

**(INTERNAL RELEASE)**

**“Working Differently”**

**Team Based Work Applauded by County  
for Innovative Approach that Improves Care and Service**

Congratulations to the Labor Management Workgroup which appeared before the Santa Clara Board of Supervisors on April 21, 2015 to receive a commendation for their work which has made significant improvements across SCVHHS.

“At the March (County) Health and Hospital meeting,... the Labor Management Workgroup gave a presentation about the successes they have had using unit-based teams (UBTs),” said Supervisor Ken Yeager, Chair, Health and Hospital Committee, Santa Clara County before reading the commendation to the audience. “I was blown away... I was so proud of their dedication, creativity and teamwork.”

More than 25 participants from the Labor Management Workgroup, including members of unit-based teams, co-leads and sponsors were on hand to receive the award and the well-deserved recognition by the county supervisors.

Watching and listening carefully to the accolades given to the UBTs was René G. Santiago, Deputy County Executive and Director, SCVHHS.

“This is really a recognition of our front-line workers and front-line caregivers. They are showing the way, not only what to do, but how to do it,” he said.

Unit-based teams are innovative partnerships between front-line staff, care providers, union personnel, supervisors and managers. UBTs identify a project that needs improvements, create goals that are specific, measurable, and actionable, as well as realistic. Then team

members along with the manager and front-line “team lead” generate ideas, test them, document and share the results.

“Your recognition today is reflective of the support that we have seen from every level of the organization... That goes out to every discipline, whether it’s a doctor, a nurse, a line worker, a manager supervisor,” said Zeb Feldman, Business Representative, County Employees Management Association (CEMA). “Titles are checked at the door and the best idea wins.”

Currently there are unit-based teams at the Barbara Arons Pavilion, Emergency Psychiatric Services, Outpatient Pharmacy, Inpatient Pharmacy, Health Information Services, Cardiology, Pharmacy Procurement, Primary Care Behavioral Health, Juvenile Hall Behavioral Health, Department of Behavioral Health Service Contracts Administration, CCS Residential and Financial Eligibility, as well as Behavioral Health Call Center.

Supervisor Yeager gave a brief history of UBTs at SCVHHS. In 2012, representatives of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) approached management about the upcoming Affordable Care Act (ACA) and its implications for the organization. Dedicated to transforming SCVHHS into “the provider of first choice,” SEIU introduced the unit-based team concept. Three pilot programs were developed. It expanded to twelve, with 30 teams are expected to be operating by June 2016.

“Unit-based teams are a new way of doing business,” said Tim Hill, Public Health Nurse, SEIU. “It’s a valuable asset to improve patient satisfaction and the quality of care... We hope to expand the teams through the health and hospital system. As a matter of fact, we would like to see the team methodology (expand) to more departments in the Santa Clara County system.”

For more information on the Labor Management Workgroup and UBTs, go to:

<https://hhsconnect.sccgov.org/sites/scvhhs/labormgmt>