



August 2010 Executive Report
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 CEO & Health Authority
 Galveston County & Cities

The Pulse of the District...

- Mid County Annex Groundbreaking
- Preparing for FY'11 Budgets
- Back to School Immunizations Update
- Status of Statewide Conference on STD, HIV & TB Strategies
- Tuberculosis Program Active in Galveston County

Mid County Annex Groundbreaking



County Judge Jim Yarbrough, Commissioner Stephen Holmes, Mayor Matt Doyle and Mr. Jimmy Hailey spoke to a crowded room in the Texas City-La Marque Chamber of Commerce and then moved to a site in front of the future Mid County Annex for the actual groundbreaking on August 17th. Planned tenants are the Galveston County Health District (clinics, ambulance authority, environmental health, WIC, etc.), the Central Appraisal District, Galveston County Tax Office, Commissioner Precinct 3 and County Veterans Affairs. In total, they will occupy about 125,000 square feet. This project is part of the \$45 million facilities bond package approved by voters in 2008. *L to R: Dr. Mark Guidry, GCHD CEO; Galveston County Judge Jim Yarbrough and Warren J. Holland, GCHD COO.*



L to R: Trey Frankovich, LP; Kurt Koopmann, Dr. Dana Beckham, Martin Entringer, RS; Dr. Mark Guidry, Ronnie Schultz; Mike Carr, JD; Mary McClure, CPC; and Warren Jay Holland

Preparing for FY 2011 Budgets

The Health District is currently in the process of reviewing operating needs for the upcoming fiscal year, and will be proposing annual budgets for Board approval. Budgets for FY2011 will be based on a required 3% reduction in County funding related to the General Fund and 4C's programs.

Status of Back To School Immunization Event - August 5 through 25

During the month of August, GCHD staff combined the Dickinson and Texas City site and provided back-to-school immunizations at the Mall of the Mainland and also at the Galveston location. As of August 21st, a total of 2927 shots have been given to over 990 children. Final campaign outcomes will be available next month. In addition, **Back-to-School Immunizations** were the subject of a Guest Column submitted for publication in the annual back-to-school edition of the *Galveston County Daily News*. In the column Dr. Mark Guidry encouraged parents to make sure their children are adequately immunized and immunized "on-time" according to the recommended schedule. The column can be found at www.gchd.org/press/2010/CuestColumn-BTS-2010.html. A press release issued on July 30th also encouraged people to prepare children for school by getting needed immunizations at GHCD's annual *Kids Health Fest* which is being conducted at Mall of the Mainland through August 25th. The complete press release can be viewed at www.gchd.org/press/2010/2010BTSImm.html. The story as published in the *Galveston County Daily News* on August 2 can be found at www.gchd.org/press/2010/Health-district-plans-immunization-drive.html.

Phase One of 4C's Electronic System Rollout Scheduled for October!

Phase one of the rollout of the practice management portion of a new electronic system for the 4C's Clinics will include new software for making appointments, check in processes, financial screening, and billing. While the new system will have many benefits, learning the new system will also temporarily impact services as fewer walk-ins will be accommodated during the period of September 27th – October 30th. Staff are developing a plan to inform patients about the temporary impact and the future benefits of the new system and we ask patients, the public, and our partners for patience and understanding during the implementation phase. For a few weeks the 4C's will commit to almost solely seeing scheduled appointments at a 33% reduced capacity. It is expected that daily walk-ins will not be able to be accommodated for this period of time. Therefore, persons without an appointment will be encouraged to make appointments or consider the Texas City Saturday clinic which only sees walk-ins. The plan includes creating an educational DVD to be played in the clinics explaining what the new system will do, encourage patients to make appointments, etc... Following the roll-out of Phase one, staff will begin the process of rolling out the electronic medical (health) record and dental record parts of the new NextGen system.

Registration Continues For the Conference on STD's, HIV and TB Strategies

As of August 25th, there are over 150 persons signed up to attend this conference where a number of dynamic speakers are confirmed to speak on September 17th at Moody Gardens, partially funded by the SSBG grant awarded to the STD/HIV & TB programs. United Board of Health Vice Chair, Dr. Ben Raimer will join Dr. Mark Guidry in giving welcoming remarks. The conference will educate public health officials and the medical community on current and future strategies to prevent and control the spread of these infectious diseases. The cost of the conference is \$25.00 or \$40.00 for Continuing Education of multiple disciplines. The registration form is located at www.gchd.org/press/2010/STD-HIV-TB-Registration.pdf. In addition, Harlan "Mark" Guidry, MD, MPH, Chief Executive Officer for the Health District and James Morgan, MD, MPH, Assistant Commissioner, Director of Regional and Local Health Services with the Department of State Health Services, signed a joint letter that was sent statewide to Local Health Authorities notifying them of a planning meeting to be held on September 16th. More information about the conference can be found at www.gchd.org/press/2010/Riding-the-Waves-2010.html.

