

Galveston County Health District

Strategic Health Plan 2010 – 2015

On January 29, 2010, GCHD held a “Forward Thinking Event” as a kick-off to developing a draft strategic health plan for 2010 – 2015. As a result of the facilitated meeting, key GCHD managers and a 4C’s Governing Board representative, identified the following overall draft priorities which were reviewed and updated after United Board of Health and 4C’s Governing Board meeting in late February 2010.

- ❖ **Improve Access to Care for the Indigent and Uninsured**
- ❖ **Improve the Health of our Community and Environment**
- ❖ **Prepare for and Respond to Public Health Emergencies**
- ❖ **Modernize Facilities and Use of Technology**
- ❖ **Strengthen the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Business Practices**
- ❖ **Develop a Competent and Professional Public Health Workforce**
- ❖ **Continue to Improve and Strengthen the Credibility of the Health District**

Following the development of a draft plan, stakeholder feedback will be sought from the general public, health partners in county and cities, local governments, and local community-based organizations. After public comment, a final draft will be submitted to the Galveston County United Board of Health and the 4C’s Governing Board for consideration of adoption. Once adopted, GCHD will begin implementing the plan, evaluating our progress, and annually disseminating board-approved annual reports to the general public, community partners, and local governments.

Improve Access to Care for the Indigent and Uninsured

Explore opportunities to increase access to 4C's federally-funded primary care services

- Seek available grant funding that 4C's may be eligible for
- Explore and implement feasible measures to improve collections and meet state and federal averages for federally-qualified community health centers to generate additional revenues to financially support the care of the patients who are unable to pay for their healthcare
- Continue case manager funding partner with local hospitals to transition patients discharged from ER or hospital into 4C's for timely primary care follow-up

Partner with County and community leaders to assist in establishing a specialty care network for county indigent patients

Identify barriers and possible solutions to uninsured access to secondary, tertiary, and mental healthcare

- Convene meetings with community partners to identify barriers at local, state, and federal levels
- Develop and implement a feasible action plan to inform and educate the public and policy-makers on feasible solutions at all levels
- Monitor and report progress to boards of health

Explore and make recommendation for improve access to pharmacy services for qualified 4C's patients and alleviate related 4C's clinic flow obstacles that impact primary care

Improve the Health of our Community and Environment

Timely identification of new and emerging public health threats and public notification about interventions to reduce risk and/or promote health

- Identify and inform the public about emerging reportable diseases and conditions
- Identify and inform the public about emerging environmental issues (e.g., mold, "going green," hazardous household waste, recycling, etc.)
- Identify and inform the public about ways to protect the public from animal-related health consequences

Prevent or reduce morbidity and mortality by increasing the public's awareness and use of the Health District's preventive health program services

- Educate the public, medical and community partners
- Expand activities related to public awareness campaigns (e.g., World AIDS Day, World TB Day, women's health issues, breast feeding, healthy food options for families, child and adult immunizations)

Improve the management of communicable diseases in the local health system

- Educate the local medical community about disease reporting, post-rabies exposure procedures and constraints, use of ImmTrac, etc
- Expand efforts to reduce the number of sexually-transmitted infections and TB among highest risk groups

- Educate community on various access points for communicable disease screening
- Improve compliance with state requirements for STD/HIV and TB public health programs
- Expand education and outreach by (1) integrating awareness activities among various public health programs which serve similar target populations and (2) collaborating with local school districts and faith-based organizations
- Improve the accuracy and reliability of STD/HIV and TB morbidity reports comparing those from GCHD epidemiology and the state-funded programs

Develop an effective response to other new and emerging public health issues (non-communicable) by developing community action plans with stakeholders in the public health system

(Possible Examples: Teen pregnancy and related health risk/consequences, cancer-related health disparities, breastfeeding promotion, obesity, tobacco cessation, chronic disease prevention and management, general health promotion through fitness and a healthy diet, childhood lead poisoning, etc)

