



LANDMARK AGREEMENT TO INCREASE PHYSICIAN WORKFORCE IN WEST HAWAII

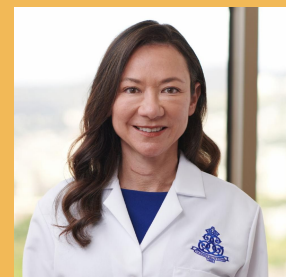
In a milestone collaboration aimed at transforming health care delivery in West Hawaii, the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation West Hawaii Region, The Queen’s Health Systems, and Ali‘i Health Center have formalized a shared workforce agreement. This allows health care providers from all three organizations to deliver services across each other’s facilities.

Why this is vital:

- Increased access to specialty providers
- Reduced need for off-island referrals
- Expanded services and continuity of care
- Improved recruitment and retention of physicians

“This agreement represents a huge step forward in how we collaborate to meet the needs of our West Hawaii communities. By sharing our workforce and aligning our goals, we can build a true physician group culture that supports our current providers, attracts new talent, and ultimately keeps our patients from having to leave the island to get the care they need.” — **Dr. Jeffrey Palmgren**, CMO of West Hawaii Region

Dr. Daphne Edmonston Hemmings and Dr. Joseph Anthony “Stryker” Rodriguez, both general surgeons with Queen’s University Medical



Dr. Daphne Edmonston Hemmings

Group, have been providing care to West Hawaii patients under this new agreement.



**Dr. Joseph Anthony
"Stryker" Rodriguez**

HO'OLOLI: TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE IN WEST HAWAII

By Jane Clement, Director of Marketing and Newsletter Editor in Chief

We're excited to introduce Ho'ololi, our new quarterly West Hawaii Region newsletter. Ho'ololi means "to change," and we want to share with you some of the positive changes, events, and news happening at Kona Community Hospital and Kohala Hospital. At West Hawaii Region, we take great pride in caring for every patient, every day.

To submit stories, ads or updates contact marketing@westhawaii.org.



MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Nearly 22 years ago, I found myself living in a remote village in Tonga. The living conditions were what many would describe as "third world" – there was no running water, no electricity, and very few modern conveniences.

At first, it was a shock to my system. The comforts we often take for granted were completely absent. And yet, something remarkable stood out: the people were genuinely happy. Their joy didn't come from material wealth or technology. It came from one simple, profound principle, community.

Neighbors didn't just live next to each other; they lived for each other. People brought food without being asked, shared resources without hesitation, and supported one another as a way of life. There was a strong sense of human connection, an unspoken understanding that we were in this together. That connection created a kind of wealth that no amount of infrastructure or modernization could replace.

Today, working in healthcare, I see a direct and powerful parallel. We, too, are bound by something greater than ourselves. The patient – and the mission to heal – brings us together. It's our shared purpose that creates unity across departments, roles, and disciplines. Whether you're a nurse, a technician, a housekeeper, a provider, or an administrator, we are part of something deeply human. Like that village in Tonga, we are a community that thrives when we care for one another – and for those we serve.

In the rush of daily demands, it's easy to lose sight of this. But when we pause to remember why we are here and who we are here for, we rediscover that connection. We remember that healing isn't just clinical – it's emotional, spiritual, and deeply human. And we create the environment where every patient and their families, and ourselves can flourish, every day. Let's continue to live out that purpose in the West Hawaii Region. Let's care like a village.

Mahalo,
Clayton McGhan, CEO West Hawaii Region

PROSTATE CANCER AND SUICIDE

SHINING A LIGHT ON PROSTATE CANCER

Prostate cancer is one of the most diagnosed and deadliest cancers for men in Hawaii. According to the University of Hawaii Cancer Center,

PREVENTION AWARENESS

Each September, Kona Community Hospital joins healthcare institutions across the country to raise awareness for two important public health issues: prostate cancer and suicide prevention. These observances emphasize the West Hawaii Region's commitment to the health and well-being of every patient, every day.

approximately 900 men are newly diagnosed statewide with prostate cancer each year, with an average of 125 losing their lives annually.

Nationally, the statistics are sobering. The National Cancer Institute identifies prostate cancer as the most common cancer among men in the U.S. and the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths.

