



**Executive Report to the Galveston 4C's Governing Board**  
**December 20, 2007**

**Advisory Meeting for Improving Non-Emergency Ambulance Transfers (NET)**

On 12/14/07, Dr. Guidry convened a meeting inviting all NET service stakeholders. A presentation was provided on GCHD services, resources, constraints, identified issues and data from a pilot study on utilization and response times. Attendees (representing Mainland Hospital, Dickinson, La Marque, Danforth Gardens, Sandcastle, and Gulf Health Care Center – Texas City) participated in developing three priorities for improving services which include: (1) stopping NET impact on 911 operations, (2) exploring low-cost wheelchair transport services for nursing homes, and (3) develop operational guidelines with standards for NET responses and use of outside ambulances when needed. Since the meeting, efforts have already been made to eliminate most cases in which a 911 truck is used to fulfill a NET request, to identify and execute MOU's with private companies to assist with NET, and to address other issues with the 911 Medic One advisory committee. Trey Frankovich was introduced as the newly appointed Deputy Director for NET operations and a dispatcher position is currently posted for interview and selection.

**Lead Taskforce Meeting Set for January 8, 2008**

As a follow-up to the Kemper Foundation meeting held on November 19, 2007, Ben G. Raimer, MD, VP/CEO, UTMB Community Health Services and Vice Chair of the United Board of Health and Harlan "Mark" Guidry, MD, MPH, CEO of the Health District were appointed co-czars. The first meeting of the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Taskforce will be held on January 8, 2008 starting at 9:30 a.m. in the Health District conference room at 4700 Broadway in Galveston.

The ultimate purpose of the meeting will be to develop a plan of action, with timelines, to improve community efforts for preventing and eliminating childhood lead poisoning. Following a brief presentation by GCHD on childhood lead poisoning in 2006 and 2007, there will be a review of the recent Baylor research recommendation and then a facilitated discussion. The facilitated discussion will help identify comprehensive strategies to combat lead poisoning along with goals and a timelines to accomplish those strategies. To read articles relating to this go to <http://www.gchd.org/press/2007/childhood-lead-poisoning.htm>

**Title V Coverage Expands Medical & Dental Services in 4C's Clinics**

After being awarded Title V grant funding, the 4C's clinic will start registering children 0-21 for Title V coverage of medical and dental services on January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Title V will cover children who are not eligible for Medicaid in households below 185% of the federal poverty level. A newspaper ad will be submitted to the *Galveston Daily News* to make the public aware of the new program and posters will be placed in both clinic sites. Staff from all areas in the clinic completed training at the December 12 in-service. The purpose of this grant is to provide fee for service payment for primary care and dental services to eligible children.

**New UTMB Partnership for Intensive Case Management**

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, Drs. Guidry, Alhassan, Patrick Butler and Pam Jahnke, RN, met with UTMB staff from the new Community Health Program. This program will provide intensive nurse case management for

persons with chronic conditions to decrease emergency department and in-patient stays. Currently the program is starting up and for now, approximately 17 4C's patients have been identified as participants. The meeting explored ways for us to work with the case managers to improve the health status of these patients. UTMB has developed an acuity rating system that may help our providers make referrals for specialty care to UTMB clinics. Another meeting has been set for February 2008.

### **Grant Offers Solutions to High Island Sewage Problem**

All parties, County of Galveston, Grant Works, Health District and Community Block Grant Program, met on December 4, 2007 to discuss the scope of this project and to review federal requirements for this grant. 28 houses currently connected to an out of compliance sewer system will have priority in the scoring criterion. Grant Work personnel will schedule a day to take applications in High Island some time in late January early February. Once the applications are scored, Grant Works will provide the list to the County for funding. Galveston County Health District will verify that each applicant is indeed on the illegal collection system and will conduct a groundwater evaluation on the property. The Health District will process the On Site Sewage Facility permit applications as normal with one exception that the Board established fee will be waived and counted as in-kind services. Finally, the Health District will do necessary construction inspections and provide the final construction approval for each system. The County Purchasing department will procure any necessary contractors for this project. Work is anticipated to begin in late spring early summer.