- Work with hospitals to establish an effective intervention for the treatment of cardiac and cerebrovascular (stroke) emergencies (GAAA)

Design and implement an effective preventive health screening program for registered 4C's patients (with implementation of new electronic record systems)

- Develop system alerts and patient reminders for preventive health screenings according to US Preventive Health Services' evidence-based guidelines
- Establish system alerts and accurate data collection for management of chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension

Recognize and promote best practices for health promotion among local governments, businesses, and community-based organizations

(EXAMPLES: city no-smoking ordinances, food services with exceptional health and safety practices and healthy menu choices, businesses with wellness programs, etc)

Prepare for and Respond to Public Health Emergencies

Inform, educate, and empower the public to prepare for health needs before, during, and after an emergency

- Implement use of Connect CTY to accomplish the following objectives:
 - A web based system for the general public to sign up for health district information
 - Ability to communicate with multiple groups via various forums (i.e. telephone calls, text messages or email)
- Continue to disseminate public information through established media outlets

Evaluate the effectiveness of GCHD medical reserve corp (volunteers for health emergencies) and make recommendations to improve the number of capable volunteers available to call upon in an emergency event

- Implement new volunteer program
- Develop essential training materials for volunteers using available technology

Collaborate with community health partners with shared roles and responsibilities in various types of emergency responses

- Seek environmental inter local agreements for mutual aid during disasters with local and state agencies to clarify roles and responsibilities

Seek to acquire needed equipment and supplies through state or federal grant funding to effectively respond to various types of emergencies, considering all GCHD program responsibilities

Work with stakeholders in the public health system to address solutions to the Health District's lessons-learned from Hurricane Ike

- Convene meeting of multi-agency response partners
- Update GCHD emergency operational plans and program specific guidelines
- Provide annual employee training
- Improve administrative support of emergency response needs as they occur

Assure contract compliance through centralized tracking of reportable activities and progress (funds managed through public health preparedness grants)

Modernize Facilities and Use of Technology

FACILITIES

Build new or renovate existing facilities to meet public service needs

- New animal resource center to accomplish the following objectives:
 - Increase total animal holding capacity from 78 to 257
 - Increases health and safety of staff, animals and visitors
 - Decrease transmission of disease in the animal population
 - Expand and update the animal services policy, guidelines and needed resources to manage the expanded services
- New Mid-County Annex to consolidate services in four existing facilities (1207 Oak Street in La Marque, 1205 Oak Street in La Marque, 2000 Texas Avenue in Texas City; and the public health services at 4700 Broadway in Galveston) with the following objectives:
 - Improve public access to services
 - Consolidate staff with similar functions in various programs to establish a one-stop GCHD business center
 - One way in and one way out of the 4C's clinic with improved security and flow of patients
 - Improved storage for emergency supplies
 - Improve disaster recovery of governmental records
 - Establish a clinic for public health clinical services, separate from 4C's (STD, TB, and breast exams)
 - Establish a modern immunization clinic that will accommodate large events
- New EMS Stations in Hitchcock, Bacliff and Galveston's 26th & Q
- Renovate Galveston 4C's clinic for improved productivity and clinic flow
- Consider expansion/renovation of Galveston WIC clinic in Island Community Center

TECHNOLOGY

Complete three-phase roll-out of new electronic business, medical record and dental record systems for the 4C's clinic to accomplish the following objectives:

- Minimize impact to patient care
- Minimize rollout confusion by clarifying roles, responsibilities and decision-making processes
- Centralize communication to NextGen
- Standardize & simplify work processes
- Move all possible from paper to electronic
- Improve billing and collections
- Improve quality of care and documentation
- Realize efficiencies in work processes and staffing
- Improve customer services

Complete rollout of new animal services software to accomplish the following objectives:

