



HEALTH IN FOCUS

Fall 2018 | Issue 1

Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

In 2017, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) Board of Trustees started a journey. Together we have been exploring the operations, challenges, and successes of this enormously important organization. When we carry out our duties as a Board, we never forget the many people who every day depend on our services. We are all reliant on an effective health care system which supports and promotes health. With every decision we make, our focus remains on this journey, not only for the community, but also for those who work day and night on behalf of all of us.

It has been our privilege to serve you alongside the determined staff of the CHCC: from the management team, the doctors and nurses, to the support staff. We are inspired by their enduring team efforts to improve the quality and scope of services, and the drive to reach the financing goals necessary to upgrade our facilities and equipment. Most of all we are inspired by support from you, our community. You put your faith in us to see that quality health care is accessible for all who call these islands home. We take your confidence in us and our responsibility seriously.

In recent years, the CHCC has made amazing advances, and we foresee an exciting future for health care in the CNMI. From creating efficiencies in existing operations, to expanding the capacity of on-island health care services, and exploring innovative service delivery methods, great things are happening at the CHCC and we are excited to share them with you through our newsletter "Health In Focus".

--CHCC Board of Trustees

Did you know?

There are two types of tuberculosis (TB): latent (sleeping) and active. If a person has latent TB, they are not infectious. But if a person has active TB, the disease can be spread when that person sneezes, coughs or sings.

TB IN THE PACIFIC

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) is proudly hosting for the first time the Pacific Islands Tuberculosis Controllers Association conference. The 2018 conference will be held from September 10th-13th, 2018 at Fiesta Hotel and Spa, Saipan. We are excited that tuberculosis (TB) experts from throughout the Pacific Region and US mainland are able to join us in this four day conference to engage in learning and discussion on the management and control of tuberculosis. CHCC will be welcoming experts from the World Health Organization, Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, Australian Respiratory Council, Southeastern National Tuberculosis Center, Heartland Tuberculosis Center, and Rutgers Global TB Center.

Tuberculosis continues to be a dominant public health concern in the CNMI, and in the US-affiliated Pacific Islands overall. The CNMI has 17 times the rate of TB cases compared to the US mainland, 9 times the rate of Hawaii, and we are on par with Guam. CNMI has lower rates compared to the other USAPI (FSM, RMI, Palau).

More information and registration for the conference can be found at:

<https://training.sntc.medicine.ufl.edu/>

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

September 9th - 15th : National Suicide Prevention Awareness Week

9/10/18 - Proclamation Signing (10am at the Governor's Office)

9/11/18 - Basic Gatekeeper Training (QPR) at NMPASI and Kagman Community Health Center

9/14/18 - Basic Gatekeeper Training (QPR) at Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and a STAY Workshop on Rota

September 11th - November 13th: Navigating Personal Well-Being and Sexuality

See details on next page.

Building a Stronger We: Breaking the Stigma (Partnership with PSS) - Kanoa Resort

Promoting resiliency within our youth.

Sept. 12: 9am - 1:30pm: Student Conference

Sept. 13: 8:30am - 2pm: Parent Conference

For more info call Jocelyn Itibus at 322-6760

HEALTH CARE INNOVATOR

Telemedicine is a cost-effective alternative to the traditional face-to-face way of providing care. Telemedicine also significantly improves the CHCC's ability to recruit health care providers because they don't need to move to the CNMI to provide care to patients.

There are many different ways to use telemedicine. One application which is practical and fills an important need in the CNMI is telepsychiatry. Beginning September 11th psychiatry services will be available on Tinian and Rota via telemedicine.

Dr. Katie Hatsushi will begin delivering services at the Tinian and Rota Health Centers and will supplement psychiatric needs on Saipan. Dr. Hatsushi currently resides in Japan, is US-trained in both adult and child/adolescent psychiatry, and is a CNMI-licensed psychiatrist.



Dr. Hatsushi on the communication platform that will be used for telepsychiatry

Telepsychiatry is a subset of telemedicine. It can include a range of services including psychiatric evaluations, patient therapy, patient education, and medication management. When a patient attends an appointment with Dr. Hatsushi, the patient will be guided to an exam room at the clinic equipped with audio-visual telecommunication equipment where the patient can speak privately with Dr. Hatsushi as though she were in the room.

