



# COOK COUNTY HEALTH

**DR. ERIK MIKAITIS**  
**INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
**REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**MAY 31, 2024**

## Employee Recognition

Stroger Hospital was awarded a **“B” safety grade by The Leapfrog Group**. The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade is the only hospital rating focused exclusively on hospital safety and ranks nearly 3,000 hospitals. Its grades are a quick way for consumers to choose the safest hospital to seek care. Our work continues to establish high reliability practices across the health system and, of course, to achieve the highest quality ratings available.

Congratulations to all nurses who were nominated for the **2024 Nursing Excellence Awards!** The 2024 Award Recipients are:

- **Arahany Villasenor:** Nurse of the Year
- **Aiesha Meghie:** Rising Star
- **Sherrie Spencer:** Leadership
- **Jeelan McCray:** Correctional Health
- **Rosa Rodriguez:** Community Care
- **Jarretha McColmeyer:** Clinical Nursing
- **Rhodelyn Bedford:** Education and Mentorship
- **Cristina Guerrero:** Excellence in Public Health Care
- **Linda Lui:** Volunteerism
- **Justin Robinson:** Patient Care Support
- **Thomas Liss:** Partners in Nursing

Congratulations to **Muna Yousuf**, 7 East Med Surg Unit, Stroger Hospital, for being recognized as a DAISY Award honoree! The DAISY Award is a recognition program to celebrate and recognize nurses by collecting nominations from patients, families, and co-workers.

On May 16, **Dr. Claudia Fegan**, Chief Medical Officer, was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award in Social Justice and Healthcare Equity and Reform by the I Am Able Foundation at the annual Chicago Health Medical and Law Careers Citywide Student Conference. The theme of this year's event was "On the Shoulders of Giants". Dr. Fegan was also recently named to Becker's Hospital Review list of Black Healthcare Leaders to know.

On April 25, **Justin Mis**, Stroger Hospital Trauma Program Coordinator, was walking home from a Cubs game when he noticed a family in distress with an unresponsive baby. Justin sprang into action and performed compressions on the infant before paramedics arrived. The baby is doing well after being treated for cardiac arrest. Lurie Children's Hospital and the Chicago Fire Department honored Justin for his heroic actions at a press conference last week.

The **CountyCare 2022-23 Choice Campaign**, "There's a Plan for That", recently won several Aster Awards, honoring excellence in healthcare advertising, including: Judge's Choice Award for Total Advertising Campaign (receiving a perfect score by the judging panel), Gold for Multilingual Advertising and Bronze for TV/Video Advertising. This campaign has won a total of 7 industry awards.

## Activities and Announcements

On May 28, Cook County Health leaders were joined by President Preckwinkle to celebrate the opening of the new **Neurocritical ICU at Stroger Hospital** with a **ribbon cutting**. The new unit is staffed by Board-certified neurocritical physicians and specialized APNs and includes state-of-the-art equipment to provide advanced care to patients with complex neurological conditions and injuries.

Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, President Toni Preckwinkle, Dr. Steve Aks, Chief Academic Affairs Officer, and Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, Chief Operating Officer, CCDPH, and representatives of community-based organizations held a **press conference** on May 28 on the **fentanyl epidemic in Illinois**. During the press conference, Congressman Krishnamoorthi, the Ranking Member of the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), highlighted his Select Committee's recent investigation into the CCP's role in fueling the fentanyl crisis in America. CCH and CCDPH shared initiatives the health system has launched to address the epidemic regionally, and support individuals suffering from substance use disorder.

**Paint parties** were held at Austin Health Center and Cottage Grove Health Center this month. Staff, patients, and community members contributed their artistic talents to painting panels that will be installed as part of new murals at the health centers. Four murals are being installed at CCH sites this summer, thanks in part to support from the Cook County Health Foundation.

In honor of **Mental Health Month**, Cook County Health held a **Facebook Live event** on managing anxiety. Several CCH clinicians discussed the factors that cause anxiety and how one can help manage anxiety individually or with the help of a provider. The event reached more than 5,400 individuals and earned more than 300 clicks.

## Legislative Updates

### Local

- Cook County Health's work to address food insecurity began in 2015 with a two-question food insecurity screening, which was later adopted by all CCH primary care sites and incorporated into the CountyCare health risk screening tool. CCH patients who screened positive received a voucher to access fresh produce from the Greater Chicago Food Depository's (GCFD) Fresh Truck.

Since its inception, CCH's Fresh Truck partnership with GCFD has resulted in more than 500 visits to CCH health centers providing fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as some shelf stable items during the COVID-19 pandemic, to over 50,000 households, representing more than 165,000 individuals.

