



November 2009 Executive Report

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The Pulse of the District... A Spotlight on 4C's Clinical Services

- H1N1 Mass Vaccinations for High-Risk groups
- 4C's Kick-off for Rollout of Electronic Systems

STOP THE FLU Campaign

On October 30 and 31, 2009, the District conducted a Mass Vaccination clinic to administer the H1N1 influenza vaccine. Approximately 5450 persons received immunizations in the two day period. The clinic operated at Mall of the Mainland near the eastern end of the facility. 64 persons, mostly GCHD employees worked in the clinic each day. At times on Saturday the line contained approximately 900 people. Even with the large turnout the crowds remained orderly. Workers averaged 380 immunizations per hour for the entire clinic, well above our goal of 300 immunizations per hour. 24 4C's employees participated in the mass vaccination clinic which was highly successful in protecting the public from infection, hospitalizations, and the possibility of death due to H1N1. Special appreciation for assistance from Mr. John Zandt, Moody Gardens; Captain Jason Jackson, La Marque Fire Department; Mr. & Mrs. Ed Carr; and Ms. Tina-Marie Patterson with Mall of the Mainland.

- **H1N1 influenza** continues to generate quite a bit of media attention. After receiving a large batch of H1N1 vaccine the District planned a mass vaccination event at Mall of the Mainland in Texas City on October 30th and 31st. A press release issued on October 27th announcing the vaccine availability is posted at www.gchd.org/press/2009/H1N1-at-MOM.htm. The mass vaccination event was announced in the *Galveston County Daily News* on October 28th www.gchd.org/press/2009/H1N1-high-risk.htm. The *Houston Chronicle* also mentioned the Mall of the Mainland event in a story on October 28th discussing vaccine availability in the Houston metropolitan area www.gchd.org/press/2009/Vaccine-shot.htm. The *Galveston County Daily News* covered the event with the following story on October 31st www.gchd.org/press/2009/Vaccine.htm, and this story which appeared November 1st reporting that the event was successful and all vaccine was administered www.gchd.org/press/2009/Vaccine-out.htm. In a November 3rd *Daily News* story on local hospital visitation regulation to control the spread of H1N1 the *Daily News* also mentioned the event and the fact that over 5000 vaccinations were administered www.gchd.org/press/2009/h1n1-visits.htm. The first reported death in Galveston County attributed to the H1N1 flu was reported in the *Galveston County Daily News* on October 28th in a story that can be found at www.gchd.org/press/2009/H1N1-county-death.htm; the *Daily News* printed a second story on the death with additional information included on October 29th www.gchd.org/press/2009/swine-victim.htm.
- H1N1 vaccinations were also given at GCHD Headquarters in La Marque beginning November 16th after a shipment of 2400 doses was received. 1600 doses were allocated for children younger than 10 that require two doses and previously received their first dose at the Mall of the Mainland vaccination event. 800 doses were allocated for others in designated high-risk groups.
- From August 1 to November 16, Galveston County Health District has received a total of 894 positive flu cases (104 H1N1, 431 Flu A, 4 Flu B and 355 Undifferentiated Flu). Reported to date, are 7 cases requiring hospitalizations and two deaths (in a 31- year old and 48-year old Galveston

Island residents). CDC surveillance shows that 99% of all surveyed influenza viruses are determined to be 2009 influenza A (H1N1) viruses.

4C's Kick-off for Rollout of Electronic Systems

On Tuesday, November 10th, Executive Management held a meeting at the City of La Marque Community Room with key staff (Core Group Members) to discuss the upcoming implementation of NextGen (a new practice management, electronic medical and dental records). The purposes of the meeting were to 1) update key staff on the implementation of our contract obligations to roll-out NextGen's electronic practice management (EPM), electronic medical/health records (EHR) and electronic dental records (EDR) systems; 2) Describe process of roll-out decision-making and roles/responsibilities/requirements of key staff in the process; 3) Describe timeline for implementation milestones toward Go-Live date and key milestones/requirements after Go-live date and 4) facilitate a brainstorming session to engage key staff in the following: a) identifying assumptions we are making as we move forward; b) characterize for all staff how our business "culture" will change at all levels in the 4C's enterprise - how to incorporate new skills, expectations, and requirements into job descriptions and how GCHD plans to both train existing staff and arrange for on-going, long-term training of new employees; c) identify a list of unanswered questions for follow-up with appropriate persons and dissemination of answers to key staff and d) identify next steps needed prior to first on-site meeting with NextGen project manager. Executive management will review the list of questions from the meeting and send out responses to the Core Groups by November 30th. During the November In-Service on the 18th, each manager provided their staff an update of the meeting held.