TB Program Update

The TB Program is currently managing three cases of active TB disease in Galveston County. Patient 1 is a 61 year old female with presumptive TB in a lymph node, no history of pulmonary TB. This patient has completed more than five months of Directly Observed Therapy. Patient 2 is a 61 year old male with recurrent pulmonary TB. This patient was completely treated for TB in 1998. The patient was recently hospitalized for over two months and is now on Directly Observed Therapy at home. Patient 3 is a 44 year old male who was diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in 2010 and recently with active pulmonary TB. This patient is currently hospitalized. Galveston County is considered to be a county of relatively low TB prevalence; however, each case of TB and their contacts require investigation, screening and often lengthy treatments and follow-up in order to protect the public's health. The number of active TB cases in Galveston County in the past few years is 20 in 2005, 17 in 2006, 18 in 2007, 23 in 2008, 12 in 2009, and 6 in 2010 to date.

Status of IT Rollouts and Upgrades

- **IT Infrastructure Redesign and Disaster Recovery** - We are continuing to make progress on the IT infrastructure project. Work continues on the build out of the co-location site (County Emergency Management facility), the upgrading of equipment and systems as initially outlined in order to optimize performance and increase efficiencies to users.
- **NEXTGEN Phase 1 (Electronic Practice Management), 4C's Clinic software** – Staff continue to work on electronic claims testing for billing, testing of permissions for staff by job functions, creating training materials, testing of all forms and alerts in the system, and finalizing dates for staff training which will begin on September 27th with a Go Live date of October 19th.
- **Accufund, Accounting software** – Staff are working with our consultant in the development of the general ledger, accounts receivable, accounts payable and the HR module. Future plans are to integrate Accufund with ShelterPro, NEXTGEN and Decade softwares, in addition to electronic cash drawers throughout the Health District where funds are collected.
- **ESO, EMS software** – A software upgrade of ESO to version 4.0 began on June 15th. Staff are testing data as ESO migrates from version 3.0 to 4.0. During the testing of equipment which includes entering ePCRs, downloading ePCRs information into billing software, testing of zoll monitors, tablets for field staff, it was noted the long wait time to load the application. Staff are working with ESO staff members to seek options to improve the response time for loading the application. The go live date of the upgrade will be determined by the outcome of equipment testing. ESO has stated during a call with staff they will continue to support version 3.0.
- **ShelterPro, Animal Shelter software** – Staff are in the final stages of software configuration. However, due to unforeseen circumstance, the Go Live for this software will not be until October 2010. Staff will stay on track by testing the system with Accufund for the interface of financial information, creating end user training material for staff and ensuring all equipment is purchased and ready for deployment.

Office of Public Information: *For more information, please contact Kurt Koopmann, Public Information Officer, at (409) 938-2211 or email (kkoopman@gchd.org).*

- The Health District has responded and contributed to several media inquires concerning a **BP emissions event** that took place beginning in April. The *Daily News* ran a story on August 9th examining what is Fact or Fiction concerning the event, www.gchd.org/press/2010/BP-release-fact-fiction-Kurt-Koopman.html. The *Daily News* also published a story on August 15th that examined the overall air quality in the Texas City area and air quality trends over the past several years, www.gchd.org/press/2010/toxic-emissions-fall.html.

4C's Clinic Updates: For more information, please contact Patrick Butler, 4C's Business Director, at (409) 949-3406 or email pbutler@gchd.org or Pam Jahnke, RN, Strategic Plan Evaluator at (409) 938-2256 or email pjahnke@gchd.org.

