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August 2009 Executive Report

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Galveston County & Cities

The Pulse of the District – Collaborations with County & City Leaders

- Introductory Meeting with City of Hitchcock Mayor Anthony Matranga
- Introductory meeting with La Marque Mayor Geraldine Sam
- Meeting with Congressional office of Congressman Pete Olsen on federal healthcare inefficiencies impacting Galveston County
- Meeting with Texas City's Mayor Matthew Doyle regarding future of non-emergency ambulance transfers and amending the interlocal agreement between GCHD and member cities
- Meeting at UTMB with the Coalition of area county indigent healthcare officials
- Introductory meeting with new DSHS Regional Director, Dr. John Jordan
- Introductory Meeting with new Mainland Medical Center CEO, Rob Heifner
- Multiple county budget workshop meetings on General Fund, 4C's, EMS, and Animal Services Budgets
- Multiple county meetings exploring ways to address indigent and uninsured access to specialty care
- Multiple meetings with Galveston County architects regarding the Mid County Annex and the new Animal Shelter

Indigent and Uninsured Access to Secondary & Tertiary Care

- During the past month Galveston County Commissioners had many discussions on the best way to address the indigent and uninsured access to care issues in the county and to fulfill state legislative expectations necessary to fully restore UTMB. One idea considered was the possibility of creating a Hospital District that would levy taxes to support indigent health care. At the request of county leaders a page with hospital district information including questions and answers was posted on the GCHD web site www.gchd.org/press/2009/Hospital-District.htm. A meeting called by Galveston County to kick off a possible hospital district campaign was covered August 5th in the Daily News www.gchd.org/press/2009/2009-hospital-district-kickoff.htm. As discussions continued an alternative to a hospital district began to emerge which was reported in an August 7th Galveston County Daily News article www.gchd.org/press/2009/2009-hospital-district.htm. The article mentions the role of the GCHD 4C's clinics in the current indigent health care program. Galveston County Daily News editors published the district's questions and answers concerning a possible hospital district on August 10th www.gchd.org/press/2009/2009-hospital-district-Q&A.htm.
- On Wednesday, August 26, 2009, County leaders will vote to increase the eligibility to 100% of the federal poverty level for the Galveston County Indigent Healthcare Program beginning January 1, 2010. Thru the Galveston County Indigent Program, Galveston County will pay for

hospital and specialty care for patients at or below the 100% of the federal poverty level. Funding and access to primary care is currently secured through the Health District's 4C's Clinics. Currently, Executive staff is working with County Officials to clarify the County's Policy regarding eligibility, streamlining and defining asset testing, clarifying services covered and/or excluded, defining the roles of GCHD and the roles of the County, and determining staffing needs. Executive staff is also working to update GCHD's staff procedures for its role in the County Indigent Healthcare Program.

Planning for the Expected Resurgence of H1N1 Flu in the Fall

With fall approaching GCHD in cooperation with other public health organizations is planning for **an effective response to H1N1** in the community, particularly as the new school year begins. Current information for various communities can be found on the district's H1N1 Flu information page at www.gchd.org/press/2009/Swine-flu-information.htm. By August 24, 2009, GCHD Epidemiology Services had received 57 confirmed cases of H1N1 flu in Galveston County. The 57 cases reside in the following cities: **Dickinson (8), Friendswood (3), Galveston (5), Kemah (1), La Marque (3), League City (10), Santa Fe (1), and Texas City (26)**. On August 5, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued the new guideline that "Persons with Influenza-Like Illness" (fever of 100° F or greater and cough and/or sore throat) should be isolated from others until 24 hours free of fever (without using any fever reducing medication). Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) recently released guidance to healthcare providers who would like to administer the H1N1 vaccine to their patients. The provider must register on line at www.Texasflu.org. The Health District was awarded over \$256,000 from DSHS for preparations of mass vaccination in the event that this flu season may be declared an emergency. The monies will be used to purchase supplies, equipment and hire temporary assistance (5 nurses and health educator) for the upcoming flu season.

Health District Responds to City of Galveston Water Outage

On August 7th at 3:00 am, the City of Galveston's Airport drinking water pump station experienced an electrical fire that shut down the pumps thus causing a loss of pressure in the distribution system. The City immediately issued a "boil water" notice to their customers from Moody Garden's Hotel, west to the end of Galveston Island. The city arranged for emergency backup generators and installed them temporarily to bring the system up to normal operating pressure. Food Safety inspectors contacted approximately 25 permitted food service establishments in the affected area and instructed the operators on how to continue their operation safely during the water outage. The city collected and submitted 20 water samples to our Public Health Laboratory for bacteriological testing. The results of the testing were all negative and the boil water notice was lifted on August 11, 2009.

