



2020
ANNUAL REPORT



FLEXIBILITY AWARENESS LEADERSHIP COLLABORATION EDUCATION INNOVATION RESEARCH OUTREACH ADVOCACY SOLUTIONS OPPORTUNITY VISIBILITY FLEXIBILITY AWARENESS LEADERSHIP COLLABORATION EDUCATION INNOVATION RESEARCH OUTREACH ADVOCACY SOLUTIONS OPPORTUNITY VISIBILITY FLEXIBILITY AWARENESS LEADERSHIP COLLABORATION

NCCHC **MISSION**

The mission of the National Commission on Correctional Health Care
is to improve the quality of health care in jails, prisons,
and juvenile confinement facilities.



Dear Colleague:

What an extraordinary year. We will not soon forget the challenges we faced or the tragedies we suffered during 2020. But neither will we forget the ways we came together and the strength we witnessed.

This year put correctional health care to the test in new and difficult ways. Never before has the NCCHC mission been so urgent. We sought to provide leadership in the year's most pressing challenges – the spread of COVID-19 within correctional facilities, care for the afflicted, and vaccination planning – as well as ongoing challenges of systemic racism and the opioid crisis.

The year's complexities made it clearer than ever that we cannot achieve success working independently but rather through partnerships and collaborations. Along with our many partners, we accomplished great things, despite the pressures of the pandemic.

They say that “necessity is the mother of invention.” That was certainly true in 2020. We created virtual accreditation surveys, produced virtual educational experiences, and embarked on important research endeavors. We launched the NCCHC Foundation, offered more opportunities for professional certification, and provided expert consulting and technical assistance through NCCHC Resources, our consulting subsidiary. I invite you to read more in the pages that follow.

In my first full year as CEO, I witnessed an amazing amount of courage, adaptability, and resilience. It is a privilege to serve this incredible field and organization.

To more health, happiness, and safety in 2021!

Deborah A. Ross, CCHP
Chief Executive Officer

2020: THE YEAR OF **MORE**



FLEXIBILITY	RESEARCH	VISIBILITY
LEADERSHIP	OUTREACH	SOLUTIONS
COLLABORATION	ADVOCACY	OPPORTUNITY
EDUCATION	AWARENESS	VISIBILITY

2020 WAS A YEAR THAT ASKED MORE OF ALL OF US.

The year demanded more patience and grit, more outside-the-box thinking, more flexibility and cooperation.

COVID-19 challenged us in new and previously unimaginable ways. Seemingly overnight, the novel coronavirus swept in and changed everything: how we live our lives, conduct business, meet, interact, and, in corrections, the way we receive, classify, house, feed, care for, and discharge people.

But we rose to the challenge. We found strength we didn't know we had and solutions we didn't know we needed.

As a field, correctional health professionals confronted the pandemic head-on, did more with less, and risked personal health and safety to care for our patients.

As an organization, NCCHC stretched in new and exciting ways to respond to the crisis.

We provided our constituents with the best available counsel and guidance. And we remained strong in our mission, needed now perhaps more than ever before, to improve the quality of health care in the country's jails, prisons, and juvenile detention facilities.

MORE FLEXIBILITY

As the year began, the novel coronavirus first identified in China was spreading, as was concern about it. The first COVID-19 case in the United States was confirmed on January 20 and soon thereafter the first cases appeared in the nation's jails and prisons. By mid-March, the country was in lockdown and the world had become virtual.

Thanks to foresight and flexibility, NCCHC was able to quickly turn the operational switch to “virtual” and continue delivering the programs and services our constituents depend on.



While on-site visits were suspended, the accreditation team pioneered a safe, effective way to continue mission-critical accreditation surveys while also protecting the health of correctional employees, surveyors, and incarcerated individuals.

Protocols to ensure that the survey's rigor was not compromised included a HIPAA-compliant video conferencing platform, advance review of electronic patient records, live inspections using phones and laptops, and secured phones or tablets for patient interviews.

Flexibility on the part of both surveyors and facility leadership helped make the virtual survey experience a success – so successful, in fact, that certain aspects may become a permanent part of a streamlined accreditation process.

Staff at the first facility to undergo a virtual survey rated the experience



“The pandemic tested our limits, and the field responded by applying in near-record numbers. That says everything about their strength and character.”

