

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **CONTACT:**

**Susan Studebaker**  
**(409) 949-3406**  
**Galveston County Health District**

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### **The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Awards Funds to the Galveston County Health District to Improve Quality of Life for Diabetics**

**La Marque** - The Galveston County Health District has received a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to strengthen community support, and improve lifestyles for those residents living with diabetes. Dr. Mark Guidry, Executive Director of the Galveston County Health District says, "These dollars will help us to better understand what diabetics in our community need and then take the steps necessary to meet those needs."

Susan Studebaker, Deputy Director for Clinical Services at the District, said that the grant will help develop tools necessary for people to successfully manage their diabetes. Grant funds will be used to target adults with the disease living in Galveston County. "Approximately 17 million people in the United States have diabetes and 5.9 million are unaware they have the disease," she said. "The need for tools to better manage diabetes is important since complications can be severe including, heart disease, kidney disease, and many other serious health conditions."

The grant requires many community collaborations to assist in determining the needs of the population living with diabetes. Other community organizations that will be participating in the program include the Coastal Area Health Education Center, The UTMB Department of Family Medicine and Stark Diabetes Center, Galveston Community Health Access Program, The Jesse Tree, Galveston County Senior Citizens Program, Connect Transportation, and Mainland Medical Center. All of these partners have a successful history of working together on other community programs.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, based in Princeton, New Jersey, is the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to health and health care. It concentrates its grantmaking in four goal areas: to assure that all American have access to quality health care at reasonable cost; to improve the quality of care and support for people with chronic health conditions; to promote healthy communities and lifestyles; and to reduce the personal, social and economic harm caused by substance abuse – tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs.