Letter from CCHE Leadership

In this issue we summarize many of our accomplishments in 2016 that were not necessarily reported in earlier CCHE newsletters. In 2016, CCHE had many successes in advancing our goals through our research projects and community partnership programs.

Since the new year, we have also taken our first official steps toward formally merging CCHE’s health equity programs with efforts at UCSF’s San Francisco campuses with a similar mission. This action will broaden our collective knowledge base and skills, strengthen our fundraising ability, and allow us to pursue new and exciting opportunities. We will report more about this progress in our next issue.

However, as we moved forward locally on our important mission, our country faces a tremendous changing health care landscape on a national level. Recent months have shown us just how political “health” is in our country. But the attendance at town hall meetings across the country clearly demonstrates how effective community involvement and advocacy are to the public policy process. Community voices were a major contributor to the defeat of the American Health Care Act.

Health equity is a major focus of CCHE’s mission and we will continue to work closely with federal, state and local elected officials, along with many other stakeholders to monitor the ongoing health policy discussion in Washington DC. We are committed to ensuring that the impact on all residents, particularly those children and families who are most vulnerable will be given serious attention in the national political dialogue.

Doreen Moreno
Director, Government and Community Relations

CCHE Project Leads to Sugar Beverage Policy at CHO

Sugar is a risk factor for a whole range of diseases, so it makes little sense for a hospital to sell sugary beverages, such as soda or sports drinks, to its patients. CCHE set out to change this at CHO.

As a CCHE project, medical resident Manny Bramble led a team of volunteer residents to actualize this vision. Dr. Bramble and his team worked with several stakeholders to figure out the logistics.

Starting March 1, our cafeteria and other locations no longer sell drinks that have more than a gram of sugar per 2 fluid ounces. Juices and milk are excluded from this policy.

Stupski Foundation awards $200,000 to CCHE to expand functionality of app for screening patients for social determinants of health

CCHE was awarded a $200,000 grant to further develop the FINDconnect® platform. FINDconnect® is an online tool that allows providers to screen families for non-medical factors that impact the child’s health, easily makes referrals to community resources to address identified issues, creates action plans, and tracks families’ progress over time. The new funding will allow FINDconnect® to integrate into EMR, add new screening forms, and conduct user testing.
CCHE 2016 Highlights

Core Operations

In 2016, CCHE created an internal advisory committee, which met four times. The first edition of BRIDGES, CCHE’s newsletter, was distributed in February to 2,600 people, and subsequent editions went out in spring and summer.

Hospital Community Benefits

CCHE ensures that the hospital meets its state and federal community benefit requirements for non-profit hospitals. In 2016, CCHE published the hospital’s 2015 Community Benefit Report, as well as the Community Health Needs Assessment: 2015-2018.

CCHE also provides routine support services to the hospital and to various hospital community benefits programs by request. CCHE’s grant writing and other technical support led to over $9 million in new funding for the hospital and community.

Research

CCHE staff co-authored an article in JAMA Pediatrics on social determinants of health and one in the New England Journal of Medicine on asthma. CCHE’s entry at the 2016 American Pediatric Association Conference won “Outstanding Abstract for Underserved Medicine.”

As a member of the Bay Area Research Consortium on Toxic Stress, CCHE received a $3.4 million grant from a family foundation and initiated the first phase of a randomized clinical trial to study the effects of adverse events on stress biomarkers and mental and physical health in children, and to validate a screening tool to identify adverse childhood events.

CCHE received new research grants from:

1. The Pre-Term Birth Initiative at UCSF to understand how obstetricians are addressing social determinants of health in prenatal care;
2. REI to build an infrastructure to study the impact of “nature” on children’s health;
3. From Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan to study the impact of vegetables and whole grains on children with pre-diabetes; and
4. Genentech to apply a proteomics approach to study the impact of stress on biomarkers in children.

Workforce Development

CCHE oversees the award-winning CHAMPS program that trains underrepresented high school students. 31 students graduated from the three-year program in 2016. Furthermore, CHAMPS served as a springboard for CCHE to initiate a cross-bay partnership with UCSF and other partners focused on health career pathways. This effort led to a grant award from the National Science Foundation to expand these efforts.

