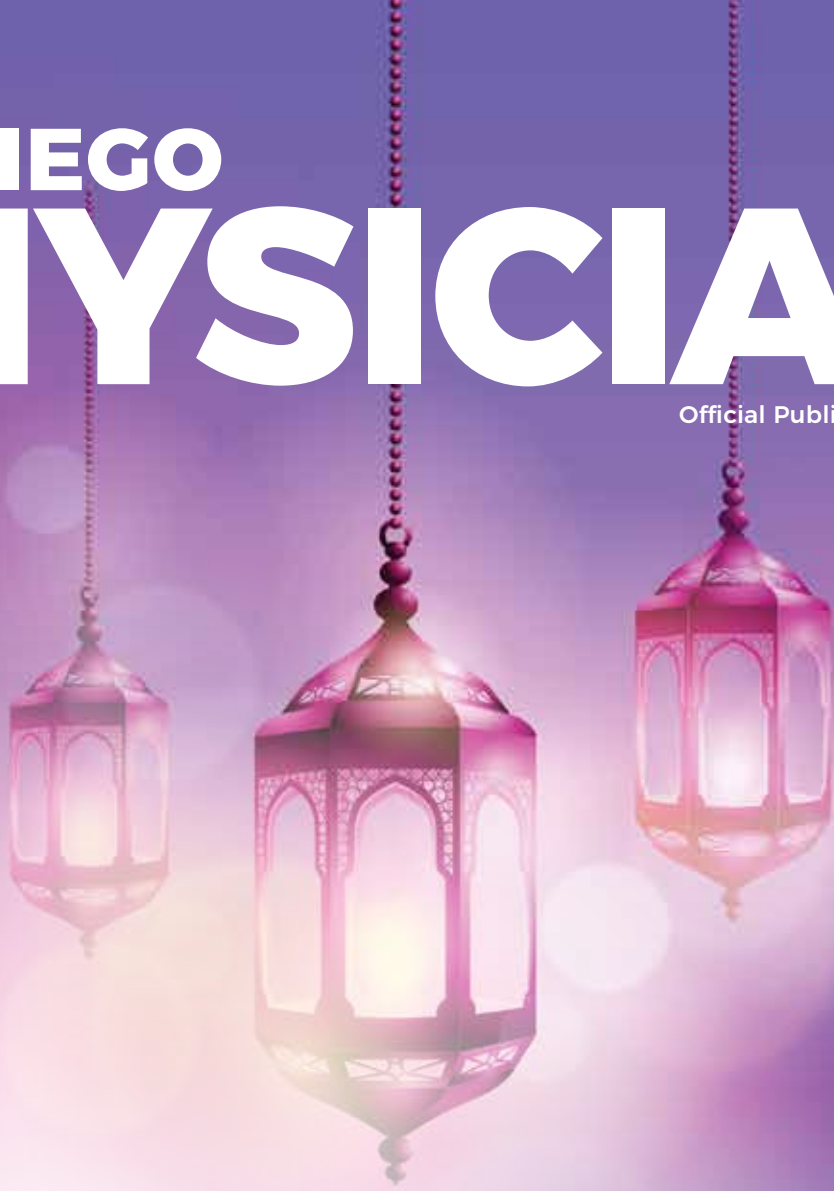


SAN DIEGO

JUNE 2025

PHYSICIAN

Official Publication of SDCMS



Lighting the Way

TO HEALTH

Champions For Health
Annual Report

2023/2024



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SDCMS

Physician 'Aloha' Mixer at Bali Hai 'No Ka Oi'

MAY'S PHYSICIAN SOCIAL AND MIXER AT THE legendary Bali Hai restaurant was a wonderful success with a large turnout, mood-improving mai tais, delicious and plentiful pu pu platters and a view on a beautiful San Diego day that could not be topped. Be sure to catch our next mixer at Stone Brewing Bistro & Gardens Liberty Station at 2816 Historic Decatur Rd, San Diego, on July 9 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. +





ADVOCACY

Hertzka and Hegyi Work to Hobble Medicaid Cuts

SDCMS'S OWN PHYSICIAN political guru Dr. Robert Hertzka and CEO Paul Hegyi spent considerable time and energy on Capitol Hill last month lobbying hard to limit the proposed Medicaid cuts in the so-called "Big, Beautiful Bill." They met with congressmembers Juan Vargas, Mike Levin, Yung Kim, and Raul Ruiz, among others. The work continues and the fight goes on. +



Top: Hertzka and Hegyi with Congressman Mike Levin. Bottom: Meeting with Rep. Juan Vargas.



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Comprehensive Behavioral Health Care for Children and Adolescents at Sharp Mesa Vista

Approximately 1 in 5 U.S. youth reported experiencing a major depressive episode in the past year, according to a 2024 report by Mental Health America. This translates to over 5.2 million people ages 12 to 17. With more than half of these individuals not receiving treatment for their mental health concerns, it is crucial for parents and medical professionals to help young people access care so they can lead healthy, productive lives and learn coping skills they can use in their daily routine.

For more than 60 years, Sharp Mesa Vista Hospital has been a leading provider of behavioral health services in San Diego County, delivering compassionate care to children, adolescents and their families through inpatient care, partial hospitalization programs and intensive outpatient treatment.

“As with adults, numerous elements affect young people’s mental health, such as genetics, interpersonal relationships and their community. But unlike adults, children are more directly affected by family dynamics and their brains are still developing, so children and teens need help with understanding their emotions and developing healthy coping habits,” says Dr. Kelsey Bradshaw, a clinical child psychologist at Sharp Mesa Vista.

The team of experts at Sharp Mesa Vista includes board-certified child psychiatrists, child psychologists, psychiatric nurses, recreation therapists and social workers. These professionals are dedicated to supporting young people ages 5 to 17 with behavioral or emotional challenges. Behavioral health concerns may include self-harm, depression, chemical dependency and anxiety, which can emerge from interpersonal conflicts and difficulties in engaging with school or home life.

Inpatient services provide care for youth at immediate risk of harming themselves or others, and they remain in the hospital for treatment. Participants in the partial hospitalization program return home each day after receiving therapy five days a week.



Intensive outpatient programs run three evenings a week and are focused on helping youth manage their mood and behavior. “By using cognitive and dialectical behavioral therapy in a group setting, our therapists help with improving self-esteem and developing effective communication strategies and social skills,” says Dr. Bradshaw. “We also provide family therapy and medication management as part of treatment.”

Additionally, Sharp Mesa Vista offers the Changes Substance Use Intensive Outpatient Program for adolescents struggling with chemical dependency and mental health conditions. Experts in this after-school, dual-diagnosis treatment program use recovery principles to support a sober lifestyle and help young patients form healthy alternatives to substance use.

Sharp Mesa Vista’s various levels of care make it San Diego’s most comprehensive provider of expert mental health care. “Our child and adolescent programs are thoughtfully developed to address the unique needs and varying intensities of symptoms in young people,” says Dr. Bradshaw. “By placing young people in the most suitable treatment program, we foster a nurturing environment that significantly enhances the healing process and promotes a lasting recovery.”

Dr. Bradshaw adds that addressing mental health concerns during childhood and adolescence can help prevent them from worsening in adulthood.

“By collaborating with our various experts and partnering with community providers, we’re proud to promote the well-being of San Diego’s youth here at Sharp Mesa Vista.”

If you or a colleague know of a patient who may benefit from child and adolescent programs or other services offered at Sharp Mesa Vista Hospital, you can refer a patient by calling 858-836-8555 or visiting sharp.com/mesavista.



Champions for Health is dedicated to providing access to critically needed healthcare for uninsured, low-income residents of San Diego County who would otherwise face insurmountable barriers to care. We recruit, mobilize, and support hundreds of volunteer physicians and healthcare professionals to provide free preventive and specialty healthcare.

