



JANUARY 2008

Highlights

Message from Dr. Chernof

I hope that everyone had a joyous holiday season. Mrs. C and I spent a day in Long Beach specifically to visit the Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA). The Museum houses a small but excellent collection of Latin American Art. You should visit! Then we went to Catalina and danced in the New Year at the Casino Ballroom. What fun!

I am really pleased that all of our new systems designed to simplify the function of the clinics are working well. Hats off to all of the Clinic Managers! As many of you know, we are installing overhead DVD/VCR overhead viewers in each of the clinics. The purpose is not simply to entertain restless children, but to take the opportunity to educate all patients in the waiting rooms on important health topics. If you are aware of appropriate DVDs and videos, either in Spanish or English, let Lupe know. We would like to build a SBNC library.

Thank you for your dedication and hard work. Have a great month! Dr. C.

From the desk of Bonnie Campbell, Director of Development



The Truth About Emergency Departments & Illegal Immigrants

I want to take this opportunity to thank one of our partners in health care, Cottage Health System. Working together, we provide for people who can't afford health care due to poverty, lack of health insurance or both.

We look for ways to collaborate in order to best serve the needs of our patients and work hard at encouraging health education and preventative care. One benefit of that goal is to reduce the amount of patients who use the Cottage Health System Emergency Departments as their primary source of medical care. SBNC is not concerned with legal status of our patients and, indeed, do not even track how many undocumented patients we care for. But, there is a general assumption that one of the reasons our healthcare system is in such dire straits nationally is because of the large number of illegal immigrants using emergency departments.

What is the real story? According to a new study published last month in the journal Archives of Internal Medicine, illegal immigrants from Mexico and other Latin countries are 50% less likely than U.S. born Latinos to use hospital emergency rooms in California! This study discovered that while the undocumented are less likely to have health insurance, they are also less likely to visit a doctor, clinic or emergency room.

“The current policy discourse that undocumented immigrants are a burden on the public because they overuse public resources is not borne out with data, for either primary care or emergency department care,” said Alexander N. Ortega, an associate professor at UCLA’s School of Public health and the study’s lead author. “In fact, they seem to be underutilizing the system, given their health needs.”

Illegal immigrants don’t come in for primary care visits because being asked for ID cards, Social Security numbers and employment histories makes them nervous. They are afraid of being reported, even though the information is used only to determine Medi-Cal eligibility or set a sliding-scale fee.

As we continue to serve our mission of providing high quality, affordable medical and dental care to all, especially those uninsured and underserved, we still are not concerned with where our patients come from or whether they have the ability to pay. We care about their health and the health of their families, while maintaining a welcoming environment and treating patients with compassion, dignity and respect, alongside Cottage Health System.

Knowing the truth about those we serve can help us counter common myths and encourage open dialog with our community, encouraging them to continue to support us in providing adequate health care for all, regardless of legal status or nationality.

SBNC participated in Project Healthy Neighbors by offering HIV testing & counseling. SBNC, alongside counselors from Pacific Pride and Public Health, working as a team to counsel, evaluate, test and disclose results to over **163 homeless individuals over the three days!** It is one example of our continuing to provide mental health services to our patient population.

The event was held November 26th, 27th and 28th at Casa Esperanza. Thanks to the community that has evolved around Project Healthy Neighbors, the three-day event was an impressive outpouring of love and concern for our homeless & mentally ill neighbors---the best one yet. An incredible array of medical services was available to those in need. Over **320** vulnerable homeless received vaccinations against the flu and pneumonia.

Testing for HIV and TB was conducted by SBNC. Veterans were able to access services via the V.A. and those in need of substance abuse or mental health counseling were able to secure help through the Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, the County's Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services and New Beginnings. Easy Lift, Shelter Outreach and Shaw Talley provided free shuttle from the streets and parks to the shelter and back. Cottage Hospital provided tents, tables and nurses. Free haircuts were provided by Underground salon. Domestic Violence Solutions and Rape Crisis offered educational awareness and direct-one on-one counseling.

The families from FUND (Families United to Nurture Dreams) secured, collected, put together and handed out backpacks for homeless people who attended. The FUND children (13 yr. old Griffin Saxon pictured here) hand wrote cards to each homeless participant telling them in their own words that they, the homeless, were not forgotten. Included in the backpacks were phone cards given by Legal Aid. Also sweatshirts, ponchos, socks, hats, sweatshirts and other sorely needed items of survival for those who live on the streets were to be found inside the free backpacks. Over two dozen U.C.S.B. student volunteers acted as compassionate guides and provided companionship to the homeless.



