



Executive Report to the Galveston County United Board of Health
July 29, 2009

Annual Back-to-School Immunizations

GCHD Immunizations will start our back to school campaign on August 6th and will continue through August 27th. Along with Galveston and La Marque clinics being open to the public, we will also hold special clinics on Saturday August 8th from 10am to 12pm in the Texas City 4C's, Tuesday August 11th from 10am to 2pm at the Wal-Mart on FM 646 and Saturday August 22nd from 10am to 3pm at Mall of the Mainland. Children will have several fun incentives to get them ready for back to school including books donated by GCHD WIC. A press release was issued on July 24th. In this year's release emphasis was placed on new requirements. Most of the new requirements impact students entering kindergarten and seventh grade. The entire press release can be found online at www.gchd.org/press/2009/2009-back-to-School.htm. The information was published July 27th in the *Galveston County Daily News* www.gchd.org/press/2009/2009-back-to-School-Daily-News.htm.

Getting Ready for Electronic Health Records

After years of fruitful planning, the 4C's is gearing up to negotiate a contract for a new electronic health system that will replace the existing AS400, paper medical records, and paper dental records. There are many, many benefits we anticipate – standardized quality of care, fewer AS400 problems, better records management, multiple persons can access record at same time in multiple locations, better billing, better coding, better data for planning, etc... In a future in-service the following will be discussed with staff: Benefits of an electronic health record (business, medical, and dental); Implementation Teams and Communications plan; Phases of implementation and possible timelines; Major implementation milestones; Training plans for various types of staff; and Preparing for Go-Live date!

Updates on Access to Care Concerns

- A meeting to discuss the formation of a **Hospital District** will be held next Tuesday, August 4th at 2:00 p.m. in the County Commissioners Courtroom at 722 Moody, Galveston.
- Health District staff contributed to a story published in the *Galveston County Daily News* on July 24th concerning **indigent care**. The story examined efforts to create a network of physicians that would be willing to see patients on the county's indigent care program in need of specialty care. The story is posted at www.gchd.org/press/2009/indigent-health-network.htm.
- **Galveston County Indigent Program** – Since June 2nd, the change of eligibility requirements from 21% to 50% of the federal poverty level took effect as approved by Commissioners Court, the number of patients on the County Indigent Program has increased from 127 on May 25, 2009 to 153 as of July 27, 2009. Thru the Galveston County Indigent Program, Galveston County pays for hospital and specialty care for patients at or below the 50% of the federal poverty level. The 4C's screens potential patients for this program and acts as the patient primary care provider.

Update on City of Galveston EMS Workgroup

On July 1, Galveston's City Manager determined that at this time it was not feasible or cost effective to make any changes in the provider of EMS services. He would make the recommendation to City Council to retain GAAA services for the next 5 years, recommend changing the contract to reflect coverage of all deficits that relate to emergencies or unexpected dramatic increases in operating costs (such as fuel, building

repairs, etc.) and that the City will guarantee the CDL loan from FEMA. These actions were approved by Galveston City Council at their council meeting on July 9, 2009.

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

- A press release issued on June 24th encouraged residents to be **safe when dealing with oppressive summer heat**. Tips on how to avoid heat illness were included in the release which can be found at www.gchd.org/press/2009/Summer-heat2009.htm. The information was published in the *Galveston County Daily News* on June 29th www.gchd.org/press/2009/cool-water2009.htm.
- **Vaccination procedures at the Joe Vickery Animal Shelter** were the focus of a *Galveston County Daily News* article printed July 26th. In the article some critics point out that enough animals are not being vaccinated, but it also notes that GCHD's shelter is the only one in Galveston County providing any vaccinations. The story is posted at www.gchd.org/press/2009/Animal-shelter-27-July.htm.

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.