ANNUAL REPORT

2023/2024

Dear friends,

Why are we here? Each of us has had this existential thought. Ralph Waldo Emerson said it best: "The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, and to make some difference that you have lived and lived well." Without hesitation, our staff, our volunteer physicians, our board, our partner FQHCs, hospitals, free clinics, funders, and supporters fulfill their purpose every day. We fully invest ourselves into our cause of health for all. When we do a good job, when we pour effort from our very core, we light the path to health for each patient, and we lighten the burden of illness from the world. Let us continue to go forth with intention. The world waits in darkness for the light in each of us. Thank you for all your continued support of Champions for Health!

With much appreciation,
**ADAMA DYONIZIAK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
CHAMPIONS FOR HEALTH, BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF**



152
Specialty care
physicians

34
Specialty areas

10
Hospitals and
outpatient
surgery centers

20
Referring clinics

60
Specialty and
medical partners

Volunteers

“Try to be a rainbow in someone’s cloud.” Maya Angelou must have been thinking of Champions for Health’s volunteers. Our medical and healthcare professionals are essential in contributing to our cause by administering vaccines, providing health screenings, educating about health topics, and providing primary and specialty care services. The treasure at the end of the rainbow is our volunteers, as they light the path to health with every patient.

113

Speaker's Bureau presentations

3,100

San Diegans educated

5,252

COVID-19 vax doses

2,092

Immunization field clinics

604

Homebound COVID-19 doses

15,989

Flu doses

268

VFC doses

365

TDAP doses

962

MPox doses

1,190

HepA doses

Community Wellness

With our amazing health equity partners and our community health workers, Champions for Health removes barriers to prevention services such as language, needing to make appointments, and lack of technology and transportation by providing opportunities for immunizations, health screenings, and education sessions in communities of need. The immunization team administered vaccinations to skilled nursing facilities, senior and low-income housing, K-18 schools, farms, faith-based organizations, free clinics, shelters, parks, and community centers. Speaker's Bureau presentations were conducted in affordable housing complexes, schools, senior centers, shelters, and community clinics. Topics highlighted the continuing needs of the community: Heart health and blood pressure management, fall prevention for older adults, updated information on influenza and COVID-19, heat safety and hydration strategies, diabetes prevention, skin cancer awareness, and mental wellness. Trusted, face-to-face interactions between healthcare professionals and the public reinforce preventive care messages and improve health literacy.



Project Access San Diego

Project Access provides a referral pathway to specialty care services for uninsured people between 139% and 322% of the federal poverty level. We arrange elective, medically necessary specialty care consultations and outpatient procedures by leveraging donated care. We recognize the challenges faced by our community members in seeking services. The physicians, ancillary service providers, office staff, and PASD care managers are kind faces who meet people at a challenging, often pain-filled moment of their lives. We continue to create an individualized and attentive web of support, one that can ultimately allow clients to continue with pain-free and independent lives.

45
procedures/
surgeries

98.5%
reduction in
missed workdays

67
interpretation
services

373
specialty
appointments

79
PASD
patients

207
transportation
services



Our Project Access Partners



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La Mesa Cardiac Center

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North Coast Surgery Center
North County ENT, H&N Surgery
Outpatient Surgery Center of La Jolla
Pacific ENT Medical Group
Palomar Health Medical Center
PLNU Health Promotion Center
Regents Pharmacy
Retina Consultants of San Diego
San Diego Cardiac Center
San Diego Cardiovascular Associates
San Diego Endoscopy Center
San Diego ENT
San Diego Hand Specialist
San Diego Outpatient Surgery Center
San Diego Podiatry Group
Scripps Health Ambulatory Surgery Center
Scripps Health Chula Vista
Scripps Health Encinitas
Scripps Memorial La Jolla
Scripps Mercy Surgery Pavilion
Sleep Data
Spine and Sport Physical Therapy
St. Leo's Medical Program
The Endoscopy Center
Tri City Medical Center
True Care
UCSD Student Run Free Clinic
Vision Care & Correction of San Diego
Vista Community Clinic
Whole Person Care Clinic
Ximed

698

San Diego County providers (MD/DO/ NP/PA) trained in real time on screening

149

providers trained on care management

206

providers used on-demand training

31

providers trained on caregiver education and support

371

staff members (MAs, LCSWs, etc.) trained on all topics

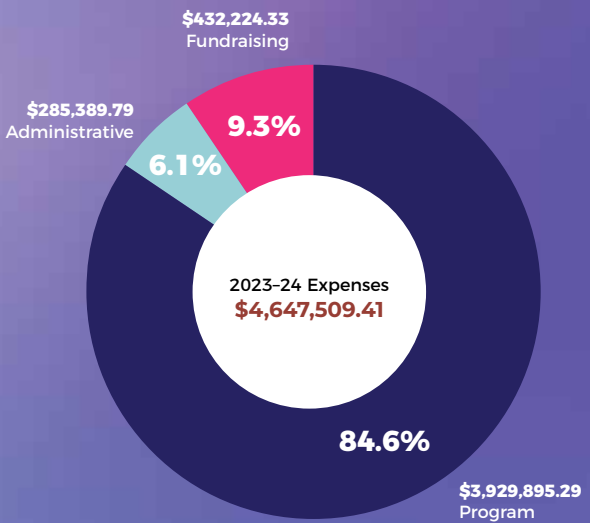
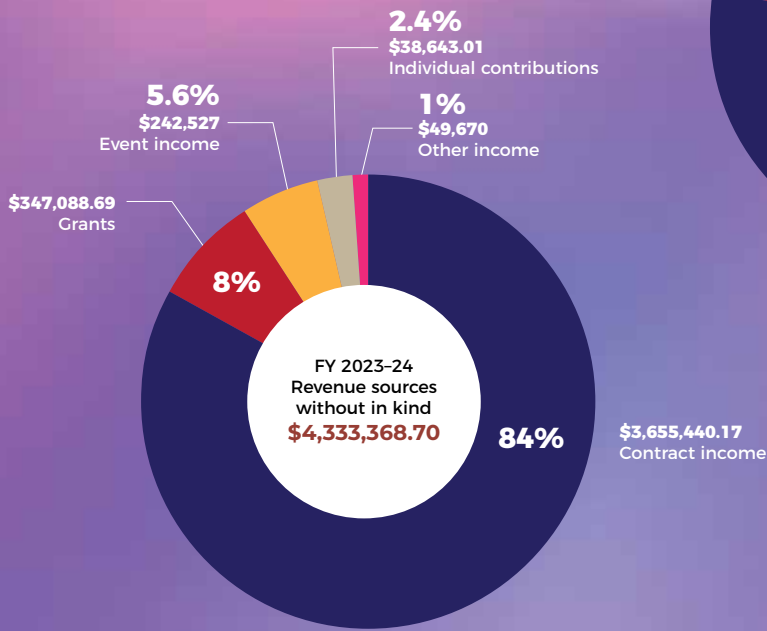
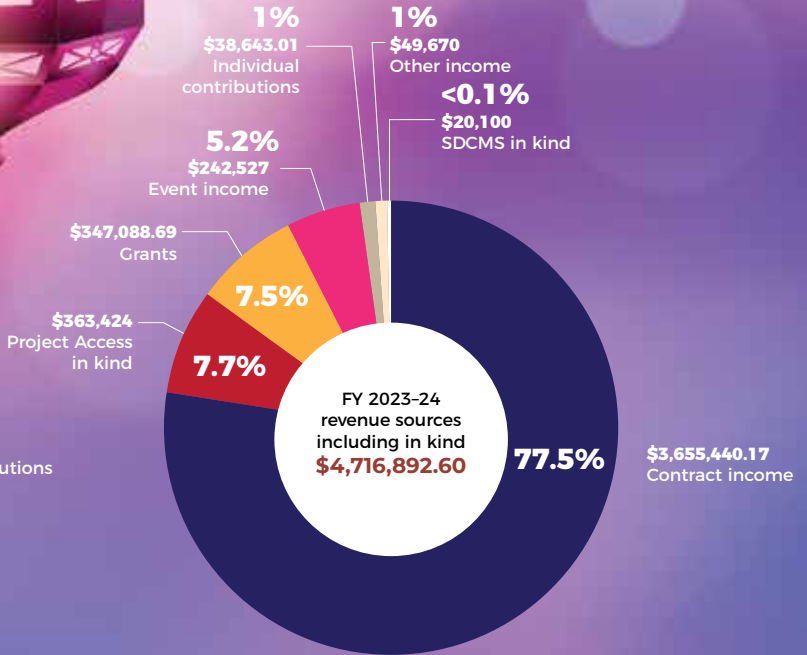
Physician Support