—Matissa Sammons, MA, CCHP, vice president, certification

To meet the needs of those who wished to advance their careers without risking their health, the CCHP program pivoted to online testing, with 24/7 access from home or office for the ultimate in convenient – and socially distanced – testing. New virtual proctoring ensures exam security.

Plus, with the adoption of a new testing network, more remote exam locations than ever before are now available.



MORE LEADERSHIP

As COVID-19 gripped the country and the world, the correctional health care field turned to NCCHC for help. Despite the extraordinary and ever-evolving situation, NCCHC rapidly mobilized to provide answers, guidance, and expertise. Through reliable information, expert education, and creative collaboration, NCCHC provided much-needed leadership and clarity.



“Now more than ever, we need to provide feedback to facilities on the quality of their health care and offer as much assistance and mentoring as we can.”

—Jim Martin, MPSA, CCHP, vice president, program development

From early-2020 worries about PPE shortages to end-of-the-year vaccination questions, NCCHC experts were available to help as the correctional health care field navigated the pandemic.

Within the first few weeks of the outbreak, an influx of phone calls, email inquiries, and media requests made the need for guidance obvious. To keep up with demand, a COVID-19 Resources page was quickly added to the NCCHC website, with up-to-the-minute information and resources, federal guidance, links to supporting organizations’ websites, and free downloads. The page was visited by thousands of people, particularly during the pandemic’s first uncertain months. A dedicated email address for coronavirus-related questions also was put in place, with answers sent to the inquirer and posted on the website for wider dissemination.



Visits to the NCCHC COVID-19 Resources and Guidance webpage

Guest commentary: Colorado should give incarcerated people higher priority for COVID vaccine

Trying to Keep Covid-19 at Bay in Nation's Prisons Presents a Challenge

California's high-risk inmates to get COVID-19 vaccines

Covid-19 Poses a Heightened Threat in Jails and Prisons

In four U.S. state prisons, nearly 3,300 inmates test positive for coronavirus -- 96% without symptoms

Opinion | Former Nevada prison doctor tells why and how we must fight COVID-19 in prisons

New CDC review finds Cook County sheriff, staff successfully stemmed rising tide of COVID-19 cases at jail

COVID-19 and Youth Impacted by Juvenile and Adult Criminal Justice Systems

Correctional Facilities Are the Perfect Incubators for the Coronavirus

An outbreak could seriously harm staff, the incarcerated, and the surrounding community. Releasing inmates could help—if they have

Assessing the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on correctional institutions

Prisoners May Hold the Key to Releasing Us from Coronavirus Lockdown

Here's why inmates should get vaccinated against COVID-19 before the rest of us

MORE COLLABORATION

In a year when cooperation and collaboration seemed elusive at best, NCCHC and its partners understood that working together was more important than ever. With supporting organizations, universities, researchers, pharmaceutical companies, health services vendors, and more, new collaborations were forged and existing partnerships strengthened.

In conjunction with the Major County Sheriffs of America, NCCHC hosted a 10-week series of webinars on COVID-19, giving law enforcement and correctional health professionals an opportunity to come together, share insights from the front lines, and learn the latest on topics ranging from pandemic response plans to controlling virus spread to treating patients. Speakers included sheriffs from hard-hit areas, national experts on infectious disease in corrections, CDC representatives, and others. Hundreds (more than 300 on average) of people attended each week, and more tuned in to recordings available on the NCCHC website.

To address the unique challenges faced by youth in detention during the pandemic, the Juvenile Health Committee cosponsored a free webinar on the subject with the American Academy of Pediatrics and consulted on AAP's clinical guidance, "Responding to the Needs of Youth Involved With the Justice System During the COVID-19 Pandemic."

The National Governors Association reached out to NCCHC for help with COVID-19 education and communication to their members. NCCHC leadership participated in a webinar about Equity and Policy Preparedness for People Who Are Incarcerated and in a live discussion of administration and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine in corrections.

We also partnered with the American Jail Association to create a pandemic response guide that will help jails prepare for the future.