Back-to-School Immunizations

During the month of August, GCHD staff gave back-to-school immunizations at several sites in the community (KE Little Elementary, Bacliff; La Marque Community Health Fair; 4C's Saturday clinic on 8/8; Galveston Coastal Credit Union Health Fair; Wal-Mart in League City and at the Mall of the Mainland) in addition to the *Annual Back to School KIDS Health Fest* in La Marque and Galveston Clinic. As of August 18th a total of 2346 shots have been given to over 800 children. Final campaign outcomes will be available next month.

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

- Galveston County Daily News ran a column on July 31st encouraging residents to make sure their **children are adequately immunized** for the new school year. The column also covered new immunization requirements. The column can be found at www.gchd.org/press/2009/2009-vaccination.htm.
- **GCHD's CEO Dr. Mark Guidry was honored by the Texas Association of Local Health Officials (TALHO)** when they presented him with their 2009 Janet Emerson Public Health Servant Award. It is the organization's highest accolade for public health servants. A press release issued announcing the award can be found at <http://www.gchd.org/press/2009/TALHOawardguidry.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.

- **Medical & Dental Provider Update** – 4C's has two new Providers. One new medical provider, Annola K. Dildy, MD, who has an emphasis in both Internal Medicine and Pediatrics. And a new dental provider, Andrea L. White, DDS. Both providers will start in early September. Staff continues to search for qualified medical and dental providers to fill open positions. Current Provider vacancies have been widely advertised and distributed. Information on all Health District positions can be viewed at: <http://www.gchd.org/hr/job.htm>
- **4C's Saturday Clinic** – The success of the Saturday Clinics continue to increase with medical visits increasing from 18 to 36 (a 200% increase) and dental visits increasing from 7 to 28 (a 400% increase) from the initial start date of Saturday, June 6, 2009 to Saturday, August 15, 2009. Executive staff continues to monitor the needs of the Saturday clinics, making necessary adjustments to meet these needs in an efficient, productive manner. On Saturdays, the Texas City Clinic is open from 10am to 5pm 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 patient's financial status. The Saturday Clinic is open for acute medical and dental services, as well as, Lab and X-ray services. All other services are available Monday thru Friday during regular business hours. The Saturday Clinic is made available through an Increased Demand Service Economic Stimulus (IDS) grant from HRSA's Bureau of Primary Healthcare (BPHC). The two year 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. More information about the Saturday clinic may be viewed at: <http://www.gchd.org/4cs/Saturdays.htm>
- **Social Service Block Grant** - 4C's is participating in a community collaborative effort to apply for federal social service block grant funding through the Houston-Galveston Area council. The funds are to provide recovery services for those residents and agencies that were affected by Hurricane Ike. The Health District has proposed a project to hire two medical case managers to work with 4C's patients who lack access to specialty care. Case Managers will coordinate care to keep patients well. The project, if approved will provide funds for one year.
- **Case Management Collaboration** – Health District Case Managers participated in a meeting with several local agencies at Jesse Tree to discuss the use of a screening tool that could be used by many local facilities. The screening tool highlights needs including those for social services, health care and public funding programs. It would trigger a more comprehensive approach to case management. A committee was formed to further explore this approach.

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.

- **Community Health Fair** – The Health District’s STD/HIV program was asked to participate in the Alpha Kappa Alpha Annual Health Fair on Saturday August 8th. 130 community members attended this event and were provided GCHD Brochures, incentives, and all service’s materials/pamphlets.
- **World Breastfeeding Day** - WIC celebrated World Breastfeeding Day August 5th in Texas City at the Family Community Center. A total of 50 participants came to hear presentations on the benefits of breastfeeding, women’s rights to breastfeed and the use of over-the counter medications in breastfeeding. Community participants included La Leche League, Star Program and Community Health Choice. GCHD provided blood pressure and iron screenings for participants.
- **Family Health Camp** - GCHD concluded the WIC – Agri-Life Extension collaborative project “Family Health Camp”. This was a weekly family oriented healthy living class held in Dickinson at the Agri-Life offices from June 18th to August 13th. A total of 12 adults and 21 children registered for this pilot program which included health education and food preparation demonstrations. There were fun classes for kids, giveaways, and a final program with awards for participants. The program received positive feedback from parents who took part.
- **Breast and Cervical Cancers Services Program (BCCS) Med IT Database** - The Data collection system for the DSHS BCCS Program will be converting from TWICES to a new system called MED-IT this fall. MED-IT is a web-based system used in several states that has all the required features needed for reporting to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as financial reports (billing status) and reminder features which will aide staff immensely. There will be a training held in Houston September 3-4th for two staff members to learn the system.