- A fully integrated animal services data management system that links animals and their owners, tracks bite cases, manages pet registration information, manages adoption paperwork, monitors lost animal reports and integrates with adoptable pet web sites.
- Electronic tracking of animal owner's compliance history
- Interfaces with the Health District's Accufund accounting software
- Capable of creating improved local jurisdiction reports (which form bases of the inter-local agreement's formula for county/cities' budget contributions)

Complete upgrade and expansion of new accounting/payroll system to accomplish the following objectives:

- Achieve efficiencies in reducing staff time performing manual and duplicate entries
- Electronic personnel record system integrated with payroll
- Electronic documentation for required employee immunizations and trainings
- Establish appropriate management level access and permissions
- Establish electronic purchasing and timesheets
- Integrated system for fixed assets tracking
- Improve management reports
- Enable integration with other software (i.e. NEXTGEN, EnvisionConnect, Shelter Pro)
- Ability to set up electronic computer-based cash drawers for all program areas (replace old cash registers)

Explore and implement use of other technologies to improve public health services and GCHD business efficiency/accountability (e.g., improve data quality)

- Implement a Contract Management Software program to handle the volume of contracts and improve internal access
- Explore opportunities to acquire an electronic medical records system for local and state and funded breast and cervical cancer screening programs (public health)
- Explore opportunities to enable online disease reporting for hospitals and schools
- Explore an electronic applicant tracking system to improve hiring process
- Investigate and identify new data security systems that monitor network intrusion detection, identify where network security breaches occur, etc....
- Investigate and identify ways to electronically file and store required government documents

Strengthen the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Business Practices

Review and make recommendations to strengthen the policy-making functions of the Galveston County United Board of Health and the 4C's Governing Board, including but not limited to:

- Updated orientation for new board members to include training requirements and a tour of facilities and services
- Provide regular program snapshots at board meeting
- Consider measures to minimize no quorum meetings
- Consider efforts to increase Board member participation in community meetings, retreats and other health district activities
- Review and evaluate board finance committee and financial reports

Explore opportunities to consolidate administrative functions with county to achieve efficiencies.

(Areas for review include, but are not limited to, purchasing, IT, phone systems, security systems, printing services, GIS, etc.)

Identify new personnel and resources needed by the Health District to accomplish Strategic Health Plan goals and objectives, and explore available funding options. *(Possible examples include: grant writer, public health educator, rabies post-exposure prophylaxis for the uninsured; agency nursing staff, fund to provide continuing education for staff with job-required certifications and licenses; a county wide Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility; Automated medicine dispensing system for 4c's nursing; updated medical equipment in the 4C's clinics; laptops for animal control field personnel for real-time data collection; ozone monitors in parts of the county not covered; a Mobile Air Monitoring Vehicle and related technology; new digital radio for EMS by 2014, etc.)*

Develop and implement a feasible plan to manage Health District capital equipment in all areas of the Health District

Evaluate and make recommendations to reduce employee-related injuries, accidents, and related agency expenses. The analysis will include the following:

- Trends over past several years (incidents and agency cost)
- Recommendation to address trends, including specific trainings for preventable incidents
- A focus on improving the safety of employees and the public

Evaluate and make recommendations to improve financial reporting, tracking, accounting, billings, and collections in all applicable areas of the agency, including but not limited to:

- EMS billing and collections and NET year-end balances
- 4C's billing and collections
- Environmental permits
- FEMA and related accounting requirements during emergencies
- Overtime and compensatory time
- Develop an indirect cost rate (a new state contract requirement) to allocate administrative costs related to grants
- Annual updates on board-approved fees and review of possible new revenue sources (e.g. incinerator services at new animal resource center, etc)
- Explore expanding payment options for fees

Evaluate contract compliance trends from prior years and make recommendations to eliminate repeated findings/deficiencies, providing quarterly compliance reports to the health boards. Evaluations are expected to address any findings in:

- State audits of grant-funded public health programs
- Joint Commission surveys and HRSA reviews of 4C's clinics
- EMS 911 response times
- Non-emergency transfer under inter-local agreement with the county & member cities
- Board-engaged financial audits
- GCHD internal audits and program reviews

