



February 2011 Executive Report
For Galveston County & Cities

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CEO & Health Authority

Pulse of the District...

- Judge Henry Joins Board Tour & Wellness Discussion
- 4C's Board Considers New Name
- Public Hearing on Septic System Homeowner maintenance
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Alert
- HIV/AIDS Health Disparity Awareness
- Animal Advisory Committee Updates
- EMS Starts New Continuing Education Program
- Progress Report on Major IT Rollouts

Judge Henry and Boards of Health Discuss Wellness

On February 18th, members of the United Board of Health and Governing Board took a tour of Health District facilities starting at the La Marque sites. Members were then bused to Galveston Island for a tour of an EMS station, the 4C's clinic, Vital Statics, Immunizations, WIC and HIV/STD program areas. **Judge Mark Henry participated with Board members in a luncheon discussion about wellness.** An overview and history of the Health District was presented during lunch in Galveston. The tour moved onto the Mainland to visit an EMS station in Hitchcock, a tour of the 4C's clinic in Texas City and ended at the Mid County Annex currently under construction. We thank Mr. John Zendt for providing the van and driver to transport board members and staff to the various locations.



4C's Board Considers New Name

On December 17, 2010, the Governing board issued a press release calling for suggestions from the public for a new name for the 4C's Clinics (www.gchd.org/press/2010/Newclinicname2010.html). As of Jan 25th, 122 suggestions were submitted from 24 individuals. The Governing Board formed a committee that narrowed recommendations to six names which will be considered at its February 24th meeting.

Public Hearing on Proposed Revisions to On-Site Sewage Facility Policy Regarding Homeowner Maintenance

The United Board of Health hosted a public hearing on February 23rd to receive comments from the public regarding proposed revisions to the OSSF policy regarding homeowner maintenance. Notice of the February 23rd public hearing to discuss proposed changes to the **Rules for On-Site Sewage Facilities** was posted on the GCHD web site February 8th. The notice of public hearing can be found at www.gchd.org/press/2011/OSSFhearing0211.html. The complete text of the proposed changes can be accessed at www.gchd.org/press/2011/OSSF%20Proposed%20Revisions0211.pdf. After the public hearing, the board may proceed to obtain comments on the proposal from local governments in the District for review and deliberation at its March 30th meeting where a final decision may be made.

Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Alert

On February 14, Epidemiology Services received a report of a 5 month old Galveston resident with confirmed Pertussis. Epidemiology investigation revealed the case had a cough for two weeks and tested positive for *B. pertussis* DNA. The patient is currently being treated with appropriate antibiotics. Additionally, 8 contacts were identified and are completing prophylactic treatment. Pertussis is a vaccine preventable disease and incidents are required to be reported to the State Health Department. This is the first case for 2011. Galveston County had one confirmed case during 2010.

Health Disparity Awareness Campaign

On February 7th, GCHD participated in the Black HIV/AIDS Awareness day by issuing over 150 pamphlets, condoms and information about HIV/AIDS and tested 29 people for HIV & syphilis. On January 26th a press release was issued promoting the activities planned for **National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**. The release which was published in the *Galveston County Daily News* on January 31st can be found at <http://www.gchd.org/press/2011/hiv-aids01-26-2011.html>.

Animal Advisory Committee Update

A quorum of the committee was provided an update on the construction progress at the Galveston County Animal Resource Center. Committee members were concerned over the exclusion of the incinerator at this time from the construction project. A presentation regarding the current pet registration programs in the cities and county was provided to the committee to show how inconsistent and confusing it is to the general public. The committee advised District staff to bring a proposal on a more consistent, less confusing

registration program for the cities and county to the next advisory committee meeting. If approved, the proposal would be reviewed by District Administration.

EMS Starts Continuing Education Program

Dr. William Mileski, Chief of Trauma Services at UTMB, conducted a class on snake bite treatment for GAAA, GCHD animal control officers, local EMS agencies and the staff at Moody Gardens. The lecture was held in the IMAX Theater. The staff also learned how to safely neutralize a snake on ambulance scenes from the animal curators employed by Moody Gardens. CE credit was granted through DSHS for those who successfully completed the class. Classes will be held monthly to help train medics and offer local continuing education.

2011 Begins Transforming IT Rollouts

In 2010, the Health Districted completed the implementation of the Electronic Practice Management system for the 4C's clinics, Disaster Recovery Phase I and Phase I of the Accounting software. The following are projects planned for 2011 with estimated completion dates:

- NEXTGEN Upgrade 5.6 SP1: This upgrade must be completed prior to conducting system configuration for electronic health and dental records. The upgrade will also meet federal requirements for Meaningful Use. Completion in February or March.
- Disaster Recovery Phase II: Phase II will complete the duplication of all GCHD data from our current production facility at the Emergency Management Facility to our La Marque location. This will be completed in April.
- NEXTGEN EDR: This will convert the dental clinic to using electronic dental records in April.
- INGEN ILI (Influenza Like Illness): This will allow access to the surveillance database which will allow us to track Influenza Like Illness from local ISD's electronically. Estimated completion date is in April.
- ShelterPro: This software will assist in tracking incoming animals, adoptions, donations, and will also assist in producing reports by cities of calls, complaints and other activities performed by staff. Estimated completion date is in May.
- NEXTGEN – EHR: This will convert the medical clinic to using electronic health records with interfaces for prescriptions, lab results, digital x-rays, etc... in June.
- Accufund Phase II: Phase II will include projects for the set up of a HR module, Fixed Asset tracking, Budget Development, Cash Drawers, External Accounting Interfaces (NEXTGEN, EnvisionConnect, ShelterPro, etc) and Report and Forms creation. Completion dates will vary for various parts of the project with the entire project completed in August.
- Merging Telecommunication: This project is to merge telecommunication systems with the county when the new Animal Resource Center and Mid County Annex is built. Dates of completion will depend on the completion of the two facilities.
- ESO Upgrade 4.0: This upgrade will improve the flow of inputting patient care information by EMS field staff and has improved ability to monitor for quality assurance. Estimated completion date is October.

Office of Public Information

- Revisions to the 4Cs Governing Board pages on the GCHD web site have been completed and are now live for viewing. The revisions can be viewed at www.gchd.org/boards/GBindex.htm.

4C's Clinic Updates

- **Status of 4C's Billing and Collections in NEXTGEN** – Executive Staff continue to monitor and resolve billing and collections issues as they arise, continuing to work aggressively with managers to keep Billing and Collections on track. At the same time, cross training of staff continues with all staff in the billing area. In our new system, from December 1st to February 18th, there has been 10,748 Self Pay encounters created of which 8,294 statements have been mailed to patients. In addition, 12,432 Self Pay statements from the old practice management system have been mailed out. Collections from our new system from October 19, 2010 to February 18th, included \$133,732 from Self Pay payers, 317 Medicaid claims billed with \$21,147.23 collected, 127 claims for Medicare with \$8,016.24 collected, and 52 Commercial claims billed with \$2,286.44 collected. We also continue to receive payments from charges processed through our old billing system.
- **Joint Commission Periodic Performance Review** - The Annual Joint Commission Periodic Performance Review is underway in the 4C's Clinic. Once a year, the CNO and Strategic Evaluator performs a self-audit, reviewing over 300 standards that apply to ambulatory care in an accredited clinic. Standards apply to the entire clinic organization including medical, dental, nursing, lab and pharmacy. Most standards ensure safety and high quality of care for clinic patients. Standards groups include the clinic environment, patient rights and responsibilities, human resources, patient care, medication systems, medical records, emergency management, and national patient safety goals. The self-assessment is due on March 3. The 4C's Clinic has been Joint Commission accredited since 2000.