2,988
people

Attended the
NCCHC – MCSA
COVID-19
webinar series

2020 Collaborators

American Academy of Pediatrics	Bureau of Prisons	National Governors Association
American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	National Institute of Corrections
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention	Department of Homeland Security	National Sheriffs' Association
American Jail Association	Harvard University	RTI International
American Society of Addiction Medicine	Major County Sheriffs of America	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
	National Association of Counties	Yale University

MORE EDUCATION

2020 was the year of online learning, for school children, high school and college students... and correctional health professionals. Despite the pandemic, NCCHC provided more educational opportunities than ever, with three virtual conferences, 16 webinars, and a whopping 161 CE hours available.

The Spring Conference on Correctional Health Care, scheduled to take place in Atlanta, had to be swiftly redesigned as an online-only event, requiring flexibility and cooperation on the part of everyone involved – the registered participants who were willing to give virtual a try, the 40+ speakers who had to quickly turn their educational sessions into virtual presentations, the exhibitors and sponsors.

More than 500 people beamed in from computer screens around the country, electronically chatted with speakers, and enjoyed the same excellent educational content found at all NCCHC conferences. Because all sessions were posted on the conference website, “attendees” were able to tune in after the event, enjoy more sessions, and earn more CE.

As the year – and pandemic-induced travel restrictions – continued, the online format got better and more streamlined as both the Correctional Mental Health Care Conference in July and the National Conference in November were transformed into virtual events.

Participants were enthusiastic. “This worked surprisingly well,” said one. “I enjoyed the experience and learned more than I thought I would.”

“I loved the ability to attend simultaneous talks and to return to a [recorded] talk a second time if I wanted to pick up more details.”

—2020 Virtual Spring Conference attendee



CCHP, CCHP-RN, and CCHP-MH exam prep courses, previously available only at on-site conferences, are now available online, any time.

MORE RESEARCH

NCCHC is committed to engaging in research to help move correctional health care forward, through NCCHC-sponsored research and through partnerships with current and potential stakeholders and funders. During 2020, we embarked on two research projects with researchers from Harvard University, both with practical applications to today's correctional health care challenges.

Almost as soon as coronavirus exploded onto the scene, academic researchers from Harvard University approached NCCHC for help in quickly creating and disseminating a study on the number of cases in correctional facilities, information that was not being collected or analyzed elsewhere. An initial survey and follow-up questionnaire were developed in late March and made available to jails, prisons, and juvenile detention facilities via NCCHC.

Nearly 400 facilities, representing thousands of incarcerated individuals, health staff, and custody staff, responded. Results from the study provided unique insights into the spread of the virus and incidence of COVID-19 in the highly vulnerable incarcerated population. The data are being used to identify common challenges, analyze best practices, and tailor NCCHC resources and content.

NCCHC was awarded a two-year, \$200,000 grant to partner with researchers from the Harvard Kennedy School to evaluate the effect of NCCHC accreditation on health care delivery and health outcomes in jails, using the NCCHC standards as the basis for assessing proper management of care services. The study has capacity for 40 facilities with average daily populations of 500 to 3,000 individuals.



“Our research efforts are designed to address both the immediate challenges of COVID-19 and the ongoing complexities of correctional health care. The lessons learned and data obtained will be beneficial far into the future.”

— Amy Panagopoulos, MBA, BSN, vice president, accreditation

MORE OUTREACH

2020 saw the launch of the long-anticipated NCCHC Foundation, the organization's charitable and philanthropic arm. With a mission to advance the correctional health care field, the Foundation accelerates NCCHC's work in meeting the increasingly complex needs of today's incarcerated populations – as well as those who care for them.



Since the Foundation's official introduction in July, reception has been enthusiastic ... and growing!

Under the leadership of Director Jennifer Riskind, the Foundation has forged partnerships with an impressive roster of individuals, corporations, nonprofits, and governmental agencies all working to move the field of correctional health care forward.

The Partners in Correctional Health Annual Giving Society, for leadership donors who make an annual gift of \$250 or more, was created to ensure an ongoing base of support for the Foundation's mission and programming.

A circular graphic with a textured, earthy border. Inside the circle, the number "\$56,000" is displayed in a bold, white, sans-serif font against a dark blue background.