Over the next several months, CCH and GCFD will be pivoting to a different model to connect patients with fresh and nutritious food. This includes piloting an onsite food pantry at Belmont Cragin Health Center and a medically-tailored meals program based initially at Provident Hospital that will further align the health conditions identified by CCH providers with food-related resources following a provider visit. These efforts are funded by an ARPA award to CCH from Cook County; these funds will also support a full-time Food Security Manager, based in the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We are also exploring other models that work best for our patients and look forward to sharing more when details are available.

- The week of May 12<sup>th</sup>, CCH leadership appeared before the following Cook County Board committees to provide testimony and respond to questions from Commissioners.
  - **Asset Management Committee** – Cook County Department of Asset Management leadership along with Adam Weber, CCH Executive Director of Special Operations participated in the meeting to respond to questions pertaining to contracts for the Stroger MEP Powerhouse, Stroger AE upgrades and the lease for CCH’s Austin Health Center.
  - **Finance Committee** – Pam Cassara, CCH CFO addressed questions related to the County’s Monthly Revenues and Expenses Report as well as CCH finances. CCH leadership was also available to respond to questions related to CCH’s Monthly Report which is a compilation of the metrics and presentations made to the CCH Board of Directors from the previous month.
  - **Health & Hospitals Committee**
    - **Meeting** – Dr. Thomas Nutter, CCH Chief Behavioral Health Officer presented the committee with an update on the Cook County Behavioral Health Summit in response to a Resolution sponsored by Commissioner Dennis Deer.
    - **Public Hearing** – Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) Chief Operating Officer; Dr. Fidel Abrego, Chair of the Department of OB/GYNE; Dr. Priscilla Auguston-Ware, Chair of the Department of Correctional Health and Cermak Medical Director; and Dr. Yvonne Collins, Chief Medical Officer Managed Care presented the committee with an update on Maternal Health & Doulas in response to a Resolution sponsored by Commissioner Donna Miller.
  - **Legislation Committee** – CCH leadership was available to respond to questions related to a Resolution pertaining to Asian American Data Collection.
  - **Workforce Committee** – CCH leadership monitored the meeting related to BHR Hiring Timeline Reports.

## State

- Despite their best intentions to adjourn by the self-imposed deadline of May 24, the Illinois House and Senate met through the weekend to wrap up passage of the FY25 budget ([SB251](#), [SA3](#)) and other legislation. The Senate stayed through Memorial Day and passed a balanced budget that includes new revenue; the House returns Tuesday and is expected to pass the bills without further amendments.

Contingent session days are scheduled through May 31, which is the deadline for a simple majority vote to pass legislation (including a budget) that would take effect prior to June 1 of the next calendar year. The state fiscal year ends June 30.

- Cook County Health’s 2024 state legislative priorities include:
  - Secure annual appropriations to fund the [Equity and Representation in Health Care Act](#), which provides loan repayment and scholarships to health care providers working at CCH facilities and at FQHCs.
    - Status: \$3M included in Governor’s proposed FY2025 budget for the Illinois Department of Public Health. This amount is included in the budget passed by the Senate.
  - Protect and strengthen Medicaid.
    - Status: The Governor’s proposed FY2025 budget included \$629M to continue Medicaid-like coverage (HBIA/S) for immigrant adults 42+ years, which would not

- allow for the lift of the enrollment freeze that has been in place since 2023. These funds remain in the budget passed by the Senate.
- Support legislation that promotes harm reduction and prioritizes treatment instead of only imposing criminal penalties.
    - Status: [HB2/SB78](#) would authorize an overdose prevention site in Chicago. [SB1830](#) would reclassify low-level possession of narcotics from a felony to a misdemeanor and offer access to treatment for those who need it. These bills did not advance in the 2024 spring session.
  - Advocate for increased funding to local health departments.
    - Status: [HB4823](#), HA1 would add \$10M to the local health protection grant line in the Illinois Department of Public Health, above the Governor’s proposed FY2025 budget. The FY25 budget passed by the Senate includes an additional \$5M on top of Governor’s proposed FY25 budget, which holds this line item flat compared to the FY24 budget.
- Other legislation of interest to Cook County Health:
    - [HB5395](#), also known as the Healthcare Protection Act (HPA), sponsored by [Representative Anna Moeller](#), prohibits prior authorization for inpatient mental health care, bans the use of “step therapy”, creates new standards for utilization review, and eliminates short-term limited duration or “junk plans” which have already been banned in 12 other states. The provisions apply broadly to private insurance plans regulated by the Illinois Department of Insurance, with some provisions applying to fee-for-service Medicaid and Medicaid MCOs. The HPA is a [legislative priority of Governor Pritzker](#). The bill passed the House and Senate and will be sent to the Governor for signature.
    - [HB5142](#), sponsored by [House Majority Leader Robyn Gabel](#), requires state-regulated private insurance plans to cover services provided by doulas, lactation consultants, and licensed certified professional midwives. The bill also expands the definition of postpartum coverage to 12 months and requires the coverage of breast pumps and breast pump supplies. The bill passed the House and Senate and will be sent to the Governor for signature.
    - [HB778](#), sponsored by [Representative Theresa Mah](#), establishes a new clinical readiness program to provide “direct services to international medical graduate physicians seeking to reestablish their medical careers and obtain residency” in Illinois. The effort would be a collaboration between the Governor’s Office of New Americans and the Illinois Department of Public Health. The bill passed the House and Senate and will be sent to the Governor for signature.