Assess and evaluate public/customer feedback regarding the quality of services provided by GCHD staff in all areas

- Develop program-specific assessment tools
- Track trends in complaint data by program
- Make recommendations to improve the quality of customer services

Developing a Competent and Professional Public Health Workforce

Develop employee training programs on issues of significance to the 2010-2015 Strategic Health Plan, including but not limited to:

- Roles and responsibilities of governmental public health and healthcare services
- Effective communications with public members and best practices for excellent customer services
- Train 4C's cashiers on effective communications necessary for optimal collections
- Nursing updates on immunizations practices and new vaccines
- Dealing with difficult complaints and customers
- Job-related training on all newly implemented electronic systems

Continue efforts to recruit and retain qualified human resources in key areas of the Health District, including but not limited to:

- Perform market-based salary analyses on, at minimum, positions with highest turnover rate and greatest difficulty recruiting (e.g., 4C's nursing staff)
- Volunteers and health professions with educational rotations at the health district
- Evaluate and improve the comprehensive orientation training for all new staff
- Annual training to meet legal requirements and to promote goals in SHP (e.g., customer services, safety, blood-borne pathogen exposures, protected health information, sexual harassment, discrimination, agency communications, emergency operations, etc)
- Management training for new managers or those requiring professional development in areas such as, but not limited to, personnel management, interview and selections, employee evaluations, and policy responsibilities of managers
- Redesign and update policies and information on the intranet
- Promote employee wellness activities for employee betterment

Explore all options for making available job-related continuing education where required

Establish a Supervisory/Management Training program

- Overview of GCHD: mission, roles, policies (e.g. ethics, etc) and management expectations

- Effectively conducting employee evaluations
- Effective management of personnel issues according to policy and laws
- Effective inter-office communications

Establish a mentoring program for new employees and those requiring professional development

Continue To Improve and Strengthen the Credibility of the Health District

Inform and educate local governments and elected officials about relevant information that impacts health policy and related decision-making

- Prepare and submit an environmental risk assessment for county and member city jurisdictions
- Inform and educate city officials about health policy options to reduce public health risks (e.g., no smoking ordinances, etc)

Improve the quality and availability of official information for the general public and local partners

- Proactively share health promotion information with the public about relevant community and environmental health topics (e.g., going “green,” wellness, preventive health screening, etc)
- Explore strategies to reach new segments of the general public (e.g., door-to-door outreach education, Connect CTY technology, Facebook, Twitter, website videos, etc)

Improve the responsiveness of the Health District to health inquires and concerns of the general public and community stakeholders

- Prepare, disseminate, and post on website a list of frequently asked questions to the Health Districts and contacts for various types of public inquiries
- Prepare and disseminate to stakeholders the average response times of animal control officers to citizen calls for assistance with or about stray dogs and cats
- Prepare reports to boards on types of citizen calls to the executive office along with recommendations for improvements

Assure Health District investigators objectively identify and document relevant investigative findings based solely on official standards consistent with local policies and regulations

- For all GCHD programs conducting health investigations set expectations so that standards and methods used are objective, policy-based, and documented properly for compliance with contracts and/or state/federal expectations
- Complete standardization of consumer health inspections and annually evaluate compliance

Improve public perceptions about quality of care and customer service in the 4C’s clinics

- Prepare and submit a comprehensive improvement plan to the 4C’s Governing Board for consideration

Engage the public and health partners in addressing shared health goals

- Maintain and convene community group meetings to address various priority health issues (e.g., obesity, lead poisoning, air pollutants, etc.), utilizing electronic technology to share ongoing information

- Work with community stakeholders to explore technology to share data to improve care management of patients who access primary, secondary, and tertiary care services among various agencies in the local healthcare system (e.g., shared electronic data repository project)
- Engage animal interest groups and public volunteers to participate in any new and existing services at the expanded new animal resource center

DRAFT