- **4C's Vacancies** – Current open positions in the 4C's include: two LVNs, one RN, 1 Medical Aid, two Dental Assistant/Receptionist, two Medical Record Clerks, one Administrative Clerk, two full-time Patient Service Specialists, one part-time Patient Service Specialist, and two temporary/seasonal Pharmacy Cashiers. More information about these positions and all open GCHD positions may be viewed on the Galveston County Health District's web site at www.gchd.org.
- **Collaboration with UTMB PA Students** – The Governing Board approved a team of UTMB PA student researchers to conduct a survey of men 18-35 regarding their knowledge and beliefs about the human papillomavirus vaccine, HPV. The team collected 10 surveys from the target population and has concluded collection at the clinic site. The results of the study will be analyzed, written and shared with GCHD.
- **DSHS Title V Children's Health Services Grant** – The Health District received the renewed Title V contract for \$78, 037, a decrease of \$15,688. Replying to our inquiry regarding the reason for the reduction, DSHS staff stated that the Title V Child Health Services program had an increase in the number of providers that were awarded funds. As per the RFP, funds were allocated based on a regional methodology. Several new agencies became contractors in the region. As such, contractors in the 6/5S area had to share the funds.
- **Head Start** - The 4C's has been contacted by *Hitchcock Independent School District's Cooperative Head Start* to provide Developmental Examinations and Physical Examinations and possible Dental Examinations in Hitchcock to participants. Staff are working out the details with services expected to begin in early September.

Office of Community Health Services: For more information, please contact Pam Jahnke, RN, Interim Administrative Director at (409) 938-2256 or email pjahnke@gchd.org.

- **Storing First Responders Immunization in ImmTrac** – The DSHS is currently encouraging First Responders to store their immunization data in the State database, ImmTrac. Immunization Program staff will outreach to first responders and their families, who are also eligible for this service. First Responders means any federal, state, local or private personnel who may respond to a disaster including public health and safety personnel, law enforcement personnel, fire protection personnel (including volunteers), emergency medical services personnel and any related personnel that provide support services during prevention, response and recovery phases of a disaster. This initiative will ensure that immunization status of first responders is easily obtained during and after a disaster. To receive more information on this, First Responders can phone Immunization staff at (409) 938-2323 (409) 938-2233.
- **GCHD Celebrates World Breast Feeding** - The World Breast Feeding Celebration was held at the Mall of the Mainland on August 11, in conjunction with the Kids Health Fest. Speakers at the 3 hour event included Dr. Pat Rogers; Pediatrician speaking on "Making Every Ounce Count", Midwife and Nurse Practitioner Susan Studebaker on "Breast Feeding Beginnings" and John Solomon, Personal Trainer led a kids physical activity. The event was well attended by parents and children. Vendors included a face-painting clown, Breast Feeding Peer counselors, WIC's lactation consultant, Texas City police offering children's ID kits, Poison control, Mainland Children's Partnership, Medicaid representatives and La Leche League.

Office of Environmental Health Services: For more information, please contact Ronnie Schultz, Director of Environmental Health Services, at (409) 938-2314 or email rschultz@gchd.org

- **High Island Grant Update** - The grant to install new septic systems for low/moderate income families in High Island is moving forward. On August 13, a pre-construction meeting was held in High Island where property owners were able to choose an installer. Construction should begin

soon. Because of property owner/eligibility issues, only nine property owners are currently eligible for the grant funding. Any other occupied properties in the project area will have to install new septic systems using their own resources. Those residents that refuse to install a properly permitted septic system will face possible enforcement.

- **GCHD Assist Houston SPCA** – Animal Services' assisted the Houston SPCA obtain a seizure warrant to remove several animals from property located in the City of Hitchcock. Houston SPCA received the initial complaint about animal cruelty involving goats, lambs, donkeys and dogs. Health District Animal Control Officers assisted the SPCA obtain the seizure warrant and helped load up the animals. Houston SPCA will house the animals at their facility in Houston until the court decides their fate.
- **Galveston County Animal Services Advisory Committee** – The quarterly meeting of the Animal Services Advisory Committee was held on August 17th. The committee discussed the current financial issues facing the County of Galveston and the impact these budget cuts may have on the operation of the new animal resource center. In addition, the committee heard reports about new city directed enforcement sweeps and an update from the Animal Services Manager.

Office of Emergency Medical Services: For more information, please contact Trey Frankovich, LP, EMS Director, (409) 765-2524 or tfrankovich@gchd.org or Mary McClure, GAAA Business Director, (409) 938-2336 or mmcclure@gchd.org.

- **EMS Vacancies** – There are currently 2 paramedic vacancies for 911 and one EMT position for the Non-Emergency Transfer side.
- **Community Outreach in Hitchcock** - GAAA participated in the Hitchcock Chamber of Commerce "Good Ole Days" fair August 13th and 14th. EMS had an ambulance on display for the citizens with public relations safety information materials handed out to the citizens present. GAAA also had an ambulance in the parade
- **Status of EMS Station in Hitchcock** – GAAA is finalizing the move from the current EMS quarters in Hitchcock to a 2 bedroom/1 bath house owned by the Hitchcock Volunteer Fire Department. This move should take place the 2nd week of September.

