



Alameda County Health Care for the Homeless

Quarterly Newsletter

July - September 2022

In The Spotlight



**Congratulations to Dr. Aislinn Bird,
ACHCH Director of Integrated Care**

We are thrilled to announce that Dr. Aislinn Bird is our new Director of Integrated Care. This is a new role for ACHCH that furthers our commitment to addressing historic silos that have existed between physical and mental health care service delivery models.

Dr. Bird has been with Health Care for the Homeless since 2017. She has served as the lead psychiatrist developing the Street Health service delivery model, driving innovative street based mental health, and substance use services to deliver patient centered care directly on the streets. In addition, Dr. Bird has served as a staff psychiatrist in the LifeLong TRUST Clinic, building deep trusted relationships with patients and supporting the ongoing development of integrated, trauma informed health care services for TRUST patients.

Dr. Bird brings expertise in public psychiatry, understanding the complex interface in which every aspect of life for individuals experiencing homelessness - environment, community safety, income levels, and more - that combine to influence the mental and physical health of every person we serve to support capacity development and system level initiatives to increase access and provision of psychiatry and substance use services.

Dr. Bird is a fierce advocate for those we serve, working tirelessly every day, and beautifully practicing radical humility.

Center for Health Care Strategies Partnerships for Action: California Health Care & Homelessness Learning Collaborative

ACHCH has been selected for Partnerships for Action: California Health Care & Homelessness Learning Collaborative: [LEARN MORE](#)

The Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) recently announced that Alameda County Health Care for the Homeless (ACHCH) along with Alameda Health System (AHS) Bridge Clinic and Bay Area Community Services

(BACS)— were one of eight teams selected to join *Partnerships for Action: California Health Care & Homelessness Learning Collaborative*.

Under this initiative, made possible by the California Health Care Foundation, CHCS is working with organizations across California that are committed to improving care delivery and health and housing outcomes for people experiencing homelessness throughout various regions in the state.

For over two years, ACHCH, AHS, and BACS and the other participating teams will work together to help develop and/or enhance strategies to improve health and housing outcomes for people experiencing homelessness. The initiative is designed to strengthen health care and homeless service organization partnerships and address new opportunities made possible through California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM), the state’s ambitious Medicaid transformation effort that is focused on redesigning health care delivery for high-need populations, including people experiencing homelessness.

“Partnerships between health care, social services, and housing providers are essential to foster a whole-person care approach for people experiencing homelessness,” said Michelle Schneidermann, MD, Director of People-Centered Care, California Health Care Foundation. “We're excited to support these innovative cross-sector partnerships working toward the promise of CalAIM — delivering care that is responsive, coordinated, comprehensive, and just.”

The learning collaborative will build the capacity of participating teams — composed of health care organizations, managed care plans, community-based organizations, housing providers, and other stakeholders — to partner and align their efforts to establish a more robust support network for people experiencing homelessness.

Information about our project:

Low Barrier, Peer-Provider Harm Reduction in Alameda County Shelters

In Alameda County, nearly one person dies of a suspected overdose each day. Overdose deaths disproportionately affect people of color and occur in

the same regions with the highest density of individuals experiencing homelessness. This project is a new partnership between the Alameda Health Systems Bridge Clinic, Bay Area Community Services (BACS), and Alameda County Health Care for the Homeless (ACHCH).

