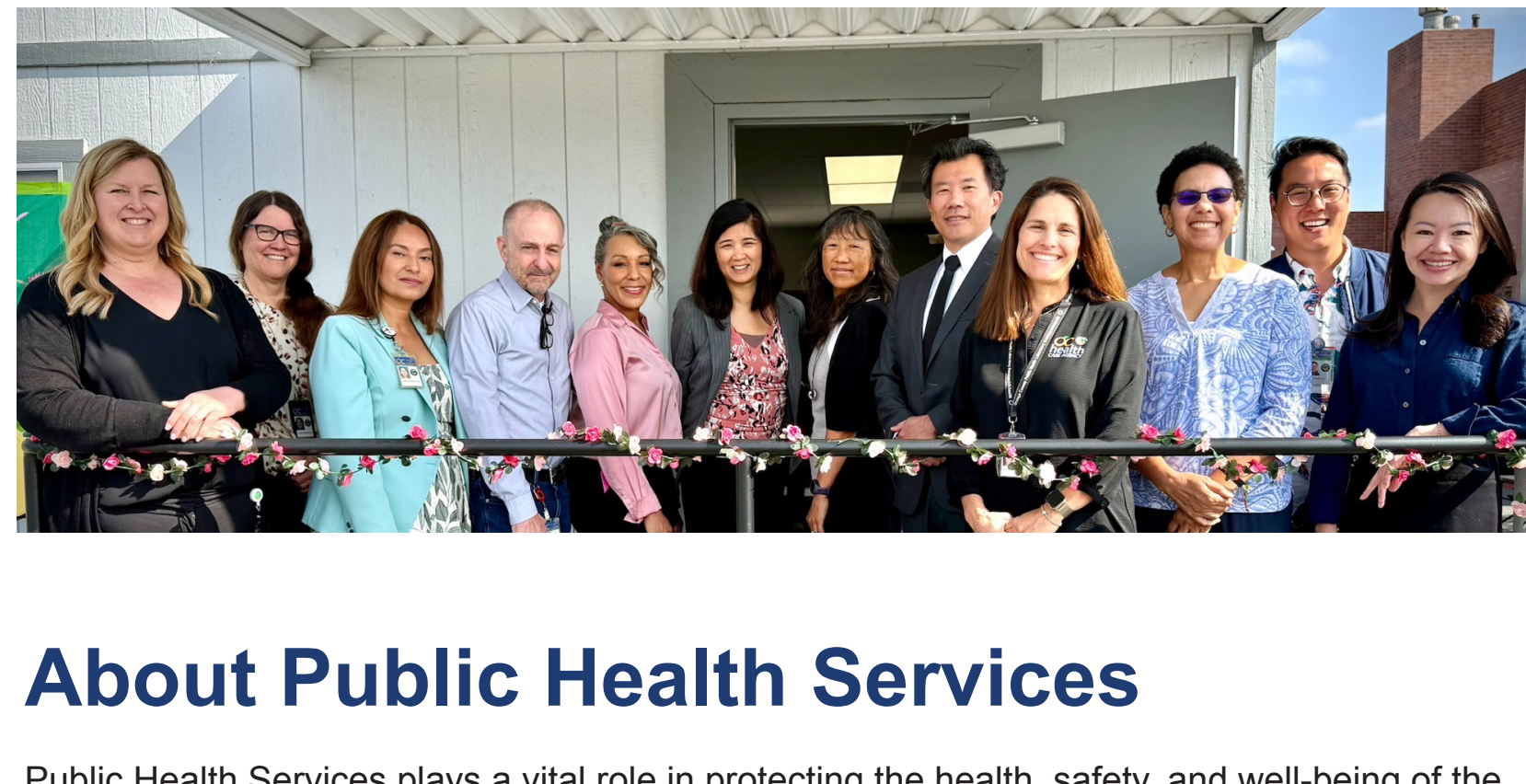
West Nile Virus – Did You Know?