The prostate is a small gland located just below the bladder and plays a vital role in male fertility. While prostate cancer typically develops slowly, it can be deadly if not detected early. There's no guaranteed way to prevent it, but men can reduce risk factors through regular exercise and healthy nutrition.

Early detection through routine screenings remains critical particularly for men over 50 or those with a family history of the disease.

"Here in Hawaii, we are seeing far too many men diagnosed with prostate cancer at the later stages, when treatment becomes more difficult. By encouraging early detection and raising awareness, we have a real opportunity to save lives," said Dr. Jeffrey Palmgren, chief medical officer at West Hawaii Region and board-certified urologist.

PRIORITIZING MENTAL HEALTH DURING SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

Suicide is a serious public health concern, especially among teenagers and young adults. In Hawaii, the Department of Health reports that on average, one person dies by suicide every two days across the state.

September's Suicide Prevention Month encourages reflection, education, and action. It's a time to remember those lost to suicide, uplift those who have struggled, and support loved ones coping with loss.

Recognizing the signs of suicide is essential. Some common indicators include:

- Talking about wanting to die
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness
- Withdrawing from social connection
- Sudden mood changes or altered sleep patterns

If someone you know is in crisis, immediate help is available. Call 911, visit the nearest emergency room at Kona Community Hospital or Kohala Hospital, or text or call the free and confidential Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988.

Whether addressing physical health through early cancer detection or promoting mental wellness and suicide prevention, West Hawaii Region remains committed to delivering quality, compassionate care to every patient, every day.



SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS WALK

Saturday, September 20, 2025 | 9 am - 11 am
**Maka'eio Walking Path at the
Old Kona Airport Beach Park**



September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

*We invite our community to walk with
us and to remember those we've lost,
support those who struggle, and
connect our community to life-saving
resources.*

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KOHALA HOSPITAL UPDATES



ADMIN EXPANSION UPDATE

Construction on the Kohala Hospital admin building expansion is underway. Completion date is scheduled for April 2026.

The expansion will include: an outpatient registration window, doctors' sleeping quarters, and extra office rooms for administrators. The hospital is also expecting to expand to outpatient services, with a new addition of a CT imaging, currently not provided.

KONA COMMUNITY HOSPITAL UPDATES



Parking Lot Update

Construction continues on the Kona Community Hospital parking lot. Select stalls remain blocked as contractors continue their work to expand, resurface and pave the parking lot to better support our patients, visitors, and staff.

This project is one way we're working to improve the experience for all who come through our doors. Progress is on track for completion in October 2025.



CELEBRATING YEARS OF SERVICE

With deep gratitude, we recognize our retirees for their years of dedication, compassion, care and commitment to the patients, staff, and community of the West Hawaii Region.

NAME	POSITION	RETIREMENT DATE	YEARS OF SERVICE
Lurleen Masalosalo	KitchenHelper/Dietary	Dec 31, 2024	28.83
Joleen Perez	Kitchen Helper/Dietary	Apr 30, 2025	23.04
Clayton Yamamoto	Building Maint. Helper/Plant Maint	Apr 30, 2025	21.29

KONA COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

NAME	POSITION	RETIREMENT DATE	YEARS OF SERVICE
Kunewa, Lori	RPN IV – Quality Management	Feb 1, 2025	18.62
Nakea-Francisco. Corinna	Environ Srvs Wkr II, Housekeeping	Mar 1, 2025	13.57
Doria, Dourien	Pharmacy Tech, Pharmacy	May 1, 2025	33.07
Kawamoto, Paula	RPN IV, Utilization Management	May 1, 2025	31.76
Miyashiro, Duane	Groundskeeper, Grounds	May 1, 2025	15.64
Miller, Donna	Sr Revenue Cycle Analyst, Medical Records	Jul 1, 2025	23.36
Modjeska, Christine	RPN IV, Quality Management	Jul 1, 2025	17.91

Martin, Mildred	Purchasing Technician, Purchasing & Stores	Aug 1, 2025	31.7
Onaka, Bert	Procurement & Supply Specialist IV, Purchasing & Stores	Aug 1, 2025	31.32



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