Office of Community Health Services

- **BCCS and DFEET** – In the month of January, the community health nurses performed 8 cervical cancer screenings, 56 clinical breast exams, which yielded 4 women with abnormal results that were referred for diagnostic follow-up care.
- **HIV/STD Services** – On February 9th, HIV/STD staff attended training in Houston which provided staff with knowledge and skills for ongoing research for innovative program models and continuation of targeted testing towards high-risk groups.
- **Immunizations Program** - Interviews have been completed to fill the two vacancies in the Immunization Program (LVN Site Supervisor and the Reminder/Recall Clerk). Immunization Clinics have administered 461 shots from Jan. 26th to Feb. 14th. As of Feb. 14th, the Immunization Outreach Worker has conducted 27 daycare/registered homes audits and 1 school validation survey (out of the 35 assigned for this year). 17 of the daycare/ registered homes are scheduled for a follow up this month. A total of 822 children's shot records have been reviewed and screened to insure they are in compliance with the State of Texas minimum requirements for School and Childcare facilities.
- **TB Program Update** - The TB program currently has 7 cases (3 suspects and 4 confirmed) of TB for whom staff is providing direct observed therapy (DOT). Each case and their contacts require investigation, screening and often lengthy treatment and follow up in order to protect the public's health.

Office of Environmental Health Services

- **Galveston County Animal Resources Center Construction Update** – Progress continues at the Animal Resources Center as we move closer to the completion date projected for Mid-May 2011. Both exterior and interior walls are going up along with electrical, roofing, air conditioning, etc. Animal Alliance of Galveston County has graciously donated \$16,000.00 towards increasing the dog kennel's interior walls from the standard four feet to five feet. This additional height will further prohibit larger dogs from nose to nose contact that increases the risk of disease transmission. Health District staff is currently reviewing the furniture, fixtures and equipment that will need to be purchased for the resource center. In addition, the District is still faced with the unresolved issue of staffing at the center.
- **Shelter in Place Outreach** – Ronnie Schultz and members of the Galveston County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) recently visited several Galveston Schools to speak to over 200 students about the dangers of chemical emergencies and how to “shelter in place”. Wally Wiseguy, a six foot turtle mascot, entertains and informs the students about chemical dangers in our communities and how to protect ourselves against these dangers. This program is sponsored by LEPC and funded by donations received from member companies.
- **Gold Ribbon Awards** – Please mark your calendars for the Gold Ribbon Awards on Thursday, April 07, 2011 6:30 PM-8:30 PM at the Wayne Johnson Center, La Marque. Staff is currently reviewing food service establishment nominations and ranking them to determine 2011 Gold Ribbon Award recipients.

Office of Emergency Medical Services

- **Debt Write Off** - GAAA currently has approximately 6,324 old calls from 2003 to 2007 totaling \$3,308,776 that were sent to collections, but have been determined to be uncollectable by the collection agency. These calls will be written off as bad debt.
- **Ambulance Wreck** – on February 13th, GAAA had an ambulance crew that was injured in a wreck on the seawall when they were struck from behind by a vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed. The crew was transporting a burn patient for Shriners hospital as well as the physician who had accompanied the patient by air from Mexico. GAAA's two crew members and the physician were transported to UTMB with minor injuries. There were no additional injuries to the burn patient or his father. The ambulance was totaled by the insurance company.
- **Disaster Drills** – GAAA administrative staff participated in an active shooter drill held on the Royal Caribbean cruise ship February 13th along with the Port Police, Fire Department, Galveston PD, and Galveston Sheriff's office. A table top evacuation drill was conducted with UTMB on February 17th. This drill simulated the evacuation of the hospital utilizing State asset ambulances and ensuring radio interoperability.
- **Teddy Bears Donation** – EMS Angels, a motorcycle club in the Galveston County area, made a donation of 40 teddy bears to GAAA so that they may be given to our pediatric patients. The hope is that it may ease the child's anxiety while being transported in the ambulance.
- **Mardi Gras Marathon** – GAAA provided two ambulances for the Mardi Gras Marathon held on February 20th. The run started in Sagerfest Park and was paid for by the event organizers.
- **Cheerleader Competition** – GAAA provided a crew for a cheer competition that was held at Moody Gardens on February 19th and 20th. The event was sponsored by United Cheer.

