



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

PLEASE JOIN US FOR LUNCH

Monday, August 24, 2015 Miyama Main Hall, Harris United Methodist Church

11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Nuuanu Ave. and S. Vineyard Blvd.—Ample parking—driveway off Nuuanu Ave

Agenda:

11:30 Luncheon (optional): Various Pizzas, Salad, and Dessert—\$5.00 Donation

11:55 Welcome, Introductions and Remarks

12:00 Program: "Health Hawaii: Where are we and where are we going", Dr, Virginia Pressler
Director of Health

Dr. Virginia M. Pressler is Director of Health for the State of Hawaii Department of Health. In addition to oversight of administrative responsibilities, she oversees Family Health, Disease Outbreak Control, Emergency Medical Services, Communicable Diseases, Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Developmental Disabilities, Environmental Health, State Laboratories, Behavioral Health, Hawaii State Hospital, Alcohol and Drug Abuse, and other public health services. She also has a number of attached agencies such as the State Health Planning and Development Agency, Office of Language Access, State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Executive Office on Aging, and others.

Previously Dr. Pressler was Executive Vice President and Chief Strategic Officer for Hawaii Pacific Health, a non-profit healthcare network that includes Kapiolani Medical Center for Women & Children, Straub Clinic & Hospital, Pali Momi Medical Center, and Wilcox Hospital and Kauai Medical Clinic on Kauai.

1:00 Adjourn

Look up ER wait times, nursing home fines, dialysis center problems, hospital ratings and more on Yelp. But where are the Dept. of Health care home inspection reports? (see Yelp p. 2)

Governor's Leadership Team on Homelessness lacks an understanding of the subject

Hawaii's homeless population continues to grow as the state dithers on implementing any permanent solutions. Unfortunately, the governor's new team lacks expertise.

(see **Governor's Leadership Team**, p. 3)

Editorial: Healthcare in Wahiawa in danger of further decay

Wahiawa, as a rural part of Oahu, has shared with Neighbor Islands a continued challenge to maintaining adequate medical care for patients of all ages. In Wahiawa, the deterioration of the Wahiawa Medical Building is physical evidence of the approaching crisis. Effective action must be taken to preserve the reality of Hawaii as the health state.

(see **Wahiawa**, p. 2)

Wahiawa—Task force formed to work on access to healthcare

The Hawaii Coalition for Health held a meeting on Wednesday, August 5, 2015 to begin work on an action plan to meet the growing need for quality medical care in the Wahiawa area. Heading over to the meeting, I walked towards the entrance to the Wahiawa Medical Building, a place I have visited many times. The door was bolted shut, and a nearby pole was deteriorating badly. As it turned out, the way in was through the parking lot entrance. Inside it was clear that the building was not being properly maintained. As a result, offices are going vacant as doctors or businesses dependent on those doctors move out.

At the meeting I learned that changing demographics mean there are more senior citizens living in the area, but they cannot be adequately served if geriatricians and other specialists are not there. There is also a need for primary care providers for patients of all ages.

Hawaii is simply headed for a cliff and will one day go over it if a solution is not found.

Yelp: You can now look up reports on hospitals, nursing homes and more, just when that information is needed most

Most people are familiar with Yelp as a website or smartphone app that helps them make restaurant decisions—where to go for dinner or what to order. Now Yelp is also a resource when the need arises to check out a healthcare facility. Yelp states that its data is provided by ProPublica and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and covers 4,600 hospitals, 15,000 nursing homes, and 6,300 dialysis clinics in the US.

To the right is a report for a hospital and for a skilled nursing home.

As usual, users of the website can enter their own reviews and assign the facility a number of "stars" as a rating. While some question the usefulness of these individual reports, others value them.



About This Provider
Provided by [medicare.gov](#)

- ER Wait Time: **24 minutes**
- Doctor Communication: **Average**
- Quiet Rooms: **Worse than Average**



About This Provider
Provided by [propublica.org](#)

- Number of Beds: **43**
- Fines Paid: **No Fines**
- Serious Deficiencies: **No Deficiencies**
- Payment Suspensions: **No Suspensions**

Those needing dialysis treatment can find how often patients are admitted to a hospital because of treatment-related infections or other problems at dialysis centers.

Department of Health inspection reports missing

After a multi-year community campaign resulting in the enactment of a state law, the Hawaii Department of Health has started to post its inspections of a variety of adult care facilities. But a recent visit to <http://health.hawaii.gov/ohca/inspection-reports/> shows that the DOH has posted mostly Community Care Foster Family Homes (CCFFH) reports. Most troubling is the absence of reports for Adult Residential Care Homes (ARCH) and Expanded Adult Residential Care Homes (E-ARCH). It appears that either DOH has not been inspecting these homes, or they are in violation of HRS §321-1.8.