The Alzheimer's Project Clinical Roundtable continues toward system adoption, provider education, and outreach to providers serving communities of color who are at increased risk of dementia. In November 2024, Michael Lobatz, MD, the co-chair of the clinical roundtable since 2014, retired. Leadership was assumed by Ian Neel, MD, UC San Diego geriatrician and consultant for the geriatric behavioral health unit; and Peter Kim, MD, chief medical officer, Sharp Community Medical Group. The focus continues to be on increasing screening rates due to both the availability of disease modifying medications for those meeting criteria, and due to Medicare billing requirements. The Fourth Edition of the Clinical Guidelines shows modified screening and evaluation algorithms to accommodate clinical practices, and added



instruments prescribed by Dementia Care Aware for MediCal-only eligible patients. Results from the research study, funded by the UC San Diego Sanford Institute for Empathy and Compassion, show that there was significant increase in screening rates and improvement in clinical skills through the training and use of the prescribed protocols. These steps improve patient care and efficiency of patient visits, reducing unnecessary referrals to specialists and empowering primary care providers.

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Borrego Springs Library
Boys & Girls Clubs
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Cal Fire San Diego
California Conservation Corps
Cape Cod Senior Villas
Casa Colina Del Sol
Casa Rafael
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Chicano Federation
Child Development Associates
Chula Vista Fire Dept
Chula Vista Community Collaborative
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Cuyamaca College
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Dramm Etcher Farms
Dreams for Change
Dulzura Market
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East County Regional Center
El Cajon Library
El Dorado Community Service
Employee Rights Center
Episcopal Community Services
Ericson Elementary School
Escondido Care Homes
Everde Growers Farm
Fallbrook Regional Health District
Fallbrook Union Elementary School District
Family Health Centers of San Diego

Father Joe's Villages
Filipino-American Cultural Organization
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Imperial Beach Women's Club
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Islamic Center of San Diego
Jamul Dulzura Union School District
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Jary Bareto Crisis Center
Jewish Family Services
Joe and Vi Jacobs Center
Just in Time for Foster Youth
Karen Organization of San Diego
Kurdish Community Islamic Center
La Colonia Community Foundation
La Mesa-Spring Valley School District
La Paloma Healthcare Center
Lakeside Union School District
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Lemon Grove Farmers Market
Lemon Grove Library
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Mexican Consulate of San Diego
Mira Costa College
Mira Mesa Senior Center
MJ Housing Services
Montgomery Waller Recreation Center
Mount Hope Garden

Mountain View Community Center
Museum of Us
Muslim Community Center of San Diego
NAMI San Diego
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Transgender Health & Wellness Center
Trauma 2 Resilience
UEI College
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University of San Diego
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YMCA - Copley Price Family, Jackie Robinson,
El Cajon
Zephyr Affirmed Housing

San Diego Physicians Organizing to Address Heat, Wildfires, and Human Health

By Rachel Han, BS, Vi Nguyen, MD, Mary Lou Lindegren, MD, MPH, Luis Castellanos, MD, MPH, and William Tseng, MD, MPH

THE 2024 REPORT OF THE LANCET Countdown indicated that in 2023, the annual mean surface temperature reached a record high of 1.45°C above the preindustrial baseline in 2023⁶. As climate change accelerates, the frequency, duration, and intensity of heat waves in the United States have increased as well (Figure 1)⁸. Extreme weather events such as wildfires are becoming more common and severe, threatening not only ecosystems and communities but human health as well⁵. The 2025 California wildfires serve as a striking example, having gained nationwide attention with more than 40,000 acres of land reduced to ruins, communities displaced, lives lost, and devastating impacts on our climate and health. One of the most dangerous effects during wildfires is the release of particulate matter (PM 2.5) into the air as studies have shown the health impacts of PM 2.5 in penetrating the respiratory system, leading to increased rates of asthma and other chronic respiratory diseases⁹.

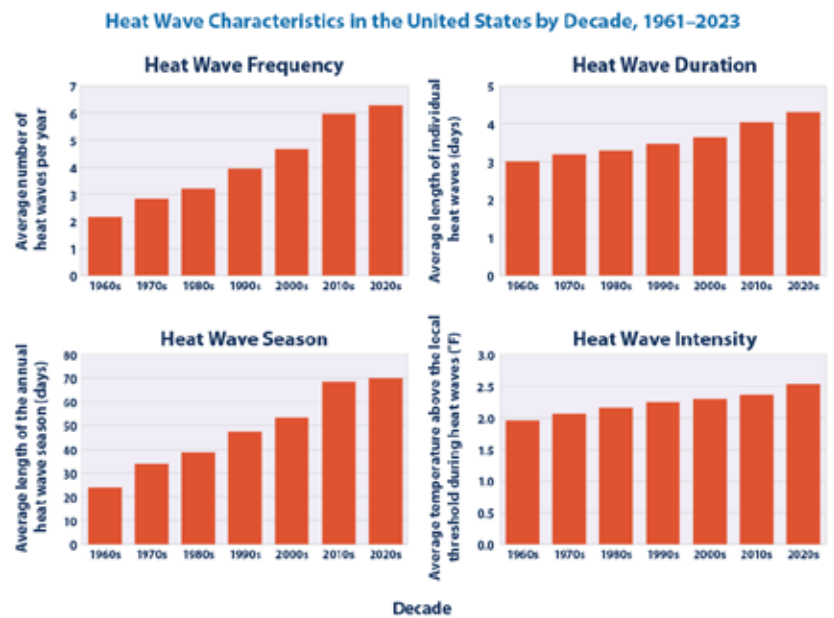
Exposure to heat in general affects human health in the short and long term. Studies have shown that the risks of illness and death from cardiovascular events, respiratory conditions, kidney disease, adverse pregnancy outcomes, and mental health disorders increase with elevated temperatures². The combination of increased heat, air pollution, and stress leads to more hospitalizations, placing

more strain on healthcare systems already stretched thin. In Figure 2, the map shows the number of hospital admissions for heat-related illnesses per 100,000 people in 23 states that participate in a national hospital data tracking program³. Ultimately, the burden disproportionately affects vulnerable populations who are at highest risk of extreme heat effects and are least able to prepare for, respond to, and cope with these events¹ such as

children, older adults, individuals who are pregnant or have chronic health conditions, and those experiencing homelessness or with limited access to resources. Interventions are needed to minimize and address these health impacts.

