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## Los Angeles County Department of Health Services Honored With 11 National Awards

The National Association of Counties recognized Health Services for best practices and innovation throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

JUNE 24, 2021 – Los Angeles, CA - The National Association of Counties Achievement Awards has recognized Los Angeles County Department of Health Services with 11 national awards. The awards highlight the department's work in providing innovative services to LA County residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Every year Los Angeles County submits groundbreaking programs from multiple agencies for consideration by the National Association of Counties Achievement Awards. The winning programs from Health Services include promoting health equity in COVID-19 testing for communities disproportionately affected by the pandemic and Harbor-UCLA Medical Center's Employee Child Care Center established through an emergency waiver shortly after the shutdown so hospital staff could continue to focus on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"2020 into 2021 was the hardest year we as health care professionals have ever faced in our careers," said Dr. Christina Ghaly, Director of Los Angeles County Department of Health Services. "The doctors, nurses, and staff within Health Services rose to the occasion and kept our community as safe and healthy as possible despite the odds. I am beyond proud of our teams and their dedication to our community throughout the pandemic by creating innovative and life-saving programs. We are humbled and honored by this national recognition."

The awards received by the Department of Health Services are:

- **Preoperative Visits During Covid:** Conversion of preoperative clinic visits to phone visits during the COVID-19 pandemic. Anesthesiology Preoperative Clinic made a transition from 100% in-person visits prior to the pandemic, to 99.7% telephonic visits during the pandemic without a decrease in quality of care.
- **Fast Track Patient Recovery:** Implementing a fast-track program to optimize medical care, improve patient satisfaction and reduce healthcare costs. The cost-effective program helps improve efficiency, decrease the amount of duplicate charting and allows patients to be discharged faster.
- **Laboratories Confront a Pandemic:** County Department of Health Services laboratories confront a pandemic. Labs leveraged recently implemented lab optimization practices to on board several testing platforms, significantly improving patient care by reducing turnaround times from a high of 9 days to less than 4 hours for inpatients and 24 hours for the majority of outpatients. Providing an estimated savings of over \$2 million.
- **Transporting Critically Ill Patient:** Olive View's Critical Care Transportation team is making every minute count by successfully reducing transport preparation time from activation to departure from 1-20 hours to just 33.2 minutes.
- **Relieving the Burn:** At Olive View Medical Center, pharmacists improve the use of antibiotics in the emergency department for urinary tract infections. Through this program Pharmacists were able to follow-up about 1 day faster and patients took shorter courses of antibiotics, saving patients 64 days of antibiotics over a 2-month time frame.
- **Mental Health for Inmates:** A model for jail diversion for individuals with severe mental illness. Over 400 individuals have been diverted from the Los Angeles County jails to Olive View Medical Center, where they have received state-of-the-art psychiatric interventions and transitioned to continuing treatment, rehabilitation and community housing services.
- **Child Care in the Time Covid:** Harbor-UCLA Medical Center's response to support staff and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 16, 2020, Harbor opened an Employee Child Care center providing programs and supervision to the children of hospital staff, allowing frontline heroes to focus on providing critical care to patients.

- Staff Deployment During Pandemic: Nursing specialty skills survey and dashboard. The creation of this database and the ensuing modules proved very valuable during the pandemic surge in the winter 2020-2021. Despite the varying shifts/schedules, weekends and holidays, the database allowed DHS to align staff with available skills with the unit or the patients that needed specific care.
- COVID-19 Testing Where Needed Most: Promoting health and racial equity in COVID-19 testing for communities disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Los Angeles County. In a collaboration with multi-disciplinary partners including DPH, faith-based and community-based partners, DHS used data on case rates and COVID-19 percent positivity to place test sites within the highest risk communities, and funded community and faith-based organizations to provide outreach, engagement, and system navigation services.
- Pharmacy Medical Interventions: Transition of Care Pharmacy program, delivered a high-value pharmacy intervention to vulnerable patients during the hospital-to-home transition period when medication-related problems are common and can result in safety complications and readmissions. Through the pandemic, workflows were adapted to serve patients telephonically.
- Vaccinations During Covid: Walk-up and drive-through vaccination clinics for adults and children. In 2020, with limited ability to vaccinate during routine, in-person doctor appointments, a new approach was needed to confront the flu season. DHS Primary Care created forty-four (44) new pop-up immunization clinics, located throughout Los Angeles County. Influenza vaccination rates for September and October 2020 (9.7%, 20.1%) actually exceeded rates for the same months in 2019 (7.8%, 18.9%).

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