Disease & Disaster Preparedness: For additional information, contact Dana Beckham, DVM, Chief Epidemiologist, at (409) 938-2322 or email dbeckham@gchd.org or Mike Carr, Public Health Preparedness Manager, at (409) 938-2333 or email mcarr@gchd.org.

Epidemiology:

- **Elevated Lead Levels (Galveston and League City)** – In the month of July, Epidemiology Services received 2 confirmed Elevated Blood Lead Level (EBLL) reports in Galveston residents. This brings the total of confirmed EBLL cases in Galveston County to 7 cases. All cases have been referred to Community Health Nursing for a home assessment. Three cases were referred to Environmental Services for an environmental lead investigation due to levels exceeding 20 µg/dL. The following is a demographic breakdown of the EBLL cases: 6 males and 1 female ranging from 10 months – 4 years; (6) **Galveston** (77550) and (1) **League City**.
- **E. coli shiga-like toxin (Hitchcock)** – On August 4th Epidemiology Services received a lab report for a confirmed case of *Escherichia coli*, shiga-like toxin in a 35 year old **Hitchcock** resident. Epidemiology investigation revealed that the patient experienced acute diarrhea that was subsequently cultured by her physician and found to be an enterohemorrhagic strain of *E. coli*. The patient was subsequently treated with antibiotics. The enterohemorrhagic strains of *E. coli* include shiga toxin producing *E. coli*, *E. coli* O157:H7 and shiga-like toxin producing *E. coli*. This category causes an infection of variable severity that is characterized by diarrhea that is often bloody and abdominal cramps. The infection may progress into more severe clinical manifestations. *E. coli* is transmitted through ingestion of food contaminated with ruminant feces. Direct person-to-person transmission occurs in families, child care centers and custodial institutions requiring a very small infectious dose. Waterborne transmission may also occur

through contaminated drinking water and from recreational swimming waters. For the year of 2010, the Health District has received a total of 2 cases.

- **Vibrio (League City)** – On August 9th Epidemiology Services received a lab report for a confirmed case of *Vibrio alginolyticus* in a 38 year old **League City** resident. Epidemiology investigation revealed that the patient experienced pain, redness and swelling in a puncture wound sustained from a catfish barb on their left index finger. The patient was admitted at UTMB for day surgery to drain the infected finger and was subsequently treated with antibiotics. *V. alginolyticus* bacteria is not associated with the epidemiological characteristics and clinical picture of *Vibrio cholera* and does not cause epidemics. This specific species of vibrio is associated with wound infections. This is the first reported case of vibrio infection in 2010, whereas in 2009 there were 2 reported cases of vibrio infection in Galveston County
- **Whooping Cough Pertussis (Texas City)** - On July 29, the Health District received its first pertussis case for the year. The case involved a four-month old infant from **Texas City**. Epidemiological investigation revealed the infant was current on its immunizations and all family members in the house were coughing for at least 2 weeks or longer. The child completed the appropriate treatment for pertussis and six household/close contacts were identified and completed the post exposure prophylaxis. Pertussis is a vaccine-preventable disease. In 2009, the Health District received a total of 7 pertussis reports.
- **Regional Epi/BT Meeting** - Epidemiology Services attended the Regional Epidemiology/Bioterrorism Meeting on August 13, 2010. The meeting is a forum for epidemiologists and public health preparedness staff to exchange information regarding epidemiology and bioterrorism activities. The meeting highlighted Hepatitis B and foodborne illness clusters in the region.
- **Public Health Advisories** – On July 30 and August 5, , Epidemiology Services disseminated public health advisories to hospitals, healthcare providers, school nurses and emergency departments on Back to School Immunizations and Influenza A (H3N2), respectively. The back to school immunization advisory consisted of the Health District reminding parents that in addition to supplies Texas law requires students in Texas schools to be immunized against certain vaccine-preventable diseases, and announced the dates and time of the vaccination clinics. The Influenza A (H3N2) advisory stated that virus infections have been recently detected in people in a number of states across the United States. Clinicians are reminded to consider influenza as a possible diagnosis when evaluating patients with acute respiratory illnesses, including pneumonia, even during the summer months. Treatment decisions should not be made on the basis of a negative rapid influenza diagnostic test result since the test has only moderate sensitivity.