\$56,000

Donations and pledges to the Partners in Correctional Health Annual Giving Society in 2020



MORE OPPORTUNITY

In keeping with the NCCHC Foundation's focus on professional education and workforce development, 30% of all funds raised during 2020 were put toward scholarships to the virtual National Conference on Correctional Health Care. Criteria included being a student or a professional with seven or fewer years in the field. From among more than 90 applications received, the Foundation board of trustees selected nine individuals representing all sectors of correctional health to attend the conference.

"I'm grateful because I would not have been able to attend otherwise. We simply don't have the funding this year because of COVID."

—Kelly Podshadley, MA, CCHP, NCCHC Foundation scholarship recipient

MORE OUTREACH

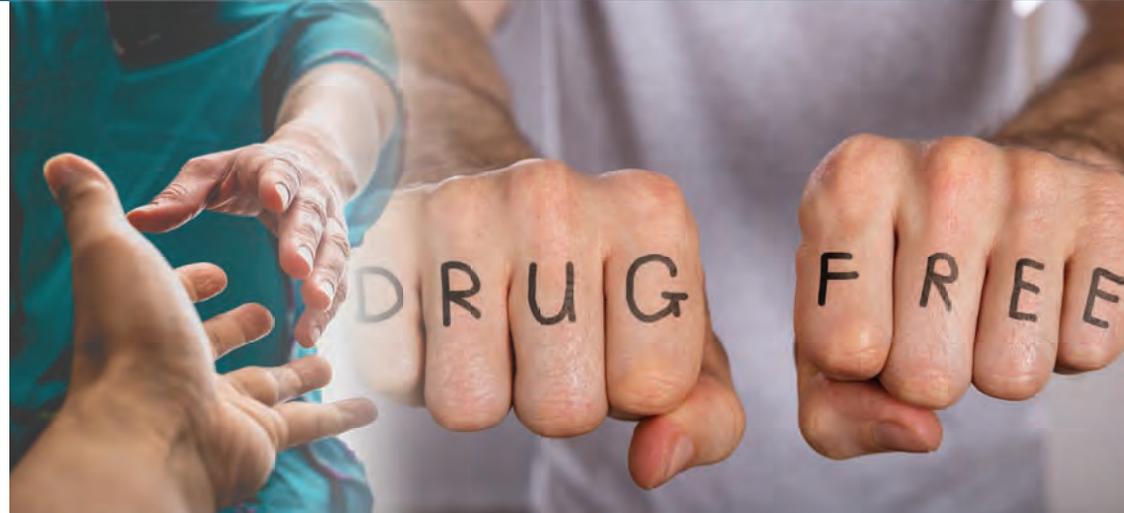
The **NCCHC Foundation's mission** is to champion the correctional health care field and serve the public by supporting research, professional education, scholarships, and patient reentry into the community.

The NCCHC Foundation was selected as the lead organization to create an evidence-based set of guidelines for withdrawal management in jail-based settings. In partnership with the American Society of Addiction Medicine and an expert advisory committee of clinical and jail personnel, the Foundation will create clinical guidelines and protocols that will help jail administrators, correctional officers, and jail-based clinicians identify and safely manage patients' withdrawal from opioids, alcohol, stimulants, and other substances. The project is funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance through a \$300,000 subcontract managed by Advocates for Human Potential, Inc., a BJA Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program technical assistance and training provider.

Please see page 16 for a complete list
of NCCHC Foundation donors.

“The Foundation has made enormous strides in our first year. We are determined to maximize our potential as a real force in changing and improving correctional health care.”