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

- **UTMB Stakeholders Meeting** – Ronnie Schultz attended UTMB’s National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences stakeholder meeting on August 7th and 8th. This meeting was sponsored by UTMB’s Dr. Sharon Petronella who challenged attendees to identify the most pressing local environmental health needs/concerns, identify short and long term goals/objectives, resources needed to implement goals/objectives, and to identify barriers to achieving these goals. Some of the pressing concerns discussed were air toxics, ozone pollution, environmental justice issues, and the need for more public outreach. Attendees from across the state represented local, state or federal government agencies, researchers, environmental advocacy groups, representatives from environmental justice organizations, and academia. The results of this brainstorming session are being compiled and will eventually be published as a road map to addressing local environmental issues for the next five or ten years.
- **Galveston County Animal Resource Center** – Representatives from the Health District and the County of Galveston have begun to meet and discuss the location and the construction of the new Galveston County Animal Resource Center. Health District staff and representatives with the County of Galveston will begin to meet with Martha Seng, a principal with the architectural firm Jackson and Ryan located in Houston who were selected by the county as the firm in charge of the animal resource center design. They are a full service architectural firm that has developed a specialty in creative animal resource design. Health District staff will provide Ms. Seng with data on the number and types of animals housed in the current shelter for the past five years as well as a tour. In addition, discussion of proper function and flow of the new animal resource center, the

design of an adoption center separate from the working kennels, the necessity of separation and isolation of incoming animals, the incorporation of indoor and outdoor kennels, electrical needs during normal operation and during emergency operations, and much more. The result of this and subsequent meetings will provide Ms. Seng with a planning document to assist with a conceptual design for Health District and County feedback.

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

- **Staffing Update** – There are currently 7 vacant full-time field 911 positions available. We recently hired 2 persons for the non-emergency transfer positions who have recently completed orientation.
- **Inter-Agency Training Pilot Program** – GAAA staff are participating in a pilot program with the Galveston Police Department and their Community Policing Program. The program includes briefings for GPD officers and staff about EMS operations, EMS role in emergency operations in Galveston and a review of CPR and basic first aid. The program meets monthly with different sections of the Galveston Police Department. The goal is to provide these briefings to all GPD staff within one calendar year and to consider extending the program to other departments.
- **Texas A&M Sea Camp** – GAAA staff participated in a program at the Texas A&M Sea Camp for gifted and talented High School students. The program exposes students to various health occupations by providing a “window” into each one. Students were introduced to the duties of 911 Paramedics and the tools they use to save lives.
- **FY 2010 Budget process moves to a close** – Health District staff attended budget hearings with local government entities that participate in GAAA contracts for Emergency Medical Services. Input from the various hearings has resulted in proposed budgets that will be presented to the Galveston County United Board of Health for approval and implementation.
- **Weekend Crowds Increase Number of Responses** – 911 responses to medical emergencies on weekends have returned to Pre-Ike levels, even as total weekly responses remain down approximately twenty percent from previous levels. GAAA has responded by staffing a fourth MICU in Galveston during the peak weekend periods on Saturday and Sunday. This staffing is expected to continue into the fall.

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

- **Elevated Blood Lead Cases (Texas City and Galveston)** - For 2009, GCHD has received a total of 7 confirmed elevated blood lead level (EBLL) reports on 4 Texas City and 3 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.
- **St. Louis Encephalitis in Galveston** - On July 29th, Epidemiology Services investigated a case of Saint Louis encephalitis (SLE) in an 80 year old Galveston resident that has recovered from the illness. This is the first case of SLE identified in Texas in four years. SLE is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito (primarily the *Culex* species). The symptoms of SLE include headache, high fever, muscle aches, chills, stiff neck, lethargy or fatigue and change of mental status. Symptoms generally begin 5 to 10 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Most people bitten by an infected mosquito will never experience any symptoms. The elderly are at highest risk for developing serious disease after exposure. Public health recommendations to prevent mosquito bites include drain all standing water, stay in during dusk and dawn (the time the *Culex* mosquito is most active), wear long pants and shirt when outside,

especially during dusk and dawn and use insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or IR3535.