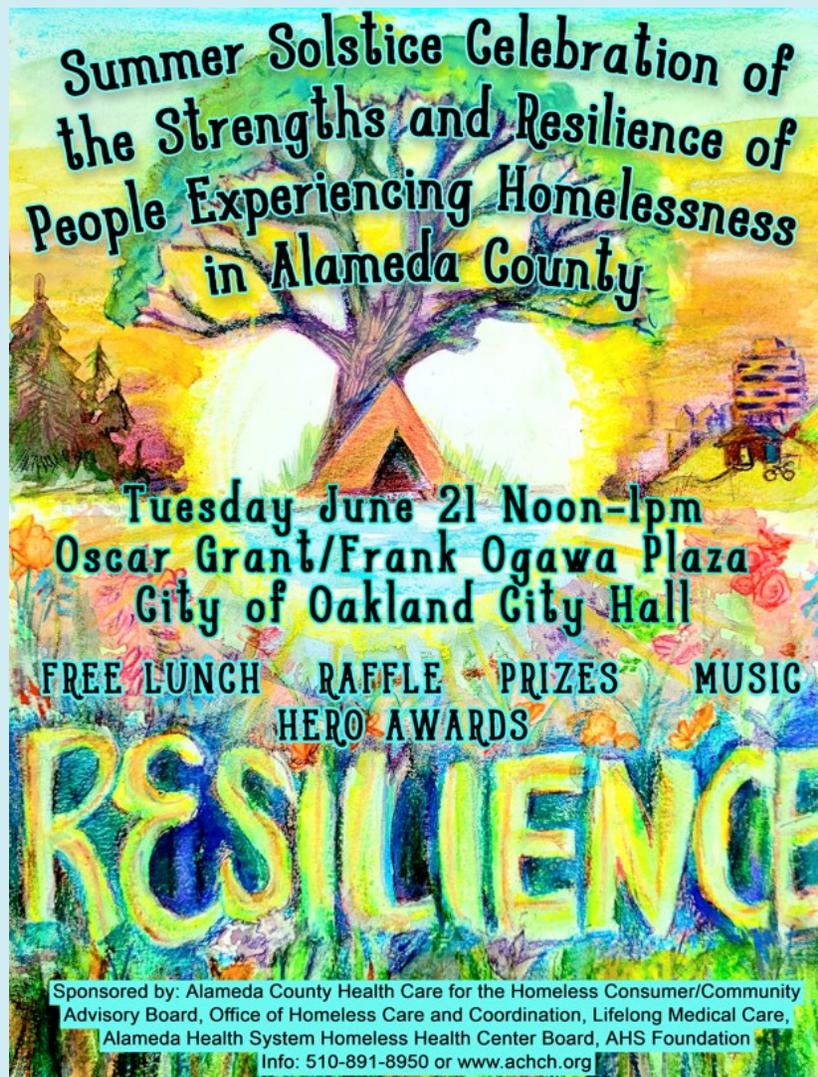
The goal of our project is to decrease the disproportionate burden of overdose risk that is faced by people experiencing homelessness.

Our project will focus on overdose risk reduction for people experiencing homelessness through three overlapping initiatives:

1. Creation of Harm Reduction Peer-Provider program in homeless shelters
2. Initiation of a clinical effort to expand access to low barrier buprenorphine initiation in atypical settings
3. Piloting of a Contingency Management program to facilitate patient engagement positive behavior change



Summer Solstice Celebration



The Summer Solstice, a day filled with light, is a fitting time to honor the accomplishments, resiliency and strength of people experiencing homelessness, and to draw inspiration from them as we continue in the struggle for justice.

Honoring Osha Neumann



(In photo: David Modersbach, Osha Neumann, April Anthony)

In this year's Summer Solstice Celebration of the Strength and Resilience of people experiencing Homeless, the ACHCH Consumer/Community Advisory Board honored Berkeley lawyer, artist and activist Osha Neumann for a lifetime achievement award. A tireless warrior for the rights of unhoused persons, Osha developed the homeless street law model, taking his efforts directly to the streets to support unsheltered people to exercise their rights to shelter, housing, health and dignity, in a way that brings power to people and helps them stand up against injustice and build community. Some of Osha's former clients attended the event, and Osha gave a stirring speech about the power and inspiration he has drawn from the people he has served over the years.

Resilience and Determination Hero Awardees

The ACHCH CCAB opened nominations to the community of housed persons and services providers to identify people who have demonstrated strength and resilience in their struggles to gain housing and support those around them by their model and by their example.