(L to R) Roger Heroux, SBNC Board; Griffin Saxon, Fund member; Homeless Man



Annual SBNC Retreat. December 21, 2007

Participants successfully completed the two hour seminar on Preventing Workplace Violence

Presented by SAVE Employee Assistance Program

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Something to Smile About—By Sheba Laser Lux

The Eastside Family Dental Clinic

SBNC's Eastside Family Dental Clinic is the ONLY place low-income and homeless people can go for their care in this County. In 2004 there were, on average, 217 monthly visits to the Eastside Family Dental Clinic (EFDC) each month. By 2006, we averaged 402 visits monthly to the Dental Clinic. Now, in the last three months, there have been, on average, 558 dental visits each month, 74% of which are low-income children! This is great news in terms of the health of our community - more low-income children and adults are receiving dental care. But this also means a huge increase in unsubsidized care.



Eastside Family Dental Clinic, led by Dr. Judy, sings a song written for Dr. Chernof at the Staff Retreat

In the past year, SBNC provided more than \$277,626 worth of dental services to children, and was reimbursed only \$171,235 for these services.

Lorena Gonzales is a young SBNC dental patient. When we first saw her at the Eastside Family Dental Clinic, she was being cradled in her mother's arms as she cried in the waiting room of SBNC's Eastside Family Dental Clinic, awaiting her first dental appointment. Lorena, four years old, was not crying out of fear of meeting Dr. Quynh Nguyen for the first time in her young life, but because her mouth was aching in pain, as it had been for months. What is frustrating is that Lorena's pain, the decay and disease already infecting her mouth, and the enormous costs of her dental treatment, are primarily preventable through regular cleanings and check ups, the use of sealants, appropriate diet and regular oral health care. Dr. Nguyen, SBNC's Dental Director explains, "The irony is that tooth decay is preventable! Unfortunately, it is still prevalent, especially in the population we serve, and affects more children than any other chronic disease. So the sooner we can get children into our Clinic for dental health education, treatment, and prevention, the sooner we can turn these children's oral health around in a positive direction!" This year, the Eastside Family Dental Clinic will provide critically needed dental care to more than 4,000 low-income children. This will take place in approximately 10,000 dental appointments. We are so proud of our Eastside Family Dental Clinic team! (And we love their singing too!!!)

* SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH*

Some other strategies to prevent a fall include:

- Limit your load. Make sure your load doesn't obstruct your vision. Whenever possible, use a handtruck to push/pull your load.
 - Maintain contact on stairs by using a handrail.
 - Exercise regularly to maintain strength, flexibility, and balance.
- .. **New handrail being installed at IV HPC 2nd floor!!!**





Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.

SBNC you are all doing a great job. Keep it going !!!

In observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day
SBNC will be closed Monday January 21st.

"I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their tired bodies, education and culture for their spirits. I believe that what self-centered men have torn down, men other-centered can build up. I still believe that one day mankind will bow before the altars of God and be crowned triumphant over war and bloodshed, and non-violent redemptive goodwill will proclaim the rule of the land 'and the lion and the lamb shall lie down together and every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree and none shall be afraid.' I still believe that we shall overcome."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide high quality, affordable medical care to all people, especially those uninsured and otherwise underserved, while maintaining a welcoming environment and treating patients with compassion, dignity and respect. We strive to achieve excellence and to maximize the potential of each employee, volunteer, and board member through a respectful and supportive organization.

NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES

Based on your annual earnings, you may be eligible to receive the earned income tax credit from the federal government. The earned income tax credit is a refundable federal income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families. The earned income tax credit has no effect on certain welfare benefits. In most cases, earned income tax credit payments will not be used to determine eligibility for Medicaid, supplemental security income, food stamps, low-income housing or most temporary assistance for needy families' payments. Even if you do not owe federal taxes, you must file a tax return to receive the earned income tax credit. Be sure to fill out the earned income tax credit form in the federal income tax return booklet. For information regarding your eligibility to receive the earned income tax credit, including information on how to obtain the IRS Notice 797 or Form W-5, or any other necessary forms and instructions, contact the Internal Revenue Service at 1-800-829-3676 or through its Web site at www.irs.gov.

For additional information, go to : www.edd.ca.gov

If you have any questions, please call the Taxpayer Assistance Center at (888) 745-3886



Happy New Year SBNC!!!