West Nile virus (WNV) is the most common and serious vector-borne disease in California, and this year is proving to be one of our worst ever. Compared to last year's 22 human cases of WNV at this point, we currently have 86 cases and counting! Dead birds are often the first sign that WNV is active in an area. So if you find a dead bird, please [file a report online](#), or call [\(877\) 968-2473](tel:8779682473).

- Here are more ways to protect yourself and your community from WNV:
- Dump and drain standing water around your home (check pet dishes, flowerpots and kiddie pools)
 - Use insect repellent when going outdoors (especially at dawn and dusk)

Don't give bugs a biting chance!

Learn More



Caregiver Resources

Caring for an older adult isn't easy. To support caregivers in their efforts, the County of Orange has released the Caregiver Guide, an essential community tool designed to make it easier to find local programs, services, and support, including:

- Respite support
- Educational resources
- Financial assistance
- Practical help for navigating care responsibilities

The guide was developed with input from partners and organizations serving older adults and caregivers across Orange County. We encourage all caregivers to connect and be aware of available support for doing this important work!

Get Connected



About Public Health Services

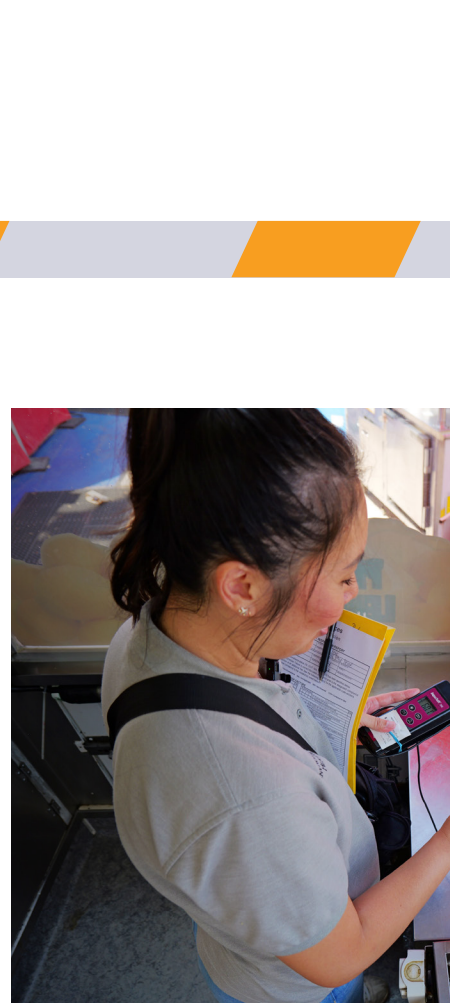
Public Health Services plays a vital role in protecting the health, safety, and well-being of the OC community. Every day, our teams work to prevent the spread of disease, monitor emerging health threats, promote healthy living, and ensure that our neighborhoods have safe food and environmental conditions. From immunizations and emergency preparedness to health education and community partnerships, Public Health Services brings together experts across many disciplines to strengthen the systems that help residents live longer, healthier lives.

Beyond responding to health concerns, Public Health Services also focuses on creating the conditions where everyone can thrive. Staff collaborate with local organizations, schools, clinics, and city agencies to expand access to care, support vulnerable populations, and advance data-driven programs that improve overall wellness. Want to know more?

