
Health district releases 2008 annual report

From staff reports

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Members of the Galveston County United Board of Health and the 4C's Governing Board recently approved the Galveston County Health District's 2008 annual progress report.

The report includes an evaluation of progress in accomplishing the strategic health plan for 2004-10, special reports on access to care, EMS and animal services.

It also includes a report on the health district's response to Hurricane Ike.

"The Strategic Health Plan has been an effective tool for focusing our efforts and for transforming the organization to better serve the residents of Galveston County," said Dr. Mark Guidry, the district's chief executive officer. Since the plan was adopted, most of the goals have been accomplished.

According to the report, the district's 4C's clinics, which see a large number of uninsured, have achieved a medical productivity that exceeds state and national averages for federally qualified health centers, but challenges remain in obtaining specialty care referrals for indigent and uninsured patients who can no longer access such care at UTMB.

The report also identifies the district's focus areas for 2009 and beyond. Those areas include:

- Uninsured access to specialty care;
- A changing EMS environment;
- Addressing new and emerging health threats through training and improving and modernizing health district data systems.
- Improve district facilities, including animal shelter, Texas City 4C's clinics, WIC clinics and others, which hopefully will be addressed with funds from the passage of a bond issue in November.
- Recruit and retain qualified, competent staff for all district operations and programs.
- Making local restaurant inspection scores available to the public on the district Web

site.

The district's first Strategic Health Plan was adopted in 2004 and provides specific priorities and goals in eight areas. The eight priorities adopted in 2004 are: public awareness; access to care and health disparities; business improvement; health care financing; management of chronic diseases; environmental health; senior health; and immunization awareness.

By 2010, the district will initiate a new strategic planning process, involving community stakeholders, to develop a second plan for the next decade, 2010-20. The complete 2008 report will be distributed to Galveston County and city elected officials as well as to health partners in the county. The report can also be found at www.gchd.org/admin/strattoc.htm.

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