—Jennifer Riskind, director, NCCHC Foundation



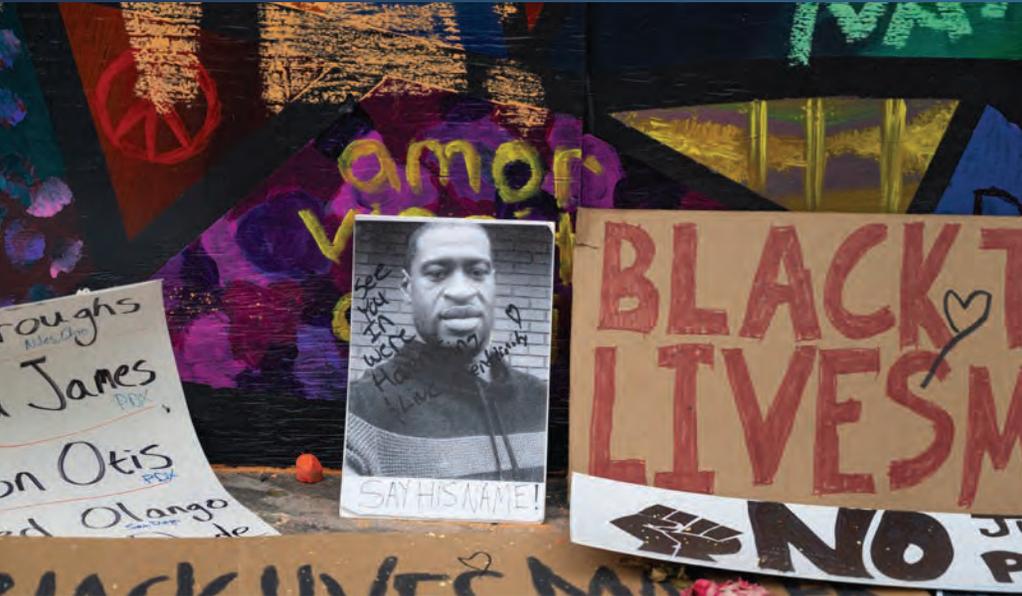
MORE **RECOVERY**

While the coronavirus pandemic took center stage this year, the opioid epidemic raged on, made worse by the economic and psychological impact of COVID. NCCHC continued its ongoing work in advocating for medication-assisted treatment programs in jails by speaking, writing, educating, and steadfastly working behind the scenes on this critical life-saving issue.

NCCHC specialists spoke at an Opioid Response Network conference meeting; served on the Justice Community Opioid Innovation Network (JCOIN), an NIH research initiative; and participated in discussions with the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program, which aims to improve how the justice system responds to addiction.

MORE AWARENESS

George Floyd’s death under the knee of a white police officer in late May sparked protests around the world and reignited deeply difficult – and important – conversations about racism in this country. At the same time, the COVID pandemic exposed the egregious health care disparities between white and Black individuals and communities and brought attention to the disproportionate number of Black Americans who are incarcerated. Somewhere in that complex tangle of issues, correctional health care has a positive role to play.



NCCHC condemns racism and supports efforts to eradicate it and its harmful effects on society.

In the aftermath of George Floyd’s death, NCCHC stood in solidarity with our supporting organizations in calling for equality and speaking out against systemic racism and injustice. That stance was amplified in a letter to constituents from the CEO and board chair, on the NCCHC website, on social media, and in *CorrectCare* magazine. It was reinforced in a variety of outreach and advocacy projects that began in 2020: creation of an ad hoc committee on racism and racial disparities, exploration of implicit bias and other barriers to equity, and discussions of the need to engage minority representation within correctional health care.

COVID infection rates

14,177 per 100,000
Black incarcerated individuals
4,094 per 100,000
white incarcerated individuals

Source: NCCHC- Harvard University COVID-19 Survey of Correctional Facilities

“Our patients in corrections are a mirror to the ills affecting our society with trauma, poor health care, and poverty contributing to their difficulties. We support all who seek to make our justice system more just, more fair, and more inclusive.”

—Deborah Ross, CCHP, CEO, and Robert Morris, MD, CCHP-P, board chair, 2020

A chilling illustration of the dynamics of incarceration, health, and racism are the disparities in COVID rates in correctional facilities, which mirror the disparities seen in the community. Data gathered in the Harvard University – NCCHC study of the pandemic’s impact in corrections reflected that reality.

MORE ADVOCACY

Incarcerated populations are among the most marginalized in society.

Unable to advocate for themselves, their voices are often lost. NCCHC is stepping up to the plate – and up to Capitol Hill – to work on their behalf.



Thanks in part to the efforts of a task force that includes NCCHC and several partners, 2020 saw progress on repeal of the Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy, which prohibits Medicaid recipients from accessing their federal health benefits while incarcerated. NCCHC leadership participated in the official presentation of the task force's report at the U.S. Capitol and met with legislative staffs. We also support the Medicaid Reentry Act, a bipartisan bill that would reinstate coverage 30 days prior to a person's release – especially important for people being treated for substance use disorder who need ongoing coverage for uninterrupted treatment.