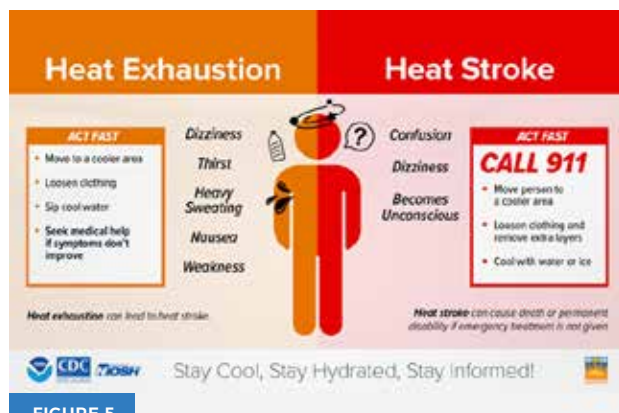
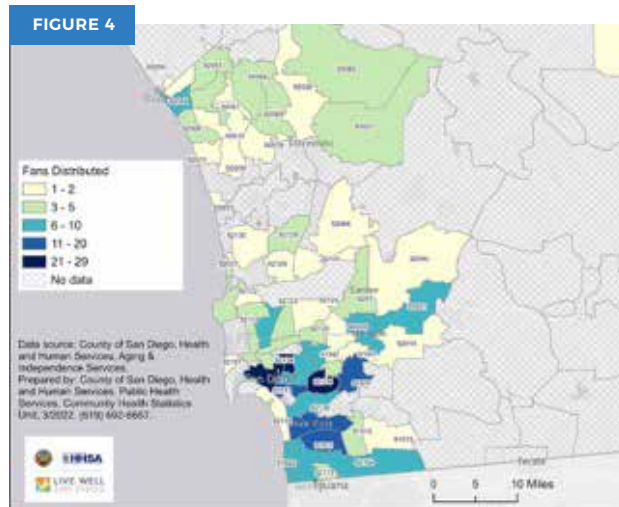
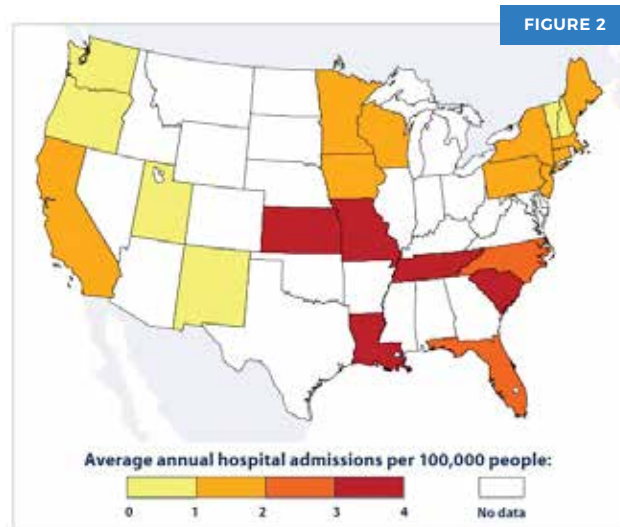
In San Diego County, response efforts are guided by the Excessive Heat Response Plan⁴. The plan is structured into three phases - Seasonal Readiness, Heat Alert, and Heat Emergency - each designed to escalate preparedness based on Heat Alerts set by the National Weather Service⁴. As shown in Figure 3, from 2013 through 2021, the county experienced a general increase in heat advisories, correlating to a rise in heat-related prehospital calls during heat events. In response, the county has implemented interventions to mitigate heat-related morbidity and mortality rates - particularly among vulnerable populations⁴. Aging and Independent Services (AIS) manages the Cool Zone program, which offers a network of free, air-conditioned spaces across the county for the elderly and

FIGURE 1



Data source: NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). (2024). Heat stress datasets and documentation (provided to EPA by NOAA in April 2024) [Data set].

For more information, visit U.S. EPA's "Climate Change Indicators in the United States" at www.epa.gov/climate-indicators.



at-risk individuals. From June to October of 2021, 313 fans were distributed to San Diego residents in response to inquiries to the AIS Call Center, with most fans provided to those in the south-west part of the county (Figure 4)⁴. Additionally, 2-1-1, a local nonprofit organization, offers a 24/7 hotline that connects San Diego residents to disaster, health, and transportation resources. These public health efforts have demonstrated the collective action taken to mitigate the risks of climate change on human health.

The County Communications Office, in collaboration with Public Health Services and other county departments, have also used a variety of social platforms to communicate about programs and services to San Diego residents, including Twitter, county news center, and other social media sites in anticipa-

tion and during heat related events⁴. Communication between public health officials, organizations, and San Diego residents is essential as the coordinated efforts among the county, healthcare workers, and environmental organizations have helped identify vulnerable populations and areas, provided cooling and transportation resources, and prepared for rapid response during heat waves. It's also important to communicate steps that can be taken as community members during heat waves — such as finding a Cool Zone, staying hydrated, avoiding strenuous activity, checking on friends and family at increased risk, and recognizing signs of heat-related illness (Figure 5)⁴. Maintaining an open line of communication between county officials and communities ensures that response plans are informed by lived experience and are

equitably implemented. This feedback loop will be critical in building climate resilience in San Diego.

In the Summer of 2023, a group of local concerned San Diegans came together to organize a health advocacy summit highlighting the intersection of climate change and human health. The Heat and Human Health Summit (H3SD) became a first-of-its-kind regional event, bringing together voices all throughout California to drive solutions at the community level. This event was spearheaded by a dedicated team of physicians, medical students, and pre-medical students, and involved the coordination of multiple parties including the University of California San Diego, San Diego State University, Kaiser Permanente, League of Women Voters San Diego, American Academy of Pediatrics CA-3, American College

of Physicians Region 3, County of San Diego, Scripps Institute of Oceanography SoCal Heat Hub, and Indian Health Council, among others. Over the course of nearly a year, the planning team held monthly meetings and brought together diverse perspectives from various healthcare sectors to strategize and plan for the summit. Contributions included communicating with potential speakers and panelists, providing financial support and resources, leading outreach and communication efforts, and coordinating logistics such as venue planning, catering, and volunteer coordination to ensure the success of the summit. Through this collective effort, our team laid the foundation of an event designed to educate, empower, and mobilize action in our community.

Our two-day summit opened with poster presentations, showcasing innovative research and projects by students of varying education levels throughout San Diego County. Our goal was to provide a platform for emerg-

ing scholars to share their work on climate and health-related topics. We invited high school students from the Greater San Diego Science and Engineering Fair, as well as undergraduate and graduate students from San Diego State University and the University of California campuses. One standout project, awarded second place, came from a high school student who created her own shoes using recycled plastic materials. The first-place winners were UC San Diego medical students who performed a waste audit in the pain management suites and revealed the significant amount of plastic waste generated in this healthcare setting. These student-led presentations set the tone for the summit by highlighting the critical role of academic institutions in amplifying youth and student voices in pursuit of discovering solutions at the intersection of climate change and human health.

The second day of the summit featured speaker sessions led by physicians, medical students, scientists, and

experts from UC San Diego, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, San Diego State University, UC Irvine, UC Los Angeles, County of San Diego, and Alliance Consulting International. Presentations covered a wide range of topics at the intersection of climate change and health effects such as wildfires, climate education and research, heat and youth sports, heat and health effects in Imperial Valley, occupational heat-related illnesses, legislative advocacy and policy, county response, PM2.5 and air quality, cardiopulmonary and renal health, pediatric burn injuries, and disaster preparedness were discussed. Between sessions, attendees engaged in networking and collaborative discussions. During lunch, we provided tabling for organizations such as the League of Women Voters, County of San Diego, American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Physicians, Alliance Consulting, and more. We also showcased climate artwork from the American Academy of Pediatrics CA3 EnviroArt Youth Climate Art Exhibition.



One of the summit's most impactful speaker sessions was delivered by Pranav Garimella, MD, a nephrologist at UC San Diego who explored the severity of climate change on renal health. He emphasized how rising temperatures, altered rainfall patterns, and the increased frequency of extreme weather events - such as heat waves and flooding - have led to a rise in kidney disease, water contamination, and infrastructure damage, all of which pose serious risks to kidney care delivery. In the United States, about 600,000 individuals receive dialysis. Dialysis treatments take place about three times a week, with each session requiring 400 liters of water. In one year in the United States alone, dialysis consumes an estimated 37.4 billion liters of water. On average, a single patient spends approximately \$90,000 annually on dialysis treatment. These treatments disproportionately affect vulnerable populations who face barriers in accessing consistent care. These disparities are further exacerbated during extreme weather events when access to dialysis facilities is disrupted and local resources are strained. In response to this, healthcare systems should shift toward zero-waste models, foster a culture of sustainability, implement carbon neutrality and water conservation goals, and urge medical providers to recognize the effect of climate change on kidney care.

Rachel Han, one of our co-authors, was one of the pre-medical students on the planning team. She expressed gratitude to have been mentored by these physicians, experts, and advocates whose clinical knowledge and passion for addressing climate change helped shape the summit's agenda and brought the community together. The H3SD summit not only highlighted the urgency of addressing these climate-related risks, but highlighted the need for collaboration across disciplines. It was inspiring to hear the different voices from every corner of our community contributing their

knowledge and passions to address these healthcare challenges. As an aspiring physician, Rachel felt an even deeper responsibility to work at the intersection of medicine and climate change to truly understand the factors that contribute to our health and protect vulnerable populations in our community. This event was a defining moment in her journey to pursue medicine — emphasizing the importance of community-driven solutions and addressing healthcare through a multifaceted lens.