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

- A November 29<sup>th</sup> *Houston Chronicle* story covered the current status of **flu season** in Galveston County. In the story residents were encouraged to get a flu shot if they have not already done so. The story is posted on the GCHD web site at [www.gchd.org/press/2007/11GalvCoflu.htm](http://www.gchd.org/press/2007/11GalvCoflu.htm).
- GCHD webmaster continues to make changes and develop products for use in the district. In the past several weeks photographs have been taken of GAAA staff for a brochure promoting GAAA employment opportunities. A new brochure is being developed for use in the 4C's Dental Clinics. An ad to be run in the *Galveston Daily News* promoting family healthcare in the 4C's clinics is also being developed and will be published in March.
- Public information facilitated an interview on December 19<sup>th</sup> with the *Galveston Daily News* and Kim Schoolcraft, Animal Services manager. The reporter is developing a story on **feral cat issues** in Galveston County. Schoolcraft was asked to provide information on what is being done and what can possible be done to curb the population feral cats.
- A *Houston Chronicle* reporter contacted public information requesting an update on activities addressing lead concerns in Galveston. Information was concerning a meeting to be held in the new year and the reported will be kept informed and welcomed to attend the meetings.
- Dates for upcoming **mammogram screenings** were submitted to the Community Bulletin Board in the *Galveston Daily News* with eligibility guidelines. These sites are submitted to the newspaper on a monthly basis. Additional information on the availability of mammograms can be found on the District's web site at [www.gchd.org/press/2007/12mammogram.htm](http://www.gchd.org/press/2007/12mammogram.htm).
- On December 17<sup>th</sup> the *Galveston Daily News* interviewed Animal Services Manager Kim Schoolcraft. Two lost dogs with **microchips** were recently picked up by officers and the chip was registered to an Air Force Base in Japan. Efforts so far have not been productive in locating the animals' owners even though they appear to have been well taken care of. Hopefully the news

coverage will assist in the effort. The story can be found at [www.gchd.org/press/2007/12chippeddogs.htm](http://www.gchd.org/press/2007/12chippeddogs.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](mailto:pbutler@gchd.org) or Pam Jahnke, RN, Strategic Plan Evaluator at (409) 938-2256 or email [pjahnke@gchd.org](mailto:pjahnke@gchd.org).*

- **4C's Provider Vacancies** – Two Medical provider vacancies are posted on the Health District's website, TACHC's website, and the Houston Chronicle. These positions were advertised in the Harris County Medical Society Newsletter, Galveston County medical Society Newsletter, in October issue of Texas medicine, and also in the Chicago area. One full time Dental Provider position will be become vacant in December, in preparation; the position has been posted on the Health District's website and also in the Greater Houston Dental Society newsletter.
- **Clinic Leadership Team (CLT)** – In December, CLT reviewed several guidelines and tracking forms, such as, Checklist for Dental Assistant, 4C's Medical Record Assembly Guide and Loose Documents Filing Guide for Medical Records. These forms will be brought to the next meeting for final approval.
- **In-Service** – In addition to Title V training at the December In-Service 4C's staff also received training on Rider 27, Reporting Abnormal Pap smears, OB log book, and Rewrite updates.
- **TB X-Ray** - The Department of State Health Services has approved monies from GCHD's TB program to be utilized for the purchase of two new X-ray machines to be placed in the 4C's Texas City and Galveston labs. The machines are tentatively scheduled to be in place by the end of January 2008.
- **Partnership for Women's Health** - On December 5<sup>th</sup>, Drs. Guidry, Alhassan, Patrick Butler and Pam Jahnke, RN, met with Sylvia Fuentes from Mainland Center Hospital OB Programs and Lynda Perez from Mainland Children's Partnership (MCP) to explore ways to improve communication and partnership with those agencies in an effort to improve the health of pregnant women. The new Title V benefits for 4C's patients were explained. Ideas for improving outreach and services to the target population were explored.
- **New Professor at UTMB School of Nursing** - On December 11, 2007 Dr. Mark Guidry, CEO and Pam Jahnke, Strategic Plan Evaluator met with Dr. Kathryn Fiandt from the UTMB School of Nursing. Dr. Fiandt is new to UTMB and is experienced in setting up nursing practice programs and sites. She also has expertise in working with indigent patient populations with chronic conditions. The meeting was introductory and explored possibilities for collaboration in the future.
- **HRSA Training** - Clinic managers attended an audio training from the Bureau of Primary Health Care on December 13, 2007. The training was to introduce clinic staff to a required activity that will be due by March, 2008. The clinic will need to electronically provide information on our 4C's scope of services. This is part of the Bureau's initiative to convert grant-related information to an all-electronic format.

**Office of Community Health Services:** *For more information, please contact Cassandra Arceneaux, MD, MPH, Director of Community Health Services at (409) 938-2457 or email [carceneaux@gchd.org](mailto:carceneaux@gchd.org).*

- **Health Fair** – On Saturday, December 1, 2007 the STD/HIV Services participated in the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual World AIDS Day, sponsored by St. Vincent's House, the Jesse Tree and the Gulf Coast Center. Among the activities held was a prayer breakfast, information seminars about the disease and a panel discussion from HIV positive individuals on how the disease has affected their lives.

- **Flu Outreach** –3189 of the 4000 doses of flu vaccine received from Department of State Health Services has been administered through this year's Flu Campaign. In addition to the many health district outreach efforts to churches, daycare centers, and other interested parties in the community, 104 shots were given through vouchers from the Jesse Tree, 700 issued through the 4C's Medical Clinics, and 435 given in the walk-in immunization clinics.
- **Community Health Nursing** – Sharon Wood-Fox Ryan, RN and June Gonzalez, RN conducted a DSHS Basic Hearing Certification Class and a Basic Vision Certification Class on December 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> respectively. These classes consist of area school and clinic nurses who need this certification to perform vision and hearing screenings. These classes are provided at no cost, and are held quarterly. There were 10 participants in the hearing class and eight in the vision class.
- **2007 Senior Health Services** – Through monthly Health District presentations at the Senior Centers, a total of 2,254 seniors were reached for 2007. Each month a new topic is chosen and seniors from Galveston, La Marque, Bacliff, and Dickinson are educated on the many services the Health District provides and other topics of interest to seniors. Some of the presentations included: 4C's Clinic Services, STD/HIV prevention, food stamps, Immunizations, and Environmental & Consumer Health.
- **TB** – Our total number of TB cases in Galveston County was 14. This is a rate of 5.1 per 100,000 and 15% less cases than last year. This been the trend for the County and the State of Texas and the US as a whole for 2007 with the average decrease in TB cases being between 10 and 15%.
- **STD/HIV**– The number of Chlamydia, Gonorrhea and Syphilis continues to be elevated compared to last year, with Chlamydia increasing from 878 last year at this time to 999 this year; Gonorrhea 516 this year compared to 482 in 2006; and Syphilis having 45 cases this year and 37 last year by the end of November. The number of HIV cases has had a decrease in cases (49 last year; 31 this year) and 24 AIDS cases are reported at this time compared to 48 last year. This could be due to change in reporting of HIV/AIDS (the state now does the statistics) and cases moving out of our county.