Recipients of this year's awards included:

- Janice Anderson

- Aisha C.
- Patrick Ford
- Elizabeth Silva
- Lawrence Lincoln
- Carla Leal
- Frank Luna
- April Anthony

ACHCH thanks the amazing group of sponsors of the event:

- Alameda County Health Care for the Homeless Consumer /Community Advisory Board
- Alameda Health System Homeless Health Center Consumer Board
- Lifelong Medical Care
- Alameda Health System Foundation
- Alameda County Office of Homeless Care and Coordination

Contributors:

- Bay Area Community Services
- Abode Housing, Inc.
- Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson
- “Old School” James Copes
- Joe Sharkey Artwork & Design

A special thank you to Bennie and Brenda Whitfield and the ACHCH Consumer/Community Advisory Board (CCAB) for their amazing work opening and closing the event.



STRENGTH
&
RESILIENCE





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Program Highlights

Ultrasound Training

ACHCH facilitated a point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS) training for ACHCH Street Health providers on June 1st and 2nd. The POCUS training was provided by the Global Ultrasound Institute, a community of expert ultrasound educators and practitioners. ACHCH Street Health teams were provided with point-of-care ultrasound machines, which are handheld, portable ultrasound devices used for street-side diagnostic medical imaging to assist in diagnostic and medical procedures by a non-radiologist (i.e., medical doctor trained in diagnostic imaging). Evidenced-based POCUS education for Street Health providers (i.e., NP, PA, DO, MD) and RNs was provided.

Street Health providers can be credentialed for all sorts of medical exams (i.e., cardiac, lung, breast, thyroid, renal, gall bladder, bladder, soft tissue, vascular, musculoskeletal, pelvic, obstetric). Street Health RNs are primarily credentialed for use in vascular (i.e., hard sticks, identifying veins), obstetric, and soft tissue ultrasound (e.g., identification of abscess). Ultrasound imagery can be viewed in real-time on a laptop, iPad, or smartphone.

ACHCH is excited to be able to support the Street Health teams in becoming proficient in POCUS and joining a global community of ultrasound practitioners to transform how street health providers practice medicine.



(In photo: Street Health teams training)



(In photo: Dr. Jay Reinking, Street Health Medical Director & LifeLong Medical Trust)

Our COVID-19 & Monkeypox Response

COVID-19

In the face of continued COVID-19 infections county and statewide, ACHCH continues to lead ongoing responses to COVID-19 in the community of people experiencing homelessness and homeless services providers. We continue to carry out the weekly Alameda County Homeless Providers COVID-19 Community Call, providing support, information, and guidance to 80-140 providers weekly. We continue to provide vaccinations, COVID-19 test kits, masks, and other supplies needed by providers.

We are keeping our [COVID-19 webpage](#) updated and we meet every morning to review and coordinate around all COVID-19 activity among shelters and homeless sites. ACHCH is working closely with our Isolation and Quarantine Hotels and shelter providers to both provide I&Q and help shelter providers adapt to providing isolation and quarantine services on site where possible. Finally, in August, ACHCH kicked off a shelter ventilation and infection control project to support providers to move into post-pandemic healthier shelter environments.

Monkeypox

ACHCH is responding to suspected and confirmed cases of Monkeypox among people experiencing homelessness in Alameda County. We are coordinating with the public health department, our isolation and quarantine hotels, and shelter, hospital, and clinic partners on a daily basis. ACHCH has developed a [Monkeypox webpage and guidance](#) for homeless services providers that includes nationwide resources, presentations, and fact sheets.



Community Care Vaccine Sites

ACHCH continues to provide low barrier access to the COVID-19 vaccine through Community Care sites.

Please visit our website for the [vaccine site schedule](#).

ACHCH Monthly Provider Training Series

Every fourth Wednesday of the month, ACHCH offers trainings for shelter and outreach providers in Alameda County. Trauma Stewardship, Hoarding Disorder, De-escalation, and Treating Clients with Psychosis are just a few of the topics that are presented. To view previously recorded trainings, visit our [website](#).

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[ACHCH Partners](#)



**Mental Health
Services Act (MHS)**
Alameda County Behavioral Health