Additional details about legislative activity from the Spring 2024 session will be shared in subsequent reports.

## Federal

- Congress is out of session this week for the Memorial Day recess, returning the week of June 3.
- **FY 2025 Budget and Appropriations Process**  
 Congress has begun working on FY 2025 appropriations, which begins October 1. On May 23, the House Appropriations Committee approved “interim” subcommittee allocations which would increase funding for Defense and national security programs while cutting most non-defense domestic discretionary programs. The Labor-Health and Human Services-Education subcommittee would be allocated \$186 billion, which is between ten and eleven percent below the final enacted funding level for this fiscal year (FY 2024). Meanwhile the Senate appropriators are moving more

slowly, and Democratic leaders have indicated that they will continue to insist on parity between defense and domestic spending.

Most observers continue to believe that at least one continuing resolution will be required to extend current year funding past the November elections. Moreover, if Republicans win back the White House in November, they will have strong incentives to wait until after inauguration day to complete negotiations, in order to advance their priorities at the outset of a new Trump administration.

- **ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, Treasury Regulations**

On May 15 the Senate rejected a Congressional Review Act (CRA) joint resolution to overturn the Obligation Interim Final Rule (IFR) published by the U.S. Department of Treasury in November 2023 for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF). Cook County advocated in support of these regulations and subsequent guidance which give SLFRF recipients essential flexibilities to obligate funds for appropriate purposes, including CCH initiatives. Defeating the resolution of disapproval was a key County priority.

- **Health Legislation**

On May 10, Sens. Cory Booker (D-NJ), Bob Casey (D-PA), and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) introduced the Mamas First Act, which would expand Medicaid coverage to doula and midwifery care. A House version of the bill was introduced by Reps. Gwen Moore (D-WI), Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), Lauren Underwood (D-IL), Alma Adams (D-NC), and Debbie Dingell (D-NC).

On May 16, the House Energy & Commerce health subcommittee marked up several health bills including some that aim to reduce Medicaid payment improper payments. The “Leveraging Integrity and Verification of Eligibility for Beneficiaries Act,” which was approved without objection, would require states to verify that Medicaid recipients are not deceased and remove any deceased beneficiaries from their rolls by cross-checking with the Social Security Administration’s Death Master File database. Under other bills advanced by the subcommittee, MCOs would have to share beneficiary addresses with state Medicaid agencies and require the states to check a provider’s status in federal databases before enrolling or reenrolling them in Medicaid on a quarterly basis.

- **Biden-Harris Administration Action**

On April 22, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) finalized two major rules aimed at improving patient experience and transparency in Medicaid managed care plans.

Each year, the rule will require states and Medicaid Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) to report on state-directed payments to providers, their rates compared to Medicare rates, as well as to survey beneficiaries about their experience with the plans. States will also be required to set up publicly accessible websites to allow beneficiaries to compare MCO quality ratings. CMS also capped state-directed payments for services at academic medical centers to the average commercial rate.

On May 1, COVID-era hospital occupancy and other reporting requirements related to respiratory infections expired.

On May 3, CMS announced a rule that will permit active recipients of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) to enroll in a qualified health plan or a basic health plan under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and some forms of financial assistance. Previously, DACA recipients were not considered “lawfully present” under the terms of the ACA.

## Redetermination Events

Cook County Health and CountyCare are currently hosting a series of Rede events in the System's facilities, other FQHCs and community partners. Rede events target CountyCare members living in or close to the Zip Codes of the hosting site. Members receive calls, postal correspondence, email, and texts advising them of the event happening in their vicinity.