- **Update on 4C's Saturday Clinic** – Since the first Saturday Clinic in Texas City on June 6th, it continues to be a success with medical visits increasing from 18 to 29 and dental visits increasing from 7 to 16. On most Saturdays, the Texas City Clinic will be open from 10:00AM to 5:00PM which is open to all Galveston County residents, both insured and uninsured, as walk-ins only. Fees are based upon the patient's ability to pay, which is determined by the 4C's Governing Board approved sliding fee scale and the patients financial status. The Clinic is open for acute medical and dental services, as well as, Lab and X-ray services. All other services will be available Monday thru Friday during regular business hours. The Saturday Clinic is made available with funds from the Increased Demand Service Economic Stimulus (IDS) grant the 4C's received from HRSA's Bureau of Primary Healthcare (BPHC). The IDS Grant is designed to increase access to healthcare for the nation's un- and underinsured while also providing economic stimulus for the national economy and funded for a two year period. More information about the Saturday clinic may be viewed at: www.gchd.org/4cs/Saturdays.htm
- **Grant Writer** - On June 26, 2009, 4C's Clinic Executive Managers met with Sue Gilbert, an experienced grant writer, who has been contracted to help develop the Clinic's federal grant application this year. The application will be for a five-year grant cycle and will be a competitive application. Ms. Gilbert brings extensive knowledge of community health center requirements and goals and has assisted other health centers with successful applications.
- **Collaboration with UTMB Case Management** - Pam Jahnke, RN, Strategic Plan Evaluator met with staff from the UTMB Community Health Program on July 9th. This case management program for patients with chronic conditions benefits eligible 4C's patients. As of July 9th, there are 30 clinic patients participating in the program. UTMB Case Managers can refer these patients to UTMB specialty clinics for care related to their chronic condition. 4C's providers have referred 27 patients to the program: 5 have been enrolled, 10 were accepted but need to complete financial screening or contact the program and 12 were not eligible. The case managers work with the 4C's NurseLine nurse to coordinate care.
- **The Joint Commission** - On July 21 The Joint Commission accepted the plan of correction from the clinic for standards not met during the unannounced survey of March 2-3 and posted the decision for accreditation on the TJC website. The clinic will continue to monitor five standards for compliance by staff over the next four months.

Office of Community Health Services: For more information, please contact Cassandra Arceneaux, MD, MPH, Director of Community Health Programs at (409) 938-2456 or email carceneaux@gchd.org.

- **Bringing Healthy Back Obesity Summit 2009** - On July 14 through the 16th Cassandra Arceneaux MD, MPH attended the states obesity summit which was hosted by DSHS and had community members from across the state including city planners, legislators, public health professionals to restaurant executives with the purpose of discussing the need for environmental changes to address the obesity epidemic in our state and the nation. The information was vast, from several perspectives and will be used in upcoming efforts to develop wellness initiatives for staff and the Galveston County community.

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

- **Texas Beach Watch Program** – The Texas Beach Watch Program has a new look. The program redesigned their logo to emphasize their interactive beach watch website. The website provides up-to-date information on beach water quality for beaches all along the coast. In addition to the Beach Watch website, the Health District posts information about local beaches on the GCHD website. The new logo design was also added to the signs that are posted on monitored beaches. These signs were recently delivered to us by the state and are currently being erected at all beaches sampled on Galveston Island and Bolivar Peninsula. Our former signs were all lost during Hurricane Ike.
- **Animal Shelter Architect** – The Galveston County Commissioner’s Court has selected the Architectural Firm, Jackson and Ryan to design and oversee the construction of the new county animal resource center. The firm located in Houston specializes in the construction of animal shelters and has overseen the building of shelters across the country and a few outside the country. A location for the shelter has not been finalized; however the initial design work will begin as soon as a contract is signed. Staff has met with the architect and provided our initial wish list for the new shelter.
- **Voluntary Mobile Emissions Program** – The Galveston County Commissioner’s Court has entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Houston-Galveston Area Council committing to reducing air emissions from mobile sources. As part of that agreement, the county will commit to purchasing vehicles with low emission diesel engines, purchase vehicles that are alternatively fueled, draft a no-idling policy for county vehicles, and provide for aggressive enforcement of the state’s smoking vehicle program. The reductions realized from this program will be included in the State’s overall implementation plan for the Houston-Galveston area to reduce the pollutants that form ozone. The Houston-Galveston area currently does not meet the federal standard for ozone.
- **McGinnes Industrial Waste Pits** – Ronnie Schultz met with officials from Waste Management Corporation to discuss an extensive plan to re-construct the levee walls at the McGinnes Industrial Waste Pits damaged by Hurricane Ike and damaged by normal wear from barge traffic along the Gulf Intracoastal Water Way. The McGinnes Pits located about six miles south of the Hitchcock city limits on FM 2004 are a former industrial waste site that was closed down approximately 15 years ago. The facility consists of a series of earthen pits covering over 100 acres, when operational it accepted industrial sludge’s from the Gulf Coast Waste Disposal Authority’s Washburn Tunnel facility located on the Houston Ship Channel. This facility treats and processes waste water from industrial sites. The damage to the integrity of the pit levees was brought to the attention of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) following a boat survey by Ronnie Schultz, who provided photos to the state of the damage. Following the submittal of this evidence, the TCEQ requested that the company file a plan of action to re-construct and protect the levees from future damage of storms and the effects of erosion from the barge traffic in the intracoastal water way. Company officials estimate the cost of the reconstruction to be at three million dollars.