The patients that Rachel hopes to care for, as well as the future generation of physicians, will face challenges directly shaped by environmental instability, from worsening respiratory and cardiac conditions to the displacement of entire communities. Addressing these challenges not only requires clinical expertise, but collective action. Every reader of this piece has a role to play in preparing ourselves and our future generation to address these emerging challenges. Our goal for our next summit is to be more innovative and expansive by including regions vulnerable to climate changes. We've been fortunate enough to have already secured experts to speak on pressing issues such as wildfires, the Tijuana sewage crisis, indigenous health, rural health and farmworkers, and heat effects in Imperial Valley. It's imperative to promote partnerships between stakeholders and students from UC Irvine, UCLA, UC Riverside, Imperial Valley, and other California regions outside of San Diego, and it is through this kind of grassroots, collective effort that we can develop meaningful solutions to address climate change and its health impacts on our communities. +

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Rachel Han is a pre-medical student with a bachelor's degree in public health. She's passionate about addressing health disparities through the intersection of social justice, climate change, and community health, and hopes to serve the San Diego community in the future.

Dr. Nguyen is a fellow of environmental health as part of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and serves as co-chair of San Diego's AAP Climate Change and Health Committee, as well as chair of AAP California State Government Affairs Expert Committee on Environmental Health and Climate Change. She's cofounder of San Diego Pediatricians for Clean Air, and now serves as co-chair of the Public Health Advisory Council for Climate Actions Campaign in San Diego.

Dr. Lindegren is a board-certified pediatrician who served at the Centers for Disease Control for 20 years and was on faculty at Vanderbilt School of Medicine. She is currently on the AAP-CA3 committee on climate change and health, and is on the organizing committee of the H3SD summit.

Dr. Castellanos is a health sciences clinical professor of medicine in the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine and vice chair for justice, equity, diversity and inclusion in the Department of Medicine at UC San Diego. Dr. Castellanos' research focuses on health outcomes and inequities involving racial and ethnic minority groups. He has been recognized by the UCSD Clinical Advancement and Recognition of Excellence in Service and received the National Center for Leadership in Academic Medicine Award.

Dr. Tseng, a respected member of the Southern California Medical Group at Kaiser Permanente San Diego since 2000, is known for his dedication to patient care, education, and community service. As a board-certified internal medicine physician and assistant area medical director at Kaiser Permanente, he upholds high standards in patient safety and healthcare quality. Recently honored with a fellowship at the American College of Physicians, Dr. Tseng is recognized for his excellence in internal medicine.




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Caring for the Patient: Serving Newcomers in San Diego

By *Devesh Vashishtha, MD*

IT WAS A USUAL TUESDAY AFTER-noon at my City Heights community health center. I walked quickly from room to room. One patient needed refills for chronic pain, another had DiG-eroge syndrome, and a third needed her staples removed after a recent ex-lap.

My most challenging visits were a trio of Russian-speaking refugees from Moldova. The ringleader was a 63-year-old woman who usually directed the conversation. As the care navigator for her family, she spoke up admirably for herself as well as her sister and brother-in-law. I usually found it hard to agenda-set during the visits, but this time I needed to be in control. The ringleader's sister, initials VC, had a positive HPV test two years in a row and was months late in scheduling her colposcopy.

These patients are what we call "newcomers," or individuals born outside the United States who require specific screening labs, counseling, and treatment based on their prior countries of residence. Newcomer is a useful term because it incorporates multiple categories, including immigrants via the visa or green card system, undocumented people, refugees, and asylees.

Although immigration rates swing between administrations, there are millions of newcomers in America who have not yet received comprehensive primary care. Such care includes health screening depending on their medical and travel history. In my clinic, we often check a quantiferon, hepatitis B and C testing, and HIV testing. In my patient's case, VC had a positive HPV test and was receiving the necessary workup.

As I began the visit, I breathed a sigh



of relief when it became clear that the group had fewer questions than usual. I stepped out for a minute and had my nurses escalate VC's case so she could potentially get on the schedule for a colposcopy.

Using the help of an excellent Russian telephonic interpreter, I answered a nuanced insurance question about dual Medicare-Medicaid coverage. I also gave VC an opportunity to sit with me alone so she could have clarity on the reason for her colposcopy. The visits were done on time and, thanks to my nurses, VC left with a colposcopy appointment in hand.

Like my primary care colleagues in City Heights, El Cajon, and other areas of San Diego County that serve a large population of newcomers, I have developed skills that make it easier to care for these patients.

First, I focus on one or two achievable outcomes for each primary care visit.

Second, and especially for my pediatric patients, I explain medical decisions and clinical processes using a certified medical interpreter, and with painstaking detail. For some of our newcomer groups with very low health literacy,


this might include explaining what a primary care clinic is, and how it differs from the pharmacy or hospital.

Third, I use resources such as Minnesota's CareRef website to determine which screening tests and immunizations are relevant for a given patient. At Family Health Centers of San Diego, our physicians have also developed an internal order set that guides this process.

Fourth, my colleagues and I continually advocate to improve the quality of care for our newcomer patients through student, resident, and physician education, hiring care navigators, improved interpreter services, and hiring staff who speak the same languages as our patients.

Many of our SDCMS members serve newcomers. To excel in this endeavor requires great patience and a willingness to adapt our counseling, treatment, and advocacy efforts to the individuals we are seeing.

In many ways, newcomer care embodies Dr. Francis Peabody's famous aphorism: "The secret of the care of the patient is in caring for the patient." +

 Dr. Vashishtha is a family physician and lead physician at City Heights Family Health Center. He serves on San Diego County's Behavioral Health Advisory Board, as well as on a Medi-Cal Advisory Committee and the CAFP Legislative Affairs Committee.





‘Progress Note’

By Daniel J. Bressler, MD, FACP


I HAVE WRITTEN THOUSANDS OF UPDATES ON MY PATIENTS’ conditions through my multi-decade career. Tradition and habit have me call these updates “progress notes.” Yet, are they really that?

For certain conditions whose natural history allows for a potential resolution or at least improvement, the term is certainly apt. Acute conditions such as infections or allergic reactions, or controllable conditions such as hypertension and diabetes, can certainly be referred to as “making progress.” The notes are also a place where I wrestle with differential diagnoses, tests to order or consider, and add input to my analyses from a consultant or reference source. In this way, they document progress in clinical understanding.

Some conditions are less amenable to medical intervention or have reached a stage in their own natural history when the most we can hope for is a controlled decline. Think advanced dementia, end-stage cancer, or severe inoperable arthritis. These are less easily described in a context of progress. Ironically these notes often outline the progress of the disease rather than the patient.

Even in these situations, however, there is something hopeful and useful about the label. A patient’s progress may be measured against a theoretical baseline of his status without intervention. There may still be pain, dysfunction, or pathology but it may not be as severe or debilitating as it would have been without medical care.

In the end, the progress note can be both an accurate account of clinical reality and a linguistic facade masking the uncomfortable truth of medicine’s limitations. When confronted with futility, we may be best served by finding ways to orient our care to the realistic goals of comfort and acceptance toward which we can truly guide our patients’ progress. +

 Dr. Bressler has been practicing internal medicine in San Diego since 1984. During his career he has taught medical students and residents and also chaired various hospital committees. He is currently affiliated with Scripps Mercy Hospital and Mission Hills Post Acute Care.