- June 3 – **North Riverside Health Center** – 1800 S. Harlem Avenue, North Riverside, IL 60546
- June 5 – **Belmont Cragin Health Center** – 5501 W. Fullerton, Chicago, IL 60639
- June 6 – **Friend Health** – 5635 S. Pulaski, Chicago IL 60629
- June 8 – **Provident Hospital** – 500 E. 51<sup>st</sup> Street, Chicago, IL 60615
- June 10 – **Austin Health Center** – 4800 W. Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60651
- June 11 – **Robbins Health Center** – 13450 S. Kedzie Ave Robbins, IL 60472
- June 12 – **Stroger Hospital** – 1969 W. Ogden, Chicago, IL 60612
- June 12 – **Provident Hospital** – 500 E. 51<sup>st</sup> Street, Chicago, IL 60615
- June 13 – **Alivio Health** - 2021 S Morgan St., Chicago, IL 60608
- June 14 – **Englewood Health Center** – 1135 W. 69th Street, Chicago, IL 60621
- June 18 – **Cottage Grove Health Center** – 1645 S. Cottage Grove Ave Ford Heights, IL 60411
- June 18 – **Esperanza Health Center** – 4700 S. California Ave Chicago, IL 60632
- June 20 – **Friend Health** – 5635 S. Pulaski, Chicago IL 60629
- June 20 – **Care for Friends** – 5749 N. Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, IL 60660
- June 21 – **Arlington Heights Health Center** – 3520 N. Arlington Heights Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60004
- June 22 – **Malcolm X College Juneteenth Event** – 1900 W. Jackson, Chicago, IL 60612
- June 24 – **Blue Island Health Center** – 12757 S. Western Avenue, Blue Island, IL 60406
- June 25 – **Lawndale Christian Health Center** – 3750 W. Ogden Ave., Chicago, IL 60623
- June 26 – **Primecare Health Center** – 5635 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60634
- June 26 – **Provident Hospital** – 500 E. 51<sup>st</sup> Street, Chicago, IL 60615
- June 27 – **Chicago Family Health Center** – 9119 S Exchange Ave Chicago, IL 60617
- June 28 – **Englewood Health Center** – 1135 W. 69th Street, Chicago, IL 60621

## CCH Community Advisory Councils

Cook County Health Advisory Councils include patients, community and religious organizations and serve as a way to promote our services in the communities where our centers are located. The Councils provide feedback to our staff and help strengthen our health center's relationships in the community. The councils meet quarterly to provide current information on Cook County Health and as an avenue for members to share information about their organizations.

The 2024 Second Quarter topic presentations include CountyCare's Health Benefits for Immigrant Adults (HBIA) presentation. In addition, the meeting provides updates on Cook County Health, Community Outreach, and each clinic's programs.

Upcoming CAC meeting dates, including the 2024 schedule:

- Prieto: Tuesday at 1:00 PM: June 4, September 3, December 3  
2424 S. Pulaski, Chicago, IL 60623
- Robbins: Tuesday at 1:00 PM: June 11, September 19, December 10  
13450 S. Kedzie Road, Robbins, IL 60472
- North Riverside: Wednesday at 1:00 PM: June 12, September 11, December 11  
1800 S. Harlem Avenue, North Riverside, IL 60546
- Englewood: Thursday at 1:00 PM - June 13, September 12, December 12  
1135 W. 69th Street, Chicago, IL 60621
- Provident/Sengstacke: Wednesday at 9:00 AM: July 10, October 9  
500 W. 51st Street, Chicago, IL 60609
- Cottage Grove: Tuesday at 1:00 PM: July 23, October 22  
1645 S. Cottage Grove Avenue, Ford Heights, IL 60411
- Blue Island: Wednesday at 1:00 PM: August 14, November 13  
12757 S. Western Ave., Blue Island, IL 60406
- Arlington Heights: Tuesday at 1:00 PM: August 20, November 19  
3520 N. Arlington Heights Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60004

#### **Event Participation in June:**

Outreach staff will participate in the following events to promote both Cook County Health and CountyCare (especially Redetermination) to attendees.

- 1) June 1, 2024 – Participation in the **Liaisons In Care (LinC)'s 2nd Annual Resource Fair** will take place at the Shine Bright Community Center located at 8560 S. Cottage Grove in Chicago, IL 60619.
- 2) June 1, 2024 – Participation in the **Community Health Fair** which is hosted by the Top Teens of America, Top Ladies of Distinction and the Theta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and which will take place at the Akarama Community Service Center located at 6220 S. Ingleside in Chicago, IL 60637.
- 3) June 8, 2024 – Participation in **the 4 Men Only Health Fair** which is hosted by Provident Hospital and CountyCare and which will take place at Provident Hospital located at 500 E. 51<sup>st</sup> Street in Chicago, IL 60609. We will also do the first Walk With A Doctor “walk” at this event.