Last year, in association with the hospital’s construction project, CCHE secured start-up funding to launch a program with OUSD for students interested in construction trades. Eight students participated in the first cohort. At an event sponsored by the Wonderful Company, CCHE spoke to industry leaders regarding “pipeline” programs.
Community Relations

Maintaining relations with our neighbors helps the hospital accomplish its mission. CCHE represents the hospital on community-based boards and committees and sponsors local events, such as the Temescal Street Fair and the Cinco de Mayo Mother’s Day Fiesta in the Fruitvale.

In order to provide essentials for families in desperate need, CCHE expanded relations with the Alameda County Community Food Bank (for food) and Help a Mother Out (for diapers and wipes) and coordinates the distribution of these items. Since the service started in July, 1,650 bags of food were distributed at eight hospital sites.

Last year, CCHE co-sponsored a community event to promote early literacy, which was attended by 375 children.

Lastly, CCHE initiated a hospital “Community Crisis Response Team” which is in the process of fundraising and strategic planning for their work on gun violence prevention in the community.

Government Relations & Advocacy

Organizationally government relations for Benioff Children’s Hospital Oakland is under the umbrella of CCHE. Some key responsibilities include monitoring legislation that will impact the hospital and children’s healthcare, advocating for specific bills and programs in collaboration with the California Children’s Hospital Association and the California Hospital Association, and maintaining relationships with local, state and federal elected officials. CCHE staff also serve on various boards and committees to advance health equity and children’s issues.

In 2016, CCHE was recognized by the White House twice. A CCHE member was selected as spokesperson for the National Word Gap Initiative, and another member participated in the White House Roundtable on Public Lands and Health. In addition, CCHE presented to 100+ Hollywood executives at an event chaired by Chelsea Clinton on using media to convey the importance of parental engagement.

Locally, CCHE coordinated visits to the hospital by US Congressman Mark DeSaulnier and Assemblymember Tony Thurmond and started working with Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan on a countywide food initiative. CCHE also met with Oakland’s Mayor Schaaf for the first time, and was given key seats on committees for Oakland Promise, the mayor’s big initiative to end poverty, and appointed to a committee for implementing Oakland’s new “Sugar Tax.”

Honors & Awards

A CCHE member was selected to give a TED talk on “nature prescriptions.”

CCHE’s Medical Director was selected as faculty at Harvard Macy’s Institute and received the 2016 BOLD Award from Girls Inc.

The Bay Area Regional Helpdesk Consortium, which was started by CCHE staff, was selected as a “best practice” by the American Hospital Association.
Health Equity Programs

FINDconnect® is a mobile “cloud-based” application developed by CCHE to screen families for social determinants of health, connect them with relevant resources, and develop an action plan. FINDconnect® went live in the hospital’s health center in 2016, and we are seeking to integrate it into our electronic medical records and expand it to other departments in 2017.

Family Care Network (FCN) provides a range of services to women, infants, and children in Alameda County with or at risk for HIV. In 2016, FCN started its Consumer Advisory Board and provided crucial HIV-related services to 553 families.

CCHE is a lead contractor on a countywide program to train providers throughout the Bay Area on trauma-informed care and led eight trauma informed care trainings in 2016. We also launched a Trauma Informed Care Collaborative within the hospital to increase understanding about the impact of trauma on patients and staff.

Also in 2016, we digitally archived the work of Dr. Melanie Tervalon, former BCHO physician who created the groundwork for cultural humility theory.

CCHE was involved in the hospital wide Talk, Read, Sing Campaign by distributing thousands of books throughout the hospital, and received a significant private donation to continue hospital-wide strategies to support literacy. CCHE was also given grants from REI and the East Bay Regional Parks District to help establish a Center for Nature and Health, which will be a national hub to promote the idea of “nature” as a clinical tool.

CCHE took the lead to bring in a very competitive $1.3 million, 5-year federal grant (HRSA) for the hospital’s residency program. The goal of the project, called CAP EXPERT (Expanded Pediatric Resident Training), is to build a rotation around caring for children with complex healthcare and social needs.

Fundraising

In 2016, CCHE led efforts to bring in over $3 million in new grants, including $1 million to support specific CCHE projects and over $1.5 million for other hospital programs. In addition, CCHE provided key grant proposal support to successfully secure another $4.5 million for other hospital programs. CCHE’s distribution of its monthly Funding Opportunities Newsletter led to several other awards.

About the Center for Community Health and Engagement (CCHE): CCHE is a department at UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital Oakland that bridges pediatric health and community needs. For more information please call 510-428-5816 or visit our website at www.childrenshospitaloakland.org/cche.