Progress Note

Another baffling history
Puzzling lab, bizarre sore throat
Just how to probe the mystery
I wrestle in the progress note

I do my darndest not to rush
To button up my thoughts and coat
And wait till hubbub calms to hush
To finalize the progress note

I make a breakthrough diagnosis
Do I grieve or do I gloat?
It all depends on the prognosis
Explained within my progress note

Capturing a patient’s story
Near-verbatim, quote-unquote
Include a useful allegory
To amplify the progress note

Wholesome health, a castle’s keep
Around the structure runs a moat
Across its span threats swim or leap
They’re listed in my progress note

Nature’s both a queen and bitch
Last to bat and first to vote
Supportive up until her switch
Lamented in my progress note

So often there’s no “progress” made
And yet this vessel stays afloat
Perhaps I’ve helped to ease the fade
I hope so in my progress note. +

Know Your Numbers

By Adama Dyoniziak



THE HEART SYMBOLIZES LIFE itself. We take for granted that our heart will always be working at its best. But do you know your numbers? Love Your Heart is an annual event started by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, and happens during the week of Valentine's Day. Organizations provide free blood pressure screenings to the public. Champions for Health had a screening event at our offices in the United Way San Diego building lobby.

"My health has always been fine," said Heather Modlmeier, senior accounting clerk for 13 years at United Way of San Diego. "I think I am healthy: I exercise, I'm a vegetarian. I decided to check my blood pressure because it was an opportunity to know

my numbers, so why not?"

For her first blood pressure screening, the numbers were not in the normal range, and Heather chalked it up to having had strong coffee and having walked the stairs. She rechecked her blood pressure an hour later. The numbers were even higher and she thought, "that can't be good." CFH gave Heather a blood pressure monitor to take home and showed her how to use it. The Love your Heart handouts explained how to ensure an accurate reading and what the number ranges meant.

That night, Heather went home to relax, drink some water, and check her blood pressure. It continued to increase through the evening. When her numbers hit 189/90, her husband, Thomas, took her to the emergency room.

Heather had blood drawn, and EKG and a chest X-ray done. Her blood pressure reached a high of 210/115 that night. "That scared me," she said. "The blood pressure alarm in the ER kept going off. I kept wondering if I was having a stroke or a heart attack." Over the next few days at home, her blood pressure gradually decreased with the medication she received. When she woke up one night because her heart was racing, her primary care provider ordered an echocardiogram and a heart monitor to capture more data. Since then, Heather drinks decaffeinated coffee, and removed any remaining sodium from her diet and continues to exercise. "I'm just thankful that CFH was taking blood pressure readings in the lobby – it may have saved my life," she said. "I wouldn't have known there was a problem until it was too late. I had experienced some headaches lately and I thought it was due to stress."

Heather recalled a family history of heart problems with both her parents having heart attacks and bypass surgery in their late 50s. When Heather recently visited her sister Windy in Texas, Windy experienced shortness of breath. Ten years earlier, Windy had suffered a heart attack in her late 50s and had needed two stents. Now, her cardiologist determined that Windy needed quadruple bypass surgery. "My advice is go see your doctor and take all the preventive measures like checking your blood pressure," Heather said. "Know your numbers and how to keep them in check, whether you have a family history or not. Listen to your body — don't ignore symptoms."

Volunteer with Champions for Health to provide blood pressure screenings or provide pro bono specialty care for Project Access by calling (858) 300-2780 or emailing adama.dyoniziak@championsfh.org.



Adama Dyoniziak is executive director of Champions for Health.

PRACTICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

VIRTUAL SPEECH THERAPY AVAILABLE: Accepting new pediatric and adult patients. We accept FSA/HSA, Private pay, Medicare, Medi-Cal, and several commercial insurance plans pending credentialing. Visit virtuallspeechtherapyllc.org or call 888-855-1309.

PSYCHIATRIST AVAILABLE: Accepting new patients for medication management, crisis visits, ADHD, cognitive testing, and psychotherapy. Out of network physician servicing La Jolla & San Diego. Visit thylmed.com or call 619-707-1554.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

PHYSICIANS: HELP US HELP IMPROVE THE HEALTH LITERACY OF OUR SAN DIEGO COUNTY COMMUNITIES by giving a brief presentation (30-45 minutes) to area children, adults, seniors, or employees on a topic that impasses you. Be a part of Champions for Health's Live Well San Diego Speakers Bureau and help improve the health literacy of those with limited access to care. For further details on how you can get involved, please email Andrew.Gonzalez@ChampionsFH.org.

CHAMPIONS FOR HEALTH | PROJECT ACCESS SAN DIEGO: Volunteer physicians are needed in the following specialties: endocrinology, rheumatology, vascular surgery, ENT or head and neck, general surgery, GI, and gynecology. These specialists are needed in all regions of San Diego County to provide short term pro bono specialty care to adults ages 26-49 who are uninsured and not eligible for Medi-Cal. Volunteering is customized to fit your regular schedule in your office. Champions for Health is the foundation of the San Diego County Medical Society. Join hundreds of colleagues in this endeavor. Contact Evelyn.penalozza@championsfh.org or at 858-300-2779.

PHYSICIAN OPPORTUNITIES

FAMILY PRACTICE | INTERNAL MEDICINE PHYSICIAN: La Jolla Village Family Medical Group is seeking a P/T/F/T primary care physician to join our well-established private practice. We've been caring for our La Jolla/UTC area neighbors for 35+ years providing comprehensive, longitudinal care to patients of all ages. Call responsibilities are minor; hours consistent with a healthy work/life balance. Our office is new, clean, modern, and well-appointed. Our clinical team is collegial, passionate, and close-knit, with a supportive, cohesive support staff. A true private practice where physicians practice artfully and build enduring relationships with patients and colleagues. Seeking a Board-certified, California-licensed MD/DO physician, passionate about medicine and looking to establish roots in a practice dedicated to the art of good medicine. Competitive salary and excellent benefits including medical, dental, vision, and retirement. Send a cover letter and CV to jcalataluna@lajollafamilymedical.com

FAMILY MEDICINE/INTERNAL MEDICINE PHYSICIAN | PHMG RAMONA: Palomar Health Medical Group is seeking a Family Medicine or Internal Medicine Physician (MD/DO) to join our multi-specialty practice at our Ramona clinic location. Experienced physicians and new graduates are encouraged to apply. Clinic schedule is Mon - Fri, outpatient only, no weekends or holidays. We offer competitive salary of \$300k/year or more depending on experience. In addition, we offer productivity and other bonuses, PTO, CME reimbursement, health, dental, vision insurance, participation in 401K with partial employer match, short and long-term disability, and life insurance. Student loan repayment assistance is also available. Join Palomar Health Medical Group, where we're reimagining healthcare with compassion, excellence, and integrity. Please email CV to clayton.trosclair@palomarhealth.org or philypantides@phmg.org.

CLINICAL DIRECTOR | BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SCIENCES | COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO: The County of San Diego is seeking a dynamic physician with a passion for building healthy communities. This is an exceptional opportunity for a California licensed, Board-certified, Physician to help transform the local behavioral health continuum of care and lead important work within the Health and Human Services Agency's Behavioral Health Services department. Visit our website to view a detailed brochure outlining the duties and responsibilities of the position and to file your application. Anticipated Hiring Range: \$310,000 to \$320,000 annually. In addition to the base salary, the incumbent may receive a 10% premium for Board Certification or a 15% premium for Board Certification and Sub-specialty. [2877-0225]

VENOUS DISEASE SPECIALIST | NORTH COUNTY: La Jolla Vein & Vascular, the premier vein care provider in San Diego, is seeking a highly skilled and experienced Venous Disease Specialist to join our team at our newest location in Vista, CA, nestled in the stunning coastal region of North County San Diego. This full-time position offers competitive salary and benefits, including profit-sharing and a 401(k). Our state-of-the-art facility operates Monday through Friday, with no weekend or night shifts, promoting an excellent work-life balance. Ideal candidates may also consider a locum or locum-to-hire arrangement. Join us in making a difference in our patients' lives while enjoying your dream location! Email CV to jobs@vascular.com. [2875-1030]

PART-TIME PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN: Primary Care Clinic in San Diego searching for part-time physician for 1 to 2 days a week, no afterhours calls. Please send CV to medclinici@yahoo.com. [2872-0909]

OB/GYN POSITION AVAILABE | EL CENTRO: A successful Private OBGYN practice in El Centro, CA seeking a board eligible/ certified OB/GYN. Competitive salary and benefits package is available with a tract of partnership. J-1 Visa applicants are welcome. Send CV to femincareo@gmail.com or call Katia M. at 760-352-4103 for more information. [2865-0809]

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO PROBATION DEPT. MEDICAL DIRECTOR: The County of San Diego is seeking dynamic physician leaders with a passion for building healthy communities. This is an exceptional opportunity for a California licensed, Board-certified, physician to help transform our continuum of care and lead essential medical initiatives within the County's Probation Department. Anticipated Hiring Range: Depends on Qualifications Full Salary Range: \$181,417.60 - \$297,960.00 annually. As part of the Probation Administrative team, the Medical Director is responsible for the clinical oversight and leadership of daily operations amongst Probation facilities' correctional healthcare programs and services. As the Medical Director, you will have significant

responsibilities for formulating and implementing medical policies, protocols, and procedures for the Probation Department. Medical Director.

