



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS - CALIFORNIA CHAPTER 3

San Diego & Imperial Counties  
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American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



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FOUNDED IN 1961

## **Congratulations to Ken Morris, MD, FAAP – the 2021 AAP-CA3’s Bronwen Anders Pediatrician of the Year!**



**Ken Morris, MD, FAAP**  
**Chief Medical Officer**  
**Children’s Primary Care Medical Group**

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California Chapter 3 (AAP-CA3) is pleased to announce the recipient of the *2021 Bronwen Anders Pediatrician of the Year Award* to Ken Morris, MD, FAAP. Dr. Morris graduated from the Medical College of Wisconsin in 1993 before completing his pediatric internship & residency at UCSD in 1996. Shortly after joining a Federally Qualified Health Center, North County Health Services (now called TrueCare) as a general pediatrician, he became an active member of the steering committee working with Dr. Mark Sawyer and his CDC-funded “Partnership for Immunization Providers” grant. One of his proudest early accomplishments was helping raise the center’s 2-year-old immunization rates from 55% to 90% over a period of 2 years while focusing on missed opportunities. This launched a career-long interest in partnering with several quality projects that would help improve immunization rates in the San Diego community.

In the years that followed, Dr. Morris assumed many different leadership roles at NCHS including that of Chief Medical Officer. In this role, he was entrusted with implementing a full-scale, integrated quality management program while obtaining and maintaining Joint Commission accreditation/reaccreditation and had significant involvement with NCHS’ Patient-Centered Medical Home recognition campaign.

In addition to his work with immunization rates, Dr. Morris had the opportunity to influence pediatric care with a different area of focus. After becoming well acquainted with and rolling out PHQ depression screening for adult patients, he began to wonder and worry about who would take care of pediatric patients with mental health challenges coupled with shrinking resources available for a growing community problem. In concert with a growing in-house behavioral health team, he championed routine depression and anxiety screening by all pediatric clinicians well before it became a new standard for consideration despite having had no formal background training in mental health care himself.

In 2011, Dr. Morris became aware of Dr. Vincent Felitti’s landmark Adverse Childhood Experiences study while hearing Dr. Nadine Burke-Harris talk about her own Bay Area clinic experiences with vulnerable children. He immediately identified trauma screening as the next critical area of focus and spent the next 10 years helping to champion ACE screening for both pediatric patients and parents of newborns first at NCHS then at Children’s Primary Care Medical Group (CPCMG) and in concert with the AAP-CA3 task force.

In 2019, Dr. Morris made a career move leaving NCHS while joining CPCMG, the second largest pediatric-only medical group in the country. As CPCMG's first Chief Medical Officer, he immediately established a new standard for combination vaccines and uniform vaccine scheduling throughout the 29 sites of the group.

In 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world, Dr. Morris' leadership with the past H1N1 (Swine Flu) pandemic was called back into action. In the early days of the pandemic, there was a thirst for frequent and consistent information to help clinicians manage their patients and offices while protecting themselves and their families from the SARS-Co-V-2 virus. Initially started as a nightly communication to CPCMG clinicians, the eventually named *COVID Chronicles* were soon distributed to a rapidly growing number of healthcare stakeholders across the county. Having worked in a collaborative environment for many years, Dr. Morris recognized there was no room for trade secrets if the community was going to overcome the extensive healthcare delivery challenges created by COVID. As of April 2022, 209 editions of the COVID Chronicles have been published, reaching nearly 1,000 recipients.

In addition to championing the COVID-19 vaccine first for clinicians and staff and then for patients through Town Halls and grassroots conversations, Dr. Morris had the opportunity to work with a dedicated team while developing a COVID Q&A guide and multiple iterations of a Return to Sports/Play algorithm after COVID. This guide and algorithm became AAP-CA3 endorsed tools helping pediatricians in their efforts to conquer COVID.

AAP-CA3 and its leadership are proud to have Dr. Morris as a colleague and mentor. We are honored to present him with the AAP-CA3's 2021 Bronwen Anders Pediatrician of the Year Award.