Office of Emergency Medical Services: For more information, please contact Mike Carr, JD, EMS Director, (409) 765-2524 or mcarr@ghcd.org

- **Staffing Update** – There are currently 9 vacant full-time field 911 positions and 4 vacant full-time field non-emergency transfer positions. We have one EMT-Intermediate and two EMT-Basics near completion of the hiring process. In addition the third Bolivar medic has been hired for that program and is completing orientation at this time. This staff addition completes the unit which starts on August 1st.
- **Preparing for UTMB Emergency Room Opening** – In preparation for UTMB ER opening on August 1st, staff have meet with UTMB staff (Mike Hill, Associate Chief Operating Officer, William Mileski, MD, Dianne Mapp and Wanda Taylor) to assure there is a mutual understanding of patients that will be brought to the ER.
- **Additional Unit Added to Galveston Island** – Due to a heavy increase of Galveston 911 calls on weekends, an additional unit is being staffed during the peak call volume times on Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 a.m. and on Sunday 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. This unit is stationed in the Jamaica Beach area for west end calls and to assist the island when all units are out.
- **New Facilities for Bacliff Crew** - Bacliff staff will be moving into new quarters within the next two weeks. The original quarters were destroyed during Hurricane Ike. The trailer is owned by the Bacliff Volunteer Fire Department and leased to the Health District.

Disease & Disaster Preparedness for additional information, contact Dana Beckham, DVM, Chief Epidemiologist, at (409) 938-2322 or email dbeckham@gchd.org.

Epidemiology Updates:

- **Elevated Blood Lead Cases (Texas City and Galveston)** - For 2009, GCHD has received a total of 6 confirmed elevated blood lead level (EBLL) reports on 4 **Texas City** and 2 **Galveston** residents. All cases have been referred to Community Health Nursing for a home assessment. Two cases required an environmental lead assessment due to levels being 20 µg/dL or above.
- **Hepatitis A in La Marque** - On June 22nd, Epidemiology Services received its 3rd Hepatitis A case for the year. The case is a 21 year old **La Marque** resident. The epidemiology investigation revealed 2 household contacts that received the Hepatitis A vaccine and immune globulin. In 2008, the Health District received 8 confirmed cases of Hepatitis A.
- **Whooping Cough in Santa Fe** - July 6, Galveston County Health District received its 5th pertussis case for the year. The case involved a 10-year old **Santa Fe** resident. Investigation revealed 6 household contacts that received post exposure medications. In 2008, the Health District received a total of 11 pertussis reports for the year.
- **H1N1 (Swine Flu)** - As of July 28, there are 5,151 confirmed cases in Texas and 35 cases in Galveston County. The 35 cases reside in the following cities: **Dickinson** (3), **Friendswood** (1), **Galveston** (4), **La Marque** (3), **League City** (4), **Santa Fe** (1), and **Texas City** (19). On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization declared H1N1 influenza a pandemic (global widespread human infection). Federal, state and local health agencies are preparing for an increase of H1N1 flu in the fall. If the governor of Texas declares H1N1 flu a public health emergency in the fall, and request the strategic national stockpile (SNS) antiviral medication cache, the Health District has adequate supply of antiviral medications to protect employees for 10 days until the SNS stockpile inventory arrives in Texas.
- On July 16, 2009, Epidemiology Services presented an in-service to 10 staff members of the Sullivan Pharmacy Team in **Bacliff** on infections in the community and disease reporting. This in-service is required for the Sullivan Pharmacy Team continuing education and accreditation.