**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](mailto:rschultz@gchd.org)*

- **Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Audit** – On November 27, 2007, TCEQ staff from the Central Office (Austin) and the Regional Office (Houston) audited the Air and Water Pollution Services work accomplished under the State Air Compliance and Enforcement Contract. The annual audit is part of the state air contract objectives. The audit included a review of finances and accounting systems, filing systems, program review of complaint response, inspections and enforcement cases. At the end of the audit, TCEQ personnel verbally told Health District staff that no major findings were identified. Written report to follow.
- **San Leon Seizure** - On December 7<sup>th</sup>, ACO Josh Henderson was on routine patrol in San Leon looking for animals at large. He observed a dog that was on a short chain and appeared to be thin and saw that the dog did not have access to food, water or shelter. As he looked over the property, he observed many more animals that appeared to be in bad condition including dogs, various species of birds and rabbits. The smell from the property was discernable from the street and no visible food or water was available for these animals. The number of animals on the property greatly exceeded the limit for unsterilized pets under the Galveston County Rules for Animals. The animals on this property were in imminent danger of loss of life and a civil seizure order was obtained from Precinct 6 Judge Mc Cumber and executed on that date. The animals were transported to the shelter and a hearing was held in court on Monday 12/10/07. All animals were awarded to the shelter. The total animals were 10 adult dogs, eight puppies, 10 chickens, 1 sugar glider, 17 ducks and geese and 17

lovebirds, canaries and cockatiels. All the ducks, chickens and geese have found homes. The remainder of the animals is adoptable and will be placed in appropriate homes.

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

- **Deputy Director for Transfer Operations** - Trey Frankovich, a long time EMS supervisor was appointed to the new position of Deputy Director for Transfer Operations. In this position he will be directly responsible or directing all GAAA transfer operations. He began this position on December 13, 2007.
- **New EMS Supervisor** - James Aaron Pounds has been named to the position of EMS Shift Supervisor. Aaron has been with GAAA for several years and most recently has served as Senior Team Captain. As Shift Supervisor, Aaron will be responsible for all GAAA 911 operations during his 24 hour long shift. Aaron began his new assignment on December 13, 2007.
- **Dickens on the Strand Operations Quiet** - The first weekend in December is when the annual Dickens on the Strand celebration is held. GAAA plans for the influx of visitors by staffing an additional unit to respond to emergencies in the area of the event. This year the additional unit assigned to the event had no major emergencies to which they responded.
- **Staffing continues to improve** - GAAA staffing continues to improve as the number of vacancies goes down. There are currently 16 vacant full-time field 911 positions and 4 vacant full-time field non-emergency transfer positions. For full time, we have one Basic and one Paramedic scheduled for testing, two Paramedics scheduled for physicals and drug tests, and checking references on one Basic. We have one part-time Basic being scheduled for pre-employment drug test and are checking references on another part-time basic. The two experienced Paramedics are former employees and are expected to return shortly after the first of the year and will be a welcome addition to the operating staff.

**Disease & Disaster Preparedness** *for additional information, contact Dana Beckham, DVM, Director of Disease and Disaster Preparedness, at (409) 938-2322 or email [dbeckham@gchd.org](mailto:dbeckham@gchd.org).*

**Epidemiology Updates:**

- **PHIN Advisory on Childhood Lead** - A Public Health Information Network advisory was sent out to local health providers, labs, and other medical personnel on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The advisory was sent out to assist health care providers as it relates to screening, testing, and follow up for childhood lead poisoning. A physician's reference on follow up testing and case management was attached in the advisory.
- **Chicken Pox Clusters Update** - As of December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007, Epidemiology Services is investigating the chicken pox cluster at Kubacak Elementary (SFISD). They have reported a total of 19 cases since late October – 2 confirmed and 17 suspect cases. As of December 2 and 3, 2007, the chicken pox outbreak has ceased at Barber Middle School (DISD) and K.E. Little Elementary, respectively. Epidemiology Services is currently working on the summary for the Barber Middle School and K. E. Little investigations.
- **Shigellosis Conference Call** - On December 12, 2007 a conference call was held with Region 6/S South colleagues to discuss a possible increase in Shigellosis cases within the region. DSHS Region 6/5 South Epidemiologists as well as the epidemiologists for each local health district shared their shigellosis numbers for the year. Overall, there was an increase seen across the region. The City of Houston offered to take the zip code information as well as the onset date and create a GIS map of the cases dating back to September 2007. The next call will be held December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

- **Perinatal Hepatitis B In-Service** - The Region 6/5 South Perinatal Hepatitis B Coordinator, Jan Edwards, visited Mainland Medical Center to conduct the yearly perinatal hepatitis B in-service. She held three different sessions to accommodate the different nursing shifts with an attendance of approximately 45 nurses. Mrs. Edwards updated the staff on proper procedures to follow for women that are hepatitis B positive or have an unknown hepatitis B status. She also informed them of the proper forms to use when reporting the woman and children to DSHS.