PART-TIME CARDIOLOGIST POSITION AVAILABLE: Cardiology office in San Marcos seeking part-time cardiologist. Please send resume to Dr. Keith Brady at uabresearchdoc@yahoo.com. [2873-0713]

INTERNAL MEDICINE PHYSICIAN: Federally Qualified Health Center located in San Diego County has an opening for an Internal Medicine Physician. This position reports to the chief medical officer and provides the full scope of primary care services, including diagnosis, treatment, and coordination of care to its patients. The candidate should be board eligible and working toward certification in Internal Medicine. Competitive base salary, CME education, Four weeks paid vacation, year one, 401K plan, No evenings and weekends, Monday through Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm. For more information or to apply, please contact Dr. Keith Brady at: uabresearchdoc@yahoo.com. [2874-0713]

FAMILY MEDICINE/INTERNAL MEDICINE PHYSICIAN: San Diego Family Care is seeking a Family Medicine/Internal Medicine Physician (MD/DO) at its Linda Vista location to provide outpatient care for acute and chronic conditions to a diverse adult population. San Diego Family Care is a federally qualified, culturally competent and affordable health center in San Diego, CA. Job duties include providing complete, high quality primary care and participating in supporting quality assurance programs. Benefits include flexible schedules, no call requirements, a robust benefits package, and competitive salary. If interested, please email CV to sdfcinco@sdfamilycare.org or call us at (858) 810-8700.

PHYSICIAN POSITIONS WANTED

PART-TIME CARDIOLOGIST AVAILABLE: Dr. Durgadas Narla, MD, FACC is a noninvasive cardiologist looking to work 1-2 days/week or cover an office during vacation coverage in the metro San Diego area. He retired from private practice in Michigan in 2016 and has worked in a San Marcos cardiologist office for the last 5 years, through March 2023. Board certified in cardiology and internal medicine. Active CA license with DEA, ACLS, and BCLS certification. If interested, please call (566) 206-0988 or email dasnarla@gmail.com.

OFFICE SPACE / REAL ESTATE AVAILABLE

MEDICAL OFFICE FOR SUBLEASE OR SHARE: A newly remodeled and fully built-out medical clinic in Torrey Hills. The office is approximately 2,700 sq ft with 5 fully equipped exam rooms, 1 lab, 1 office, spacious and welcoming waiting room, spacious reception area, large breakroom, and ADA-accessible restroom. All the furniture and equipment are new and modern design. Ample parking. Perfect for primary care or any specialty clinic. Please get in touch with Charlie at (714) 271-0476 or cmescher1@gmail.com. Available immediately. [2871-0906]

LA JOLLA/XIMED OFFICE TO SUBLEASE: Modern upscale office on the campus of Scripps Hospital — part or full time. Can accommodate any specialty. Multiple days per week and full use of the office is available. If interested please email kochariann@yahoo.com or call (619) 319-5139. [2866-0904]

SUBLEASE AVAILABLE: Sublease available in modern, upscale Medical Office Building equivalent from Scripps and Sharp CV. Ample free parking. Class A+ office space/medical use with high-end updates. A unique opportunity for Specialist to expand reach into the South Bay area without breaking the bank. Specialists can be accommodated in this first floor high-end turnkey office consisting of 1670 sq ft. Located in South Bay near Interstate 805. Half day or full day/week available. South Bay is the fastest growing area of San Diego. Successful sublease candidates will qualify to participate in ongoing exclusive quarterly networking events in the area. Call Alicia, 619-585-0476.

OFFICE SPACE FOR SUBLEASE | SOUTHEAST SAN DIEGO: 3 patient exam rooms, nurse's station, large reception area and waiting room. Large parking lot with valet on-site, and nearby bus stop. 286 Euclid Ave - Suite 205, San Diego, CA 92104. Please contact Dr. Kofi D. Sefa-Boakye's office manager: Agnes Loolie at (619) 435-0041 or ams66000@aol.com. [2869-0801]

MEDICAL OFFICE FOR SALE OR SUBLEASE: A newly remodeled and fully built-out primary care clinic in a highly visible Medical Mall on Mira Mesa Blvd. at corner of Camino Ruiz. The office is approximately 1000 sq ft with 2 fully equipped exam rooms, 1 office, 1 nurse station, spacious and welcoming waiting room, spacious reception area, and ADA accessible restroom. All the furniture and equipment are new and modern design. Ample parking. Perfect for primary care or any specialty clinic. Please contact Nox at 619-776-5295 or noxwms@hotmail.com. Available immediately.

RENOVATED MEDICAL OFFICE AVAILABLE | EL CAJON: Recently renovated, turn-key medical office in freestanding single-story unit available in El Cajon. Seven exam rooms, spacious waiting area with floor-to-ceiling windows, staff break room, doctor's private office, multiple admin areas, manager's office all in lovely, drought-resistant garden setting. Ample free patient parking with close access to freeways and Sharp Grossmont and Alvarado Hospitals. Safe and secure with round-the-clock monitored property, patrol, and cameras. Available March 1st. Call 24/7 on-call property manager Michelle at the Avocado Professional Center (619) 916-8393 or email help@avocadoprofessionalcenter.com.

OPERATING ROOM FOR RENT: State of the Art AAAASF Certified Operating Rooms for Rent at Outpatient Surgery of Sorrento. 5445 Oberlin Drive, San Diego 92121. Ideally located and newly built 5 star facility located with easy freeway access in the heart of San Diego in Sorrento Mesa. Facility includes two operating rooms and two recovery bays, waiting area, State of the Art UPC02 Laser, Endoscopic Equipment with easy parking. Ideal for cosmetic surgery. Competitive Rates. Call Cyndy for more information 858.658.0595 or email Cyndy@roydavidmd.com.

PRIME LOCATION | MEDICAL BUILDING LEASE OR OWN OPPORTUNITY IN LA MESA: Extraordinary opportunity to lease or lease-to-own a highly visible, freeway-oriented medical building in La Mesa, on Interstate 8 at the 70th Street on-ramp. Immaculate 2-story, 7.5k square foot property with elevator and ample free on-site parking (45 spaces). Already built out and equipped with MRI/CAT machine. Easy access to both Alvarado and Sharp Grossmont Hospitals, SDSU, restaurants, and walking distance to 70th St. Trolley Station. Perfect for owner-user or investor. Please contact Tracy Girdley [Coldwell

Banker West, DRE# 02052571] for more information at (619) 987-5498.

KEARNY MESA OFFICE TO SUBLEASE/SHARE: 5643 Copley Dr., Suite 300, San Diego, CA 92111. Perfectly centrally situated within San Diego County. Equidistant to flagship hospitals of Sharp and Scripps healthcare systems. Ample free parking. Newly constructed Class A+ medical office space/medical use building. 12 exam rooms per half day available for use at fair market value rates. Basic communal medical supplies available for use (including splint/cast materials). Injectable medications and durable medical equipment (DME) and all staff to be supplied by individual physicians' practices. 1 large exam room doubles as a minor procedure room. Ample waiting room area. In office x-ray with additional waiting area outside of the x-ray room. Orthopedic surgery centric office space. Includes access to a kitchenette/indoor break room, exterior break room and private physician workspace. Open to other MSK physician specialties and subspecialties. Building occupancy includes specialty physicians, physical therapy/occupational therapy (2nd floor), urgent care, and 5 OR ambulatory surgery center (1st floor). For inquiries contact kdowning79@gmail.com and scurry@orthol.com for more information. Available for immediate occupancy.

