

# NĀ MAKAWAI

A PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY PAPA OLA LŌKAHI



Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems



Nā Makawai Community Partners



With the most recent surge of both Delta and Omicron COVID-19 variants, timelines have been pushed back for almost all our partners. Thus, the Native Hawaiian Health Care systems and community partner organizations have been compelled to prioritize the emerging needs of those they serve.

The Nā Makawai program looks ahead to continue expanding the great body of work that's been put into motion. This issue of the Nā Makawai Newsletter highlights some of our recent triumphs, challenges, and lessons learned.

Dr. Sheri-Ann Daniels, Executive Director of Papa Ola Lōkahi

For more information, please contact [namakawai@papaolalokahi.org](mailto:namakawai@papaolalokahi.org).

Funded by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021



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## David Peters

Chief Executive Officer, Ho'ōla Lāhui Hawai'i

### What's been the most challenging about the last couple of months?

*Most challenging has been recruiting to fill vacant staff positions and managing the existing staffing out due to COVID related infections. It has also been a challenge for our organization and community dealing with the long-term mental stress that COVID has created.*

### What can you tell us about how global shipping delays have hindered you?

*Global shipping delays have pushed back the implementation of our mobile clinics now to January of 2023. Our expanded technology infrastructure was finally upgraded after almost one year of waiting for a part. Our dental chairs we ordered in August of 2021 are now scheduled to arrive in March 2022.*

### What are you hopeful for moving forward?

*That new COVID strains do not emerge and that we can return to focusing on the health of our community in the other priority areas which have taken a backseat during the pandemic.*



'Ōlelo No'eau

1924

**Kū pākū ka pali  
o Nihoa i ka makani.**

*The cliff of Nihoa stands as a  
resistance against the wind.*

Said of one who stands  
bravely in the face of  
misfortune.


The narrative was similar across the board as all entities braced themselves with the highest spike in COVID-19 cases since the inception of the pandemic. According to the Hawai'i Department of Health, 4,719 new cases were reported on January 11<sup>th</sup>, more than quadruple that of the previous wave of infections seen in July to October of 2021. Despite the rise in cases, the Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems and health care providing Community Partners were equipped to do what they do best – serve the needs of the community.


In December of 2021, Premier Medical Group Hawai'i wanted to continue providing outreach, education, surveillance testing, cluster support, vaccination and vaccine education/support/outreach, treatment in outpatient setting, post hospitalization support and family education, connection to appropriate resources and communication with their medical home or connection to one if they do not have one. Through the Nā Makawai project, they were able to continue focused efforts on COVID-related data analytics to share with the larger Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander network. Premier Medical Group Hawai'i has provided a unique model which includes treatment in the field on Hawai'i Island via their mobile medical unit.

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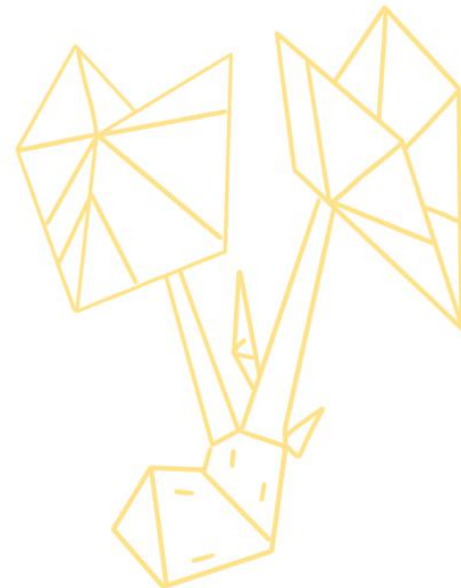


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appointments. Moving forward, a consulting company is currently evaluating three new potential software platforms to house Lunalilo Home’s electronic medical records. Ian Heilbron, Director of Finance, hopes to get a new system up and running within four months. As the surge continues to slow down the Adult Day Care has reopened. Plans to expand its capacity have been finalized and are in motion with the hiring of an architect to design plans that would allow for more kūpuna to benefit from these services.

With the reduced rate of infections, our partners are looking forward to having the bandwidth for establishing expanded services to meet the needs of our community.



By February, the surge had affected Dr. Ka’ohimanu Dang-Akiona and her staff similarly to other frontline health care providers. Premier Medical Group Hawai’i operated at a loss keeping up through the dedication of staff and ensured equitable availability of rapid antigen and PCR tests. Dr. Dang-Akiona is working with Kamehameha Schools and the Department of Education to get tests and vaccines out to keiki on Hawai’i Island. To date, PGMH has provided over 285,000 tests and thousands of vaccines.

Keiki and kūpuna alike were affected by the winter surge. By January, Lunalilo Home had returned to full lock down mode testing all staff and kūpuna weekly. Four nursing agencies are helping to provide staffing for Lunalilo Home though it continues to be a challenge to fully staff with a decline in applications and staff who still attend universities with demanding academic schedules.

Interim Executive Director, Dr. Poki’i Balaz is looking to fill the Manager of Nursing position, as well as clinical, dietary, and housekeeping staff. The driver shortage and recent loss of a cook, Lunalilo Home has reduced its meal delivery services while causing a disruption to kūpuna doctor