Preparedness Update:

- **Galveston County Emergency Response Collaborative** - The Galveston County Emergency Response Collaborative (GCERC) met on July 9. The guest speaker was Bill Ray, Executive Director, Homeland Preparedness Project. Mr. Ray discussed how his agency can assist other counties with recruitment of volunteers to help in responding to public health emergencies.

Signed RFP's, Grants, Contracts & Agreements For more information, please contact Kristina M. Garcia, JD, Compliance Auditor, at (409) 938-2213 or email kgarcia@gchd.org

- **Funding to prepare for dispensing prophylactic medications within 48-hours of a large scale public health emergency.** Cities Readiness Initiative grant from DSHS was signed by COO on July 13, 2009. DSHS has requested Harris County acting through Harris Co. Public Health & Environmental Services; act as the fiscal agent over the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) Grant. The grant amount is \$87,345.00 for the contract term of 8/1/2009 and ends on 7/31/2010.
- **CPS Bio-Terrorism Preparedness Grant from DSHS** was signed by COO on July 15, 2009. This grant funds the dispensing of prophylactic medications during a bioterrorism attack. The grant amount is \$245,860.91 for the contract term of 8/1/2009 and ends on 7/31/2010.
- **HIV Surveillance State grant from DSHS** was signed by COO on 7/13/2009. This funds active surveillance and reporting activities regarding HIV/AIDS. The grant amount is \$44,283.00 for the contract term of 9/1/1009 and ends on 8/31/2010.
- **The Medical Equipment/Supplies bid** was awarded to Moore Medical and PSS by COO on July 13, 2009. The term of the contract is July 15, 2009 to July 15, 2010.
- **The D'Feet Breast Cancer, Inc. grant** was signed by COO on July 1, 2009. The grant funds breast and/or cervical screening, diagnostic and support services, tracking, follow-up, case management, and individual client education services to reduce premature mortality. The grant award is \$94,894.00 for the term 7/1/2009 to 6/30/2010.
- **Radiologist Services for 4C's Clinic** - Independent Professional Contractor Agreement and HIPAA Business Associate Addendum with Robert C. Matteson, M.D. was signed by CEO on 7/17/2009. Mainland Radiology Association, PA will perform professional services in the form of diagnostic X-ray film interpretations and the submission of written reports of findings for 4C's Clinic at a charge of \$12.00 per film.
- **TCEQ Air and Water Pollution Services grant** was signed by COO on July 1, 2009. This agreement states GCHD will operate and maintain whole air samplers in the Galveston area. The maximum TCEQ obligation is \$160,568.00 for the term of 9/1/2009 to 8/31/2010.
- **Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Agreement with county resident** was signed by COO on 7/1/2009. The amount of agreement was \$402.58 for 2-doses of rabies vaccine to be administered by District staff.
- **Educational Opportunities for Physician Assistant student.** Clinical Program Affiliation Agreement with Baylor College of Medicine for physician assistant students was signed by COO on 7/2/2009.

Environmental Health Programs – Notices June 2009	
Animal Control (dogs running at large, no registration, cruelty, etc.)	66
Air Pollution (violation of state regulations, permits, excessive emissions, etc.)	2
Food Services (violations of food service policy)	0
Public Health Nuisances (trash and high weeds, violations of health and safety code)	16
On-Site Septic Systems (violations of on-site policy)	0
Water Pollution (improper disposal, sewage leaks, grease trap violations, etc.)	3