- 4) June 8, 2024 – Participation in **State Representative Brad Stephens Childrens Safety Expo** will take place at the St. Rosalies Church Parking Lot located at 6750 W Montrose Avenue in Harwood Heights, IL 60706.
- 5) June 8, 2024 – Participation in **Chicago Family Caregiver Expo** which is hosted Call for Caring and Bellevue Baptist Church and which will take place at the Bellevue Ministry Center located at 10715 S. Halsted in Chicago, IL 60628.
- 6) June 8, 2024 – Participation in the **2nd Annual Man Up - Chicago's Men's Lifestyle Expo** which is hosted by Imagen Marketing Consultants, and which will be held at the Instituto del Progreso Latino located at 2520 S. Western in Chicago, IL 60608.
- 7) June 8, 2024 – Participation in the **Men's Health Fair** which is hosted by Provident Hospital and CountyCare will be held Provident Hospital located at 500 E. 51<sup>st</sup> Street in Chicago, IL 60615.
- 8) June 8, 2024 – Participation in the **Summer Vibes, Peaceful Lives: A Community Convening** which is hosted by the Kenwood United Church of Christ and the Hyde Park and Kenwood Anti-Violence Task Force and which will be held at the Kenwood United Church of Christ located at 4600 S. Greenwood Ave. in Chicago, IL 60653.
- 9) June 8, 2024 – Participation in the **2024 Palooza Health Resources Fest** which is hosted by the CORE Center's CCHIP Program and which will be held at the Austin Health Center located at 4800 W Chicago Avenue in Chicago, IL 60651.
- 10) June 9, 2024 - Participation in the **National Kidney Foundation of Illinois Walk for Kidneys** which will be held at Diversey Harbor located at 2601 N Cannon Drive in Chicago, IL 6061.
- 11) June 12, 2024 - Participation in the **Community Mural Paint Party** which will take place at the Austin Health Center located at 4800 W Chicago Ave Ste 1 Chicago, IL 60651.
- 12) June 14, 2024 - Participation in the **Family Focus Englewood's Annual End of Year Community Celebration & Home Visiting Graduation** which will take place at their facility located at 6727 S. Western Avenue in Chicago IL 60636.
- 13) June 14, 2024 – Participation in the **2024 Palooza Health Resources Fest** which is hosted by the CORE Center's CCHIP Program, and which will be held at the Association House of Chicago located at 1115 N. Kedzie in Chicago, IL 60651.
- 14) June 15, 2024 – Participation in the **Homewood-Flossmoor Juneteenth Festival** which is hosted by You Matter 2 will take place at the Homewood-Flossmoor High School South Parking Lot located at 999 Kedzie Avenue in Flossmoor, IL 60422.
- 15) June 14, 2024 - Participation in the **Cook County Assessor's Office's Senior Resource Fair** which will take place at the Cook County Assessor's Office located at 118 N Clark St 3rd Floor Lobby in Chicago, IL 60602.
- 16) June 20, 2024 - Participation in the **Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation's Health Fair on The Block** which will take place at the Former CVS Parking Lot located at 79th Street and Halsted in Chicago, IL 60620.



- 17) June 20, 2024 - Participation in the **Howard Brown Health Center's Juneteenth Health & Wellness Fair** which will take place at their clinic located at 641 W. 63rd St. in Chicago, IL 60621.
- 18) June 22, 2024 - Participation in the **Friend Health's Annual Men's Health Event** which will take place at their clinic located at 1522 E 63rd Street in Chicago, IL 60637.
- 19) June 27, 2024 - Participation in the **Healthy Relationships Matter Community Resource Event** which is hosted by the Center for Advancing Domestic Peace which will take place at Fernwood Park located at 10436 S. Wallace in Chicago, IL 60628.
- 20) June 27, 2024 - Participation in the **Provident Scholarship Awards Ceremony** which will take place at the CCH Professional Building located at 1950 W. Polk, Chicago, IL 60612.
- 21) June 29, 2024 - Participation in the **Pink Divas & Gents Breast Cancer Organization's 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Brastr Cancer Walk** which will take place at the Morton West High School located at 2400 Home Avenue in Berwyn, IL 60402.
- 22) June 29, 2024 - Participation in the **Cook County Bureau of Economic Development's Transforming Places Summer Kick-off Events** which will take place at Celebration Park located at 13800 Trumbull in Robbins, IL 60472.
- 23) June 30, 2024 - Participation in the **2024 Pride Parade** which will take place along Broadway and Halsted Avenues in Chicago. CCH will have a float and about 100 participant walkers in the parade.