- **Q Fever in Galveston** - On August 3, Epidemiology Services investigated a case of Q Fever in a 43 year old Galveston resident that showed no illness. The testing was performed to rule out other diseases or conditions. Q fever is a zoonotic disease caused by *Coxiella burnetii*, bacteria found in the tissues of infected animals, including a wide variety of livestock and domesticated pets. This disease is highly infectious and may be transmitted to humans commonly by the inhalation of airborne particles containing animal tissues, such as contaminated barnyard dust.
- **Public Health Advisories** - For the month of August, 3 public health advisories were sent out to stakeholders. The first advisory was sent to the medical community informing of a confirmed St. Louis encephalitis (SLE) case in Galveston County. The advisory requested for providers to consider SLE, West Nile virus or other arboviral infection in the differential diagnosis of patients presenting with sudden febrile illness accompanied by neurologic symptoms. Two advisories were sent to the medical and school communities on H1N1 flu (swine flu). The advisories gave recommendations for the amount of time persons with influenza-like illness (ILI) should be away from others and updated guidance for school administrators responding to influenza this flu season.
- **GCHD Collaboration with British Petroleum** - On July 30th GCHD Public Health preparedness staff attended a unified commander meeting hosted by British Petroleum Company (BP). Ray Meyer, Incident Commander Coordinator for BP gave a brief presentation on their recent oil spill exercise and Dr. Boswell, Director Health Service for BP spoke on the activation of their Incident Management Team during the early stages of the H1N1 situation. United States Coast Guard gave presentation on the Coast Guard duties. The meeting is a forum for agencies to share information and understand the roles each play in an incident.

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

- **Demolition/Rebuild Office Space for Dickinson WIC and Immunization Clinic** - Acceptance of Proposal with Mike Nolan & Associates, Inc. was signed by COO on August 3rd in the amount of \$217,331.98.
- **Next Gen EPM/EMR Consulting/ Programming Services** Independent Contractor agreement with IONET LLC was signed by COO on August 4th. The hourly rate for this service is \$150/hour. This agreement may be terminated by either party with a 3-day written notice to the other party.
- **Dental Equipment/Supplies** addendums to Original contracts were signed by COO on August 12, 2009. The agreements are with AMI Dental and Patterson Dental will continue for one year expiring August 28, 2010.
- **Non-Emergency Ambulance Services** agreement with Bayou Pines Care Center was signed by COO on August 17th. The contract term is for one (1) year, commencing on July 1, 2009 through July 1, 2010. A HIPAA Compliance Business Associate Addendum was also executed.
- **Public Health Clinical Externship with Arcadia University** was signed by COO on August 24, 2009. After such initial Term, the agreement will automatically renew unless terminated. A HIPAA Compliance Business Associate Addendum was also executed the Externship Agreement.
- **Public Health Clinical Externship with Walden University** signed by COO on August 25, 2009. Either party may terminate the agreement at the end of any academic year upon 60 days notice in writing. A HIPAA Compliance Business Associate Addendum was executed on August 25th with the Externship Agreement.

- **DSHS TB Prevention and Control funding** – State agreement was signed by COO on August 25, 2009. The amount awarded was \$79,731 an increase of \$1,879 from last year. The term is September 1, 2009 to August 31, 2010.
- **Primary medical care services to Aids Coalition Of Coastal Texas, Inc. (ACCT) patients** Memorandum of Agreement was signed by CEO on August 26, 2009. The term is August 1, 2009 to August 1, 2010. After such initial Term, the agreement will automatically renew year to year unless terminated.

Environmental Health Programs – Notices July 2009	
Animal Control (dogs running at large, no registration, cruelty, etc)	73
Air Pollution (violation of state air regulations, permits, excessive emissions, etc)	3
Food Services (violations of food service policy)	0
Food Services (letters sent for operating with an expired food service permit)	61
Public Health Nuisances (trash and high weeds, violations of health and safety code)	4
On-Site Septic Systems (violation of on-site policy)	0
Water Pollution (improper disposal, sewage leaks, grease trap violations, etc)	7

*A Monthly Report of
 The Galveston County Health District.
 For more information regarding this document,
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 409-938-2401 or Kurt Koopmann, PIO, at kkoopman@gchd.org
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