Disease and Disaster Preparedness:

Epidemiology

- **Flu Surveillance** - Epidemiology Services continues to conduct flu surveillance throughout the county. From January 23rd thru February 12th, the Health District has received a total of 275 positive flu cases bringing the total cases for 2011 to 349. Texas is one of 37 states which are currently classified as having "Widespread" influenza activity by the CDC. Nationally, about 25% of the influenza A infections this year have been due to the novel 2009 H1N1 strain. Officially, flu season runs from October through May. Though most flu illnesses in Texas usually occur in December, January and February, flu is unpredictable and can happen at any time. It's not too late to get your flu shot, the viruses reported remain similar to those chosen for the 2011-2011 vaccine. For more information please see www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivitysurv.htm.
- **Elevated Lead Levels Galveston)** - In the month of January, Epidemiology Services received 1 confirmed Elevated Blood Lead Level (EBLL) report in a 2 month old Galveston resident. This case has been referred to Community Health Nursing for a home assessment. For 2010, the Health District received 18 EBLL cases.
- **Public Health Advisories** – On January 27th and February 16th, Epidemiology Services disseminated public health advisories to hospitals, healthcare providers, school nurses and emergency departments on the 2011 Notifiable Conditions in Texas and CDC's Best Practices for Health Care Professionals on the Use of Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) for Diagnosing Pertussis, respectively. The 2011 Notifiable Conditions in Texas was updated by the Texas Department of State Health Services and disseminated to users at the beginning of each year. The CDC Best Practices for PCR testing of pertussis describes proper testing criteria, timing of testing, specimen collection techniques, protocols for avoiding specimen contamination, and appropriate interpretation of test results for patient diagnosis.

Public Health Preparedness

- **PHEP meeting and Planning Activities** -- On January 27, 2011 PHEP staff attended an interim planning meeting for the regional SNS drill in May 2011. PHEP staff attended the regional SNS coordinators meeting in Houston on February 1, 2011 to discuss the upcoming BioWatch Drill and its SNS component. On February 2, 3 & 4, 2011 PHEP staff participated in the response to an arctic cold snap and possible ice storm, including participating in conference calls, developing and distributing messages to GCHD staff and community partners and closing operations at 4 PM on Feb. 3 through Friday Feb.4. On February 7, 2011 PHEP staff attended the final planning conference for the Bio Watch drill to be held in mid February, PHEP staff will participate in the drill. On February 8-10, 2011 PHEP staff responded to another arctic cold wave providing information to GCHD staff on a regular basis about status of the facilities and the plans for operation as the cold continued. No closure was required after closely monitoring the situation as it developed.
- **Intermediate and Advanced Incident Command Classes Presented** -- PHEP Staff sponsored and taught two Incident Command Classes January 31 – February 3, 2011. ICS 300 Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents was presented Jan.31 – Feb. 2, 2011 for 28 persons, 10 of the participants are Health District employees and volunteers. The rest of the participants were from community first responders from Galveston County with a few from the Houston Metropolitan area. On Thursday Feb. 3, 2011 the ICS 400 Advanced ICS for Complex Incidents was delivered to 27 persons 9 who were Health District Employees of Volunteers. This marks the first time that GCHD has been able to sponsor and teach these classes locally.