If you or your child have difficulties with mood, anxiety, unwanted thoughts or behaviors, psychosis, drug addiction or other concerns about your mental health, talk to your doctor about seeing a counselor or psychiatrist, or make an appointment by calling the Family Care Clinic at 670-236-8308.

HEALTHY TIPS

Get the Most out of Chores

Add movement to housework. Focus on posture and the different muscle groups you're using while doing chores such as sweeping, raking or washing the dishes. For added exercise, listen to music while doing housework- dancing will add some activity to your day and add some fun to your chores. Get the kids involved too!



Alternative Snacking

Before you reach for those potato chips, try this simple, tasty and budget-friendly snack.



Ingredients

- 1 can of chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1/2 tbsp olive, canola, or grapeseed oil
- 3 or 4 peeled whole garlic cloves
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Powdered tinian hot pepper (optional)

Instructions

Spread the beans in an even layer on a clean towel, and roll them around for a couple of minutes to help them dry. Heat the oil in a pan over medium-high heat and when the oil is hot, add the garlic cloves. Let the cloves brown on each side for a minute and then add the chickpeas. Shake up everything in the pan occasionally and let the chickpeas get really brown and crunchy. (about 10 minutes). Season to taste with salt and pepper. Enjoy!

RECENT SUCCESSES

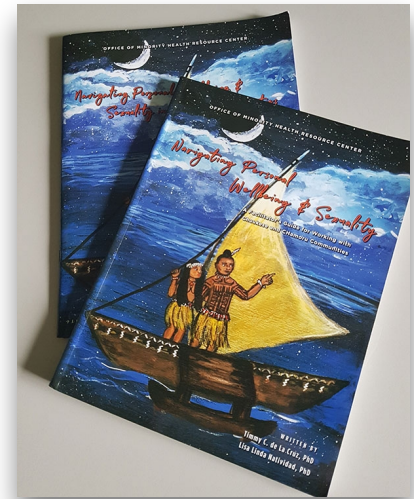


Clockwise from top left: The new inpatient pharmacy clean room is ready for sterile mixing of intravenous medicine; the staff of the inpatient pharmacy show off their renovated location; CEO Esther Muna and Halina Palacios smile with intern Abby Dimaano, one of eight recent participants in the CHCC's internship program; elected officials and CHCC managers break ground for the CHCC's solar energy project.

Culturally Relevant Curriculum: Navigating Personal Well-Being and Sexuality

The HIV/STD Prevention Program is conducting a 10-lesson curriculum from the Office of Minority Health Resource Center (OMHRC) in an effort to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV transmission among residents of the CNMI. The OMHRC curriculum addresses topics on myths and misconceptions of HIV/AIDS stigma among Chamorros, family violence, drug and alcohol use/misuse, suicide prevention, and working together for a better community.

The next session is on September 11th and will run every Tuesday until November 13th. Sessions are from 5:30PM-7:00PM at the Kanoa Resort. Interested? Call 664-4050.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Website Launch in October

Check out our new website coming soon at the same address www.chcc.gov.mp

Nomination of New Board Member

Governor Torres recently submitted a nomination for Polly Masga to become a member of the CHCC Board of Trustees. Polly is an NMC graduate and clinic manager of Marianas Medical Center.

Suicide Prevention Program at the Community Guidance Center (CGC)

The Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Program focuses on assisting youth (ages 10-24) who have or may attempt suicide.

If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, call: (670) 664-5483 (LIFE)

Food Safety Training Workshops

Available every Tuesday and Wednesday at the Bureau of Environmental Health (BEH), on Navy Hill across from the soccer field. BEH also takes

appointments for on-site training (min. 10 participants) Call 664-4870/2

New WIC Eligibility Guidelines

You may be eligible for the WIC program if your gross income (before taxes) is less than 185% of the federal poverty guidelines for your family size. Contact the WIC program at 664-4084

Welcome Podiatrist Dr. Daniel Shead

We're proud to announce that Dr. Shead recently joined our team at the Family Care Clinic and is ready to see patients.

Centering Pregnancy Initiative

This new method of prenatal care allows time for pregnant women to have both a private check-up and participate in group discussions on topics related to labor and delivery, nutrition counseling, stress management, and common discomforts of pregnancy. For more information call Keanna at 236-8703 or Tony at 664-8701