***Preparedness Update:***

- **Point of Dispensing Clinic Training** - The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Coordinator facilitated two Point of Dispensing (POD) trainings recently. The training provides instruction in how to operate and lead community clinics to disperse medications in the event of a disease outbreak. Nineteen nurses from the Clear Creek Independent School District received training on the operations of a POD on November 29th at Space Center Intermediate School. On December 10<sup>th</sup>, SNS and POD Operations overview training was conducted at the Galveston County Office of Emergency Management. Thirty participants representing city and county emergency management, NASA, and private industry attended the 4 hour training.
- **Public Health Preparedness Contractors Conference** - On November 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> the Public Health Planner participated in a statewide conference hosted by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) for local health departments and hospitals that receive preparedness dollars through the state. The conference outlined the priorities for this grant year which include leadership and direction, community engagement/citizen participation, mass care, medical surge, epidemiological surveillance and detection, disaster mental health, and to sustain and enhance traditional public health deliverables and activities. Participants also discussed reporting requirements and timelines for the year.
- **Texas Homeland Security Conference** - The Public Health Planner attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Texas Homeland Security Conference in San Antonio on December 3<sup>rd</sup> through the 7<sup>th</sup>. More than 3,500 participants representing law enforcement, public health, emergency management, fire, EMS, and other responders attended the conference. Some of the public health topics discussed during the conference included disaster-related public health surveillance, medical special needs evacuation, critical incident stress management, food and drug regulatory program prevention and response to an event, SNS operations, pandemic flu planning, Texas law and flu preparedness, and more. Texas Governor Rick Perry was the keynote speaker for the conference.
- **Discretionary Spending Projects** - GCHD collaborated with other local health departments and the DSHS regional office in Houston to identify potential projects that could be conducted using statewide carry over funds from Public Health Preparedness. A number of projects were identified including enhancing our capacity to use geographic information systems (GIS) to track cases of disease and map hazards in our county, the development of online training for staff and volunteers, community preparedness education, syndromic surveillance enhancement and laboratory testing enhancements through the City of Houston, and other projects designed to increase our capacity to respond to a public health emergency. After submitting the proposals to the state it is anticipated to take between 1 to 4 months to find out if the projects are approved.
- **Medical Reserve Corps** - The Region VI Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) held it's annual meeting on December 12 & 13<sup>th</sup> in Dallas, Texas. There were approximately 80 participants from Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana and New Mexico. The meeting offered opportunities for participants to exchange and gain knowledge on topics, such as, MRC promising practices and peer presentations, Disaster Volunteer Management, Health Disparities, and Public Health Preparedness. The national conference will be held in Portland, OR on April 8-11, 2008.

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

- **Memorandum of Understanding with BP Products North America Inc.** was signed by CEO on December 12, 2007. This agreement establishes a relationship of cooperation for the provision of medications to BP employees, their family members and other employers that have a contractual relationship with BP in the event of a Strategic National Stockpile deployment to Galveston County or other public health emergencies. The term is from December 12, 2007 through August 31, 2009.
- **Amendment to the DSHS CPS Bio-Terrorism Preparedness Grant** was signed by CEO on December 12, 2007. This grant funds the dispensing of prophylactic medications during a bioterrorism attack. The change requested totaled a reimbursement of \$93,612.00 for personnel, fringe benefits, travel and supplies expenses for the budget period covering September 1, 2007 through July 31, 2008.
- **EMS Interlocal Cooperative Agreement with the City of Galveston** for Emergency Medical Services and Non-Emergency medical transport was signed by CEO on December 17, 2007. The district may not withdraw from this agreement without cause, until September 30, 2010.