Governor's Leadership Team on Homelessness can't lead until it learns

On July 27, Governor David Ige appointed a "Leadership Team on Homelessness." Team members are Gov. Ige, Sen. Jill Tokuda, Rep. Sylvia Luke, Director of Human Services Rachael Wong, Mayor Kirk Caldwell, Honolulu City Council Chairman Ernie Martin, U.S. Sen. Brian Schatz's designee and U.S. Sen. Mazie Hirono's designee. None of these team members are experts on homeless issues or remedies for homelessness. At the same time, the governor dismissed the State Homeless Coordinator, who never had a budget or staff during his tenure.

Other states have implemented Housing First, an evidence-based program that puts people in apartments first and surrounds them with services that enable them to stay there long-term or to transition to other housing. It works, and it works well. But it seems that at least one member of the governor's new team doesn't understand this. From a Hawaii News Now story dated August 7:

"A lot of that population has mental issues and other type of issues," said Rep. Sylvia Luke, (D) Makiki, Punchbowl, Nuuanu. "Placing them in a home is not going to be the right solution."

In fact, Housing First works very well with this population. The governor needs to add someone to his team who understands this. **A study of 4,679 New York City homeless with severe mental illness found that each cost an average of \$40,449 a year in emergency room, shelter, and other expenses to the system, and that getting those individuals in supportive housing saved an average of \$16,282 each** (per Mother Jones). Ignorance of these results is costing Hawaii taxpayers money.

What is "Housing First?"

From Wikipedia:

Rather than moving homeless individuals through different "levels" of housing, whereby each level moves them closer to "independent housing" (for example: from the streets to a public shelter, and from a public shelter to a transitional housing program, and from there to their own apartment in the community) Housing First moves the homeless individual or household immediately from the streets or homeless shelters into their own apartments.

Housing First approaches are based on the concept that a homeless individual or household's first and primary need is to obtain stable housing, and that other issues that may affect the household can and should be addressed once housing is obtained.

Wikipedia also lists cities where Housing First is being applied: New Orleans, Louisiana; Plattsburgh, New York; Anchorage, Alaska; Minneapolis, Minnesota; New York City; District of Columbia; Denver, Colorado; San Francisco, California; Atlanta, Georgia; Chicago, Illinois; Quincy, Massachusetts; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Salt Lake City, Utah; Seattle, Washington; Los Angeles and Cleveland, Ohio. Some cities reported success as early as 2007. **Most recently, Utah reported that chronic homelessness was down 91% due to its Housing First program.**

Housing First includes supports for those individuals with special needs such as mental health issues, alcoholism or drug use. Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) services provided these supports in the past, but the Department of Health discontinued them. Without supports appropriate to the individual, simply placing people into apartments will result in a revolving door back onto the streets. The Governor's team needs to understand this to be at all effective.

Of course, we still need truly affordable housing and a living wage so that people can pay the rent. Homelessness is much more than a single issue. Its root causes are many.



Kokua Council for Senior Citizens of Hawaii Education Fund, Inc.
 20 South Vineyard Blvd.
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WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Please join us on Monday, August 24, 2015

"Health Hawaii: Where are we and where are we going" Dr, Virginia Pressler Director of Health,
 State of Hawaii

Who Are We?

Kokua Council is one of Hawaii's oldest advocacy groups. There is a **\$10.00 annual membership** to defray printing and postage costs. At each meeting, topical issues are presented for discussion and possible action. We embrace diversity and extend a special invitation to any senior or intergenerational minded individual interested in advocating for these important issues in Hawaii." All are welcome. **WHEN:** 4th Monday of every month, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. **WHERE:** Harris United Methodist Church @ Nuuanu and Vineyard Blvd. There is ample parking. A light lunch is provided for a \$5 donation. **REACH US** c/o Harris United Methodist Church, 20 South Vineyard, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Mission: "Kokua Council advocates and seeks to empower seniors and other concerned citizens to be effective advocates in shaping the future and well-being of our community, with particular attention to those needing help in advocating for themselves."

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Yes! I want to join Kokua Council. Here are my annual dues and my contact information. I understand that my phone number will be added to the Kokua Phone Tree and I will receive the monthly newsletter and occasional e-mails. Our fiscal year starts in January. Please make checks payable to **Kokua Council**.

Individual Member __ \$10.00 Life Member __ \$100.00 Organizational Member __ \$25.00

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