- **BioWatch Drill Participation** -- PHEP staff were active participants in the Houston Region BioWatch exercise on February 15-17, 2011. BioWatch is a Department of Homeland Security program that provides an early warning system of biological sensors in Houston and the surrounding communities. The purpose is to detect potential acts of Biological Terrorism in the early stages of the event so appropriate intervention can be made to protect life and property as well as apprehend those responsible for the act. The drill scenario included a simulated release of *Bacillus Anthracis*, the bacteria that causes Anthrax along a freeway in the area. The drill followed the response of the first 18 hours of the incident from detection to response preparations and announcements to the community. PHEP staff were involved in the logistics of delivering Medical Countermeasures to the entire population of the area an estimated five million people.

Signed RFP's, Grants, Contracts & Agreements:

(Time period January 2011 – February 2011)

GENERAL (applies to both boards)

1. **Host Agency Agreement between Galveston County Health District and Senior Community Services Employment Program** was fully executed on January 31, 2011. The term is from January 31, 2011 to June 30, 2012.
2. **Personnel Supply Agreement between Certified and Galveston County Health District** was fully executed on November 30, 2010. The contract term is for one year starting November 30, 2010.
3. **Energy Services Agreements between Galveston County health District and Green Mountain Energy Company** was fully executed on February 11, 2011. The contract terms are for one year with one contract fixed rate of \$0.05691 and one contract fixed rate of \$0.05809.

UBOH

1. **Agreement between Galveston County Health District and National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) for Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Units** was fully executed January 25, 2011. The term will be from January 5, 2011 to July 31, 2011. NACCHO will pay \$5,000 for GCHD to be a MRC Unit in Good Standing.
2. **Memorandum of Understanding for Non-emergency Supplementation between Galveston Area Ambulance Authority and North Star EMS** was fully executed on January 28, 2011. The term is for one year starting January 3, 2011 and will automatically renew for one year terms.
3. **Water Sampling Analysis Services Contract between Galveston County Health District and The General Land Office (GLO)** was fully executed on February 8, 2011. GLO will pay \$47.50 per water sample not to exceed \$87,181.50. The contract term is January 1, 2011 to August 31, 2011.
4. **Amendment to Bioterrorism Preparedness Contract between Galveston County Health District and The Department of State Health Services** was fully executed February 3, 2011. The amendment changes the contract termination date from July 31, 2012 to July 31, 2011.

Governing Board

1. **Modification to Subcontract under Texas Health and Human Services Commission Social Services Block Grant issued by University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston with Galveston County Health District as subcontractor** was fully

executed on January 13, 2011. The subcontract is modified to extend completion date to September 30, 2011.

2. **Memorandum of Agreement for Contractual Referrals to 4C's Clinic between Galveston County Coordinated Community Clinic and the College of the Mainland Nursing Department** was fully executed January 25, 2011. The term is from December 17, 2011 to December 16, 2011 and will automatically renew for one year terms.
3. **Contract between X-Ray Equipment Company and Galveston County Health District** was fully executed January 27, 2011. Texas City and Galveston clinics medical upgrade were each \$85,351. The dental package for Galveston was \$57,245 and the dental package for Texas City was \$71,615.

Pending

1. **Health Reimbursement Service Agreement between Galveston County Health District and TML Intergovernmental Employee Benefits Pool** was signed by COO on January 20, 2011.
2. **Laboratory Data Management Agreement between Galveston County Health District and Laboratory Corporation of America (LabCorp)** was signed by COO on February 2, 2011. The Term of the Agreement will remain for successive annual periods unless terminated.

Environmental Health Programs – Notices January 2010		
	Month	Average
Animal Control (dogs running at large, no registration, cruelty, etc)	103	69
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	0.16
Food Services (letters sent for operating with an expired food service permit)	4	16
Public Health Nuisances (trash and high weeds, violations of health and safety code)	22	20
On-Site Septic Systems (violation of on-site policy)	9	7
Water Pollution (improper disposal, sewage leaks, grease trap violations, etc)	4	7

*A Monthly Report of
 The Galveston County Health District.
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