



COMMUNITY HEALTH
IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS
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Dana Richardson Named CHIP President & CEO

Dana Richardson, MA, has been named President & CEO of Community Health Improvement Partners after serving as interim President & CEO since February 2020. Community Health Improvement Partners, known as CHIP, marks 25 years of service to the community later this year.

Richardson joined CHIP in 2007, and progressively held leadership positions, most recently as Vice President of Community Health & Engagement. In 2011, he and CHIP colleagues created the Resident Leadership Academy --- a nationally adopted curriculum. To date, more than 850 community residents have been trained and have taken on critical community roles, including as mayors, and planning commission and city council members. “Throughout my career, I have been instrumental in the development of highly effective teams that have yielded significant impacts in many of San Diego’s underserved populations relative to the prevention of chronic illnesses and diseases,” said Richardson.

The COVID-19 crisis and increased attention on the needs for diversity, inclusion, and innovative leadership have raised significant attention to the health impacts of structural advantage, disadvantage and other social challenges, such as inadequate access to resources across our communities. Under Richardson’s leadership, CHIP has been instrumental in inspiring a number of community-driven solutions in San Diego that have addressed health inequities and substandard social conditions. In the midst of these tumultuous and challenging times, CHIP’s Resident Leadership Academy hosted several virtual workshops and trainings tackling some of the region’s most critical issues such as, “Changing Systems Failing Men and Boys of Color: Advancing Self-Determination”, “Trauma-Informed Care – Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs),” and “Implicit and Explicit Bias in the Time of COVID-19”. The latter being just one component of work conducted in partnership with the County of San Diego to promote family self-sufficiency, anti-poverty and guide communities to take action to achieve health equity.

Isolation and stress due to pandemic and evolving societal tensions clearly contribute to the risk of mental illness and suicide ideation, and the Suicide Prevention Council, facilitated by CHIP since 2011, has continued to provide a virtual space for community members to connect and work on suicide prevention efforts. At the SPC’s recent Annual Stakeholders Meeting, State representatives of the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Committee applauded the Council for its high levels of engagement among diverse sectors and proactive efforts to implement promising practices that save lives, restore hope, and connect people to critical mental health resources across the County.

Stay-at-home orders have also affected those with mental health and substance use needs living in congregate or shared housing. The Independent Living Association in San Diego, Alameda, and Fresno Counties and Recovery Residence Association in San Diego, all led by CHIP, have provided assistance and training to residence owners, to provide high quality, home environments for tenants who are disabled and/or recovering from mental health challenges.

Key members of the CHIP team have spent the last 10 years gaining a deeper understanding of communities across the County, especially marginalized communities. “This critical knowledge has positively impacted the strength and creativity of our programs, which keep getting better and better,” said Richardson. “Understanding more about the intricacies and complexities of community life, and matching that with our 25 years of public health experience has put our organization in a unique position to make significant contributions to public health landscape in San Diego. We have worked tirelessly to build strong partnerships and real trust with many organizations and local residents across the County, so that we can take action and empower communities to make bold steps in addressing some of the County’s most persistent challenges,” he added.

CHIP’s Board Chair, Barbara Mandel, recently confirmed the organization’s leadership decision by stating, “Dana has proven himself over the past 12 years, and particularly during this difficult COVID crisis time, has earned the respect and enthusiasm of the staff, and has shown strong leadership in the community. While there have been more challenges in the past five months than most new CEOs would encounter, Dana has more than risen to the occasion.”

About Community Health Improvement Partners

CHIP was formed in 1995 when the region’s not-for-profit hospitals came together to accomplish a collaborative Community Health Needs Assessment in response to a new state law. The organization was supported in its early years by the Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties until it established itself as an independent and private, community-based 501(c)(3) in 2011.

In the past 10 years, CHIP has uniquely served as lead facilitator of community needs assessments, demonstration projects, and several countywide initiatives including the Suicide Prevention Council, the Independent Living Association, the Recovery Residence Association, the Lemon Grove HEAL Zone, the Farm to Institution Center, and led the county wide Childhood Obesity Initiative for 12 years.

For more information visit www.sdchip.org.