LA JOLLA/UTC OFFICE TO SUBLEASE OR SHARE: Modern upscale office near Scripps Memorial, UCSD hospital, and the UTC mall. One large exam/procedure room and one regular-sized exam room. Large physician office for consults as well. Ample waiting room area. Can accommodate any specialty or Internal Medicine. Multiple days per week and full use of the office is available. If interested please email drphilipw@gmail.com.

ENCINITAS MEDICAL SPACE AVAILABLE: Newly updated office space located in a medical office building. Two large exam rooms are available M-F and suitable for all types of practice, including specialties needing equipment space. Building consists of primary and specialist physicians, great for networking and referrals. Includes access to the break room, bathroom and reception. Large parking lot with free parking for patients. Possibility to share receptionist or bring your own. Please contact coastdocgroup@gmail.com for more information.

NORTH COUNTY MEDICAL SPACE AVAILABLE: 2023 W. Vista Way, Suite C, Vista CA 92082. Newly renovated, large office space located in an upscale medical office with ample free parking. Furnishings, decor, and atmosphere are upscale and inviting. It is a great place to build your practice, network and clientele. Just a few blocks from Tri-City Medical Center and across from the urgent care. Includes: multiple exam rooms, access to a kitchenette/break room, two bathrooms, and spacious reception area all located on the property. Wi-Fi is not included. For inquiries contact hosalkarofficesassist@gmail.com or call/text (858)740-1928.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT / FURNITURE FOR SALE

FRIDGE & FREEZER EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE | MINT CONDITION: Pristine medical cold storage refrigeration equipment available for purchase by Champions for Health, SDCMS' philanthropic 501(c)3. Used to store vaccines. Includes 2 (two) commercial-grade Accucold ARG49ML 49 cu ft upright pharmacy refrigerators each with two glass doors, automatic defrost, digital thermostat and stainless steel cabinets (83.75" H x 55.25" W x 31.0" D), plus 1 (one) pharmaceutical-grade TempArmour BFFV15 compact freezer built to ensure stable temperatures and virtually eliminate supply losses (26.5" H x 25.0" W x 31.0" D). All units were acquired new, in use between 2-4 years and in very gently used condition. Units meet all CDC guidelines for vaccine storage. Asking price for each fridge is \$4,000 OBO and \$2,500 OBO for the freezer. Purchase individually or as a set. Contact Adama at (858) 300-2780 or adama.dyoniziak@championsfh.org.

NONPHYSICIAN POSITIONS AVAILABLE

NURSE PRACTITIONER | PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT: Open position for Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant for an outpatient adult medicine clinic in Chula Vista. Low volume of patients. No call or weekends. Please send resumes to medclinici1@yahoo.com. [2876-1121]

POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS: The Office of Research Affairs, at the University of California, San Diego, in support of the campus, multidisciplinary Organized Research Units (ORUs) <https://research.ucsd.edu/ORU/index.html> is conducting an open search for Postdoctoral Scholars in various academic disciplines. View this position online: <https://apol-recruit.ucsd.edu/JPF03803>. The postdoctoral experience emphasizes scholarship and continued research training. UC's postdoctoral scholars bring expertise and creativity that enrich the research environment for all members of the UC community, including graduate and undergraduate students. Postdocs are often expected to complete research objectives, publishing results, and may support and/or contribute expertise to writing grant applications <https://apol-recruit.ucsd.edu/JPF03803/apply>. [2864-0808]

RESEARCH SCIENTISTS (NON-TENURED, ASSISTANT, ASSOCIATE OR FULL LEVEL): The University of California, San Diego campus multidisciplinary Organized Research Units (ORUs) <https://research.ucsd.edu/ORU/index.html> is conducting an open search for Research Scientists (non-tenured, assistant, associate or full level). Research Scientists are extramurally funded, academic researchers who develop and lead independent research and creative programs similar to Ladder Rank Professors. They are expected to serve as Principal Investigators on extramural grants, generate high caliber publications and research products, engage in university and public service, continuously demonstrate independent, high quality, significant research activity and scholarly reputation. Appointments and duration vary depending on the length of the research project and availability of funding. Apply now at <https://apol-recruit.ucsd.edu/JPF04188/apply>. [2867-0904]

PROJECT SCIENTISTS: Project Scientists (non-tenured, Assistant, Associate or Full Level): The University of California, San Diego, Office of Research and Innovation <https://research.ucsd.edu/>, in support of the Campus multidisciplinary Organized Research Units (ORUs) <https://research.ucsd.edu/ORU/index.html> is conducting an open search. Project Scientists are academic researchers who are expected to make significant and creative contributions to a research team, are not required to carry out independent research but will publish and carry out research or creative programs with supervision. Appointments and duration vary depending on the length of the research project and availability of funding: <https://apol-recruit.ucsd.edu/JPF04189/apply>. [2868-0904]

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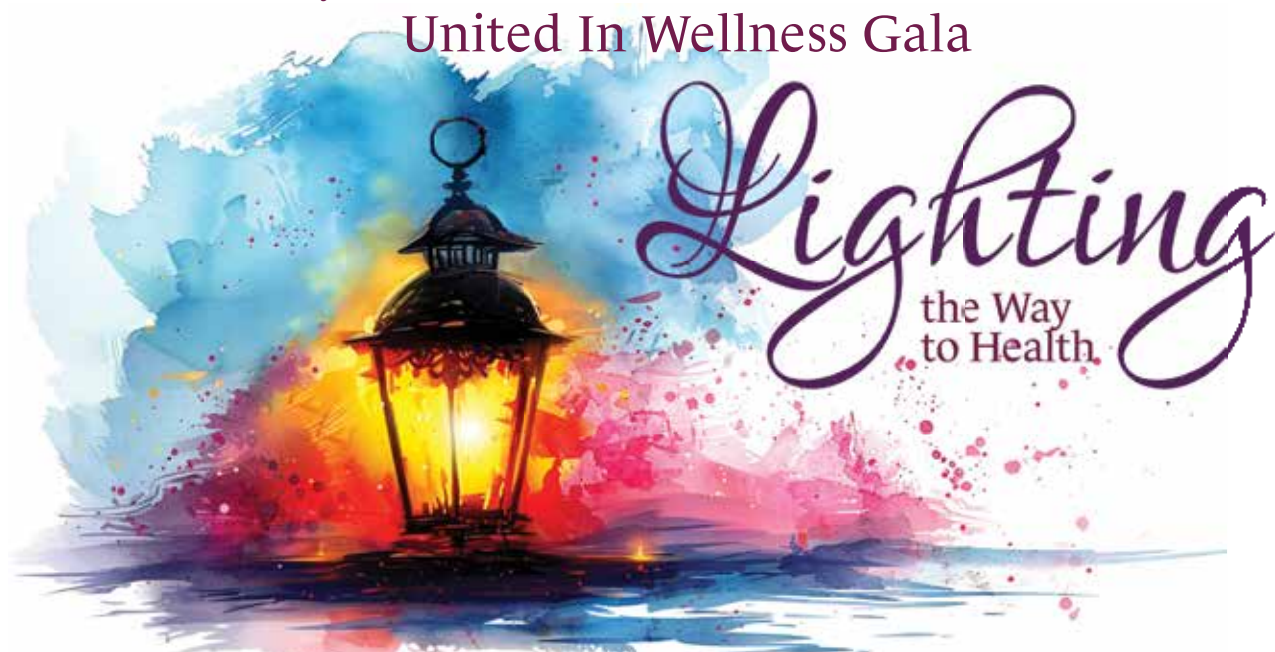


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Gabriela Stichler at gabriela.stichler@championsfh.org or at 858-300-2789