YOUR VOTE MATTERS!

This year’s primary election turnout at less than 35 percent was disappointing, at best. In fact, it was a record low turnout at a time when our communities and state are facing critical issues — from rail, homelessness, housing and infrastructure to the economy.

Out our right to vote did not come easy. Our forefathers, civil rights and women’s suffrage activists fought long and hard to have this right given to us. Our men and women in uniform continue to be on the front line defending our freedom so that we can continue to enjoy this democratic right. We owe it to them and our future generations to exercise our right.

On November 8, we challenge you to get out and vote. Your vote is your voice. When you vote, you are letting candidates and elected officials know how you feel about issues that are important to you.

The November ballot will include critical races, including the presidential, mayoral, and key state house, senate and city races. Voters also have a say in the OHA races. Finally, the Honolulu Charter Commission has been working on various amendments to the City Charter, the “Constitution” of the C&C of Honolulu, through public input. Please take the time to understand these proposals as many impact the way business, government and our communities are run.

We encourage employers to engage their employees in our democracy by casting their votes. Apathy is not an option. All of us, as U.S. citizens and residents of Hawaii, need to step up and use our voice. Visit the Office of Elections website at: elections.hawaii.gov to register and for more information.

TRANSFORMING HEALTH CARE IN HAWAII

Healthcare delivery in Hawaii is changing with initiatives around a coordinated care model that improves health care and drives down costs for employers.

Through its accountable care organization (ACO), Hawaii Health Partners (HHP), Hawaii Pacific Health (HPH) is partnering with community physicians, expanding its reach beyond its hospitals and clinics to increase access and provide high-quality, patient-centered care. This is not only improving patient care, it’s helping to decrease the cost of health care.

As Hawaii’s first ACO, HHP is building health care teams centered around patients and focusing on prevention, early intervention, monitoring and regular check-ups.

With health expenditures representing 25 percent of Hawaii’s entire state budget, this renewed focus on quality, personalized care will help lower health care costs and slow the medical cost trend.

HHP physicians deliver a patient experience, where services go beyond basic care and involve patients in the planning of their care, helping them to better understand their options, recognizing cultural differences and addressing socioeconomic issues, like lack of access, housing and family support, and addressing related obstacles.

Better care means partnering – with other providers, insurers, employers, social workers, support staff and patients. Attend the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii’s panel discussion, including leaders from HPH, Queen’s Physician Network, HMSA, Hawaiian Electric Company, UHA, Foodland and others September 30, 2016 to learn more about the new health care landscape in Hawaii. Visit cochawaii.org to register and for more information.

Sherry Menar-McNamar, President & CEO