“This problem is harshly affecting incarcerated individuals who are working to reenter society, but currently lack the health care coverage they need to continue their recovery.”

—Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), coauthor, Medicaid Reentry Act

In the early weeks of the pandemic, NCCHC called on the president to support adequate personal protective equipment in correctional facilities. We also joined several supporting organizations in opposition to the use of information about young immigrant detainees, obtained during therapy and presumed to be confidential, in asylum cases.



MORE **VISIBILITY**

For years, correctional litigators have been arguing that the NCCHC standards represent the standard of care in correctional health, and in 2020, a high-profile case amplified that message.

A U.S. District Court judge ordered an end to a class action case after nearly 40 years of litigation, having found no constitutional violation in the health care provided to incarcerated individuals at the Idaho State Correctional Institution. In his decision he wrote that compliance with NCCHC standards is “powerful evidence” of compliance with Eighth Amendment requirements (*Balla v. Idaho*).

MORE SOLUTIONS

The consulting, monitoring, and technical assistance services provided by NCCHC Resources, Inc., were in great demand during this challenging year. Many new projects were initiated while ongoing projects continued.



NCCHC Resources conducted a study of the link between dental hygiene care and diabetes in incarcerated populations to help benchmark patient outcomes. The project was funded through an Ignite Innovation grant from the Dental Trade Alliance Foundation.



“Our work did not stop because of the coronavirus; in fact, it became more important than ever. During the pandemic, some of the biggest problems facing correctional programs were medical ones. NCCHC Resources was and remains uniquely positioned to help.”

Brent Gibson, MD, MPH, CCHP-P, managing director, NCCHC Resources, Inc.

With roots in the National Commission on Correctional Health Care – the nation’s leader in setting standards for correctional health services – NCCHC Resources offers unparalleled breadth, depth, experience, and perspective. The array of projects during 2020 provide a snapshot of that expertise:

- Assisted a federal governmental agency by evaluating the medical care provided at several detention centers, as well as consulting on other health care-related activities.
- Continued long-term, comprehensive clinical and fiscal management and monitoring in two large urban counties.
- Conducted comprehensive statewide review of health care operations at all juvenile facilities in a western state.
- Completed a staff analysis and evaluated health care leadership, communication, information flow, and clinical operations at a jail in Florida.
- Conducted annual California Title 15 medical/mental health inspections for all detention facilities in a large urban county.
- Analyzed health care operations, the CQI process, and culture change for a women’s prison in the south.
- Evaluated the quality of medical and mental health services at several jails across the country.



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2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NCCHC is supported by the major national organizations representing the fields of health, mental health, law, and corrections. Each of those supporting organizations has named a liaison to the NCCHC board of directors to create a robust, multidisciplinary governing structure that reflects the complexities of correctional health care.



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**deceased*

MORE BRAND RECOGNITION

As part of a strategic rebranding initiative, NCCHC has modernized its 20+ year-old logos. This fresh take reflects the organization's medical origins with a stylized caduceus and pulls together the NCCHC family of logos – NCCHC Foundation, NCCHC Resources, Accreditation, and Certification – with a unified feel to help build awareness of NCCHC's related services and programs.





The NCCHC Foundation is grateful for its many inaugural donors, and below recognizes all gifts made between September 1, 2019 and December 31, 2020. Every effort is made to list all donors accurately. We sincerely apologize for any omissions or errors in spelling.

\$1,000+

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Award of Merit

Jim Voisard, CCHP-A

R. Scott Chavez Facility of the Year

Atlantic County (NJ) Justice Facility



Program of the Year

Complejo Correccional de Bayamón, Puerto Rico, Transformative Education Institute

Surveyor of the Year

Barbara Mariano, RN, CCHP



NCCHC Young Professional Award

Lalita Bhandari Gautam, MSN, RN, CCHP



B. Jaye Anno Award of Excellence in Communication

Anne Spaulding, MD, MPH, CCHP-P

**IN
MEMORIAM**

NCCHC honors the thousands of patients, correctional health care professionals, and custody staff who have lost their lives to COVID-19.