Recognizing the Public Health Workforce

On Thursday, November 5th, the Health District recognized employees for exemplary performance and years of service. In addition, employees were given certificates and recognition for their hard work and dedication during the H1N1 Mass Vaccination clinics held on October 30 & 31st. Eight employees were named GCHD's 2009 Employees-of-the-Year. Honorees were Cheri Linton (4C's), Megan Bedford, PA (4C's), Lora Franklin (EMS), Amy Weber (EMS), Pisa Lewis (Executive Services), Connie Gregory (Fiscal Services), Eugenia James (Community Health Programs), and Gwen Norman (Environmental Health Services). See photo on www.gchd.org.

Clearing the Fog?

A report on the availability of **charity care** in local hospitals and the 4C's clinics resulted in a *Galveston County Daily News* story on November 5th www.gchd.org/press/2009/hospital-charities-blasted.htm. The *Houston Chronicle* also ran a story on the report, Clearing the Fog, which mentioned the 4C's clinics on November 5th www.gchd.org/press/2009/hospitals-flouting-law.htm. The survey based on a similar survey in Boston looked primarily at hospitals in the area, but for unclear reasons included 4C's clinics which are FQHCs and accountable to federal guidelines. Reporters were provided information on several points specific to the 4C's clinics including: 1) 4C's Governing Board is comprised of a majority clinic users and sets policy for the clinics, 2) The Governing Board approved a policy that "permits" the use of a collection agency but that has never been done; the policy was approved based on an audit recommendation that showed 4C's collections were well below state and national averages, 3) In all cases, no one is refused medical care in the 4C's clinics if they cannot pay and none have been referred to a collection agency, 4) The clinic does provide discounted services based on income according to federal guidelines, 5) Every patient who comes in to register for services is provided information about collection policies and signs a Patient Rights and Responsibilities document, 6) All Governing Board approved policies are posted on the GCHD web site and are also available by contacting 4C's administration.

Dental Improvement Plan – The dental review with recommendations for improvement was completed and presented to the Governing Board on August 30, 2007. With the filling of several dentist vacancies after market-based increases in dentist salaries, staff are now gearing up to improve its orientation of dentists and focus on developing dental practice guidelines and other guidelines for dental staff. Future team-building training and supervisor training are expected to improve the dental services

and staff retention. Janice Reardon, DDS., joined the 4C's Dental Team on November 16th. Currently there are two Dental Assistant/Receptionist position open. Please see GCHD's current job openings for more information at: <http://www.gchd.org/hr/job.htm>.

Lab Updating Formulary – The Lab Supervisor is working with Executive Staff and the Medical Director to update the 4C's Lab and X-ray formularies and updating current written procedures and guidelines. The 4C's Lab is fully staffed with one additional part-time Lab Tech working during the Saturday Clinics which is funded by the IDS Grant.

Medical Records & Coding Staff Subject To Review – The Medical Records and Coding staff job duties will be reviewed with the implementation of NextGen. The current duties in these two areas will be most dramatically impacted in an electronic environment. With EMR there will no longer a need to pull paper charts for medical visits. In addition, medical and dental coding will be completed electronically. Staff currently performing these duties in the absence of an EMR will be subject to an analysis of their skills which may be beneficial for new duties as we roll out the electronic systems (for example scanning records).

County Indigent Covers 100% of FPL in 2010 – As of Monday, November 9, 2009 there were approximately 189 patients approved on the County Indigent Program. County Officials have agreed to increase the eligibility requirement to 100% of the federal poverty level for the County Indigent Healthcare Program to be effective January 1, 2010. Thru the Galveston County Indigent Program, Galveston County pays for hospital and specialty care for patients at or below the 100% of the federal poverty level. 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 it role in the County Indigent Healthcare Program.

Pharmacy Services Under Review - In September 2009, both 4C's Pharmacies dispensed a total of 4886 RX's, including 1086 Share the Care Rx's, 103 PAP Rx's and averaged 227 Rx's dispensed per day. Executive Staff are still looking to the future and continues to explore ways to meet the Pharmacy needs of all 4C's patients in the coming years. Executive Staff participated in a conference call with Lynn Ford from the Texas Association of Community Health Centers (TACHC) to discuss the challenges that Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC's) face in providing Pharmacy Services in Texas and discussed pharmacist shortages, as well as, alternative, efficient, and effective ways to provide Pharmacy Services to 4C's Patients.



*A Monthly Report of
The Galveston County Health District.
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