Meet Our Team

HEALTH CORNER

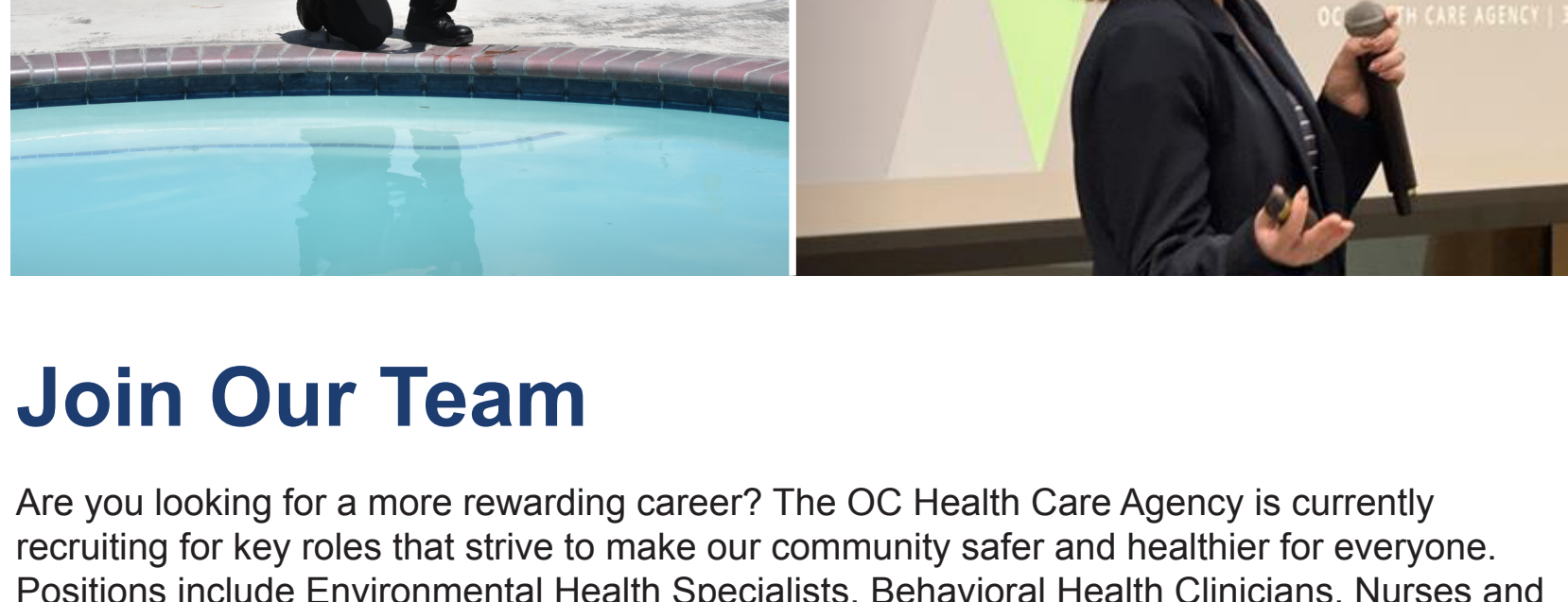
Supporting a Loved One With a Substance Use Disorder



Watching a loved one struggle with a substance use disorder can cause immense pain, anger and grief – leaving families feeling powerless. Family members can provide support on the journey, but ultimately the person suffering with a substance use disorder must be willing to accept help.

In honor of recovery month, this issue's Health Corner celebrates those recovering from substance use disorders, as well as their loved ones supporting them along the way. Dr. Kelly Moquin shares how treating substance use disorder patients impacts the lives of patients and their families, and provides practical tips for anybody impacted.

Read More



Pregnancy and Parenting Support

The OC Health Care Agency's Adolescent Family Life Program (AFLP) can help young parents or parents-to-be navigate resources available that can help you and your infant.

If you're pregnant or a parent who is 21 years old or younger, we offer free, confidential support to help you through the challenges you may be facing. Male or female, single or partnered, about-to-be-parents or brand-new-parents – no matter your situation, we're here for you. As your public health advocate, AFLP will walk alongside you with care, connection, and real support.

Find Help Today



Join Our Team

Are you looking for a more rewarding career? The OC Health Care Agency is currently recruiting for key roles that strive to make our community safer and healthier for everyone. Positions include Environmental Health Specialists, Behavioral Health Clinicians, Nurses and lots more.

Ready to do work that makes a difference? Search "Health Care Agency" on our jobs listing website today!

Apply Now