Public Health Preparedness:

- **Meetings with Emergency Preparedness Partners** - PHEP staff attended the following Preparedness meetings during August 2010. Participated on Surgeon General Conference call about psychological stress of the Deep Water Horizon oil spill on July 28, 2010. Participated in Focus Group for DSHS “Ready or Not” education program addressing efficacy and strategies to reach more of the public on July 30, 2010. DSHS regional meeting for SNS operations on August 3, 2010. Participated in CDC Public Health Apprentice Program orientation teleconference. Attend the Urban Area Strategic Initiative (UASI) Health and Medical Committee Meeting August 11, 2010. Conducted quarterly Galveston County Emergency Response Cooperative (GCERC) meeting with local emergency response partners on August 12, 2010. Attended final planning meeting on the Galveston County Mass Fatality Plan on August 18, 2010. Attended the monthly Emergency Management Coordinators meeting at the Galveston County EOC on August 19, 2010. Attend the City of Galveston Hurricane Preparedness meeting on August 24, 2010. Meet with Regional Emergency Medical Response partners about a Regional “No Notice” Emergency Response Plan on August 24, 2010.
- **Community Health Nursing Back to School Immunizations** – PHEP staff have provided the immunization staff with PHEP equipment for use in the Back to School immunization program. Additionally PHEP staff have assisted with planning the layout of the clinic site and transporting

equipment to the site for setup of operations. PHEP staff will assist in breakdown of the clinic site on August 26, 2010.

- **PHEP Discretionary Funds Grant 2010** – PHEP staff are actively involved in purchasing the equipment needed to complete the grant. To date, an enclosed trailer specified in the grant for conversion to a mobile Point of Distribution site / Command Post, and two-way, trunked radio equipment have been ordered. Upon delivery of these items, conversion of the new trailer and one already in PHEP possession will begin.

Signed RFP's, Grants, Contracts & Agreements:

- **Agreement between Hitchcock Independent School District – Cooperative Project Headstart and Galveston County Health District** was signed by COO on August 23, 2010. Agreement will be for 1 (one) year from September 1, 2010 to September 1, 2011.
- **Water Sampling Agreement between GCHD and The City of Bayou Vista** was signed by COO on July 29, 2010. Agreement will be from June 1, 2010 to August 31, 2010.
- **Contract for Child Health and Dental Services with DSHS (Department of State Health Services)** was signed by COO on August 18, 2010. Contract period 9/1/2010 to 8/31/2011 – DSHS agrees to purchase, and Contractor agrees to provide, services or goods to the eligible populations for the total amount of \$78,037.00, a decrease of \$15,688 from the previous contract.
- **Contract for Immunization Branch (Locals) with DSHS** was signed by COO on August 13, 2010. Contract period 9/1/2010 to 8/31/2011 – DSHS agrees to purchase, and Contractor agrees to provide, services or goods to the eligible populations for the total amount of \$251,837.00 same amount as previous contract.
- **Contract for Vital Statistics Unit with DSHS** was signed by COO on August 18, 2010. Contract period 9/1/2010 to 8/31/2012 – DSHS agrees to provide and Receiving Agency to purchase the services and/or goods. The total amount of this contract shall be determined by the number of birth certificates printed as a result of searches of the database.
- **Contract for Tuberculosis Prevention and Control (State) with DSHS (Department of State Health Services)** was signed by COO on July 28, 2010. Contract period 9/1/2010 to 8/31/2011 – DSHS agrees to purchase, and Contractor agrees to provide, services or goods to the eligible populations for the total amount of \$74,229.00, a decrease of \$5,432 from the previous contract.
- **Agreement of Lease between Mainland Youth at Risk, Inc. and Galveston County HealthDistrict** was signed by COO on August 2, 2010. Agreement will end on August 31, 2011.
- **Amendment from Department of State Health Services for the Public Health Emergency Response – Focus Area 1** was signed by COO on August 12, 2010. This purpose of this amendment will extend the contract period through August 31, 2010 – per CDC no–cost extension and DPA approval on August 5, 2010. No change to categorical budget.

Environmental Health Programs – Notices June 2010

	Month	Annualized Monthly Average
Animal Control (dogs running at large, no registration, cruelty, etc)	42	89
Air Pollution (violation of state air regulations, permits, excessive emissions, etc)	5	5
Food Services (violations of food service policy requiring voluntary closure, court actions, etc.)	0	0.45
Food Services (letters sent for operating with an expired food service permit)	17	26
Public Health Nuisances (trash and high weeds, violations of health and safety code)	38	19
On-Site Septic Systems (violation of on-site policy)	11	6
Water Pollution (improper disposal, sewage leaks, grease trap violations, etc)	4	8