

Texas Update September 2007

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13 New Access Point Awards for Texas!

A belated Update congratulations goes out to Texas New Access Point and Planning Grant award winners!! Dr. Elizabeth Duke, the HRSA Administrator herself, delivered the good news at the NACHC CHI in Dallas this year. Texas did very well receiving a total of 13 new access point grants and one High Poverty County planning grant. At least one of our new awardees made the paper recently. Check out the [article](#) on Amistad Community Health Center that recently ran in the Corpus Christi Caller Times.

High Poverty County New Access Point recipients:

Shackelford County Com. Resource Ctr	Albany	Callahan
Chambers County Public Hosp. District #1	Anahuac	Chambers
Amistad Community Health Center	Corpus Christi	Nueces
CHC's of South Central TX	Gonzales	Guadalupe
Community Health Service Agency	Greenville	Red River; Delta
Longview Wellness Center, Inc.	Longview	Upshur
East Texas Border Health Clinic	Marshall	Marion
East Texas Community Health Svcs	Nacogdoches	Sabine
Atascosa Health Clinic Inc.	Pleasanton	Wilson
NE Texas Public Health District	Tyler	Smith

The Highest Poverty Planning Grant recipients:

Heart of Texas Community Health Center	Waco	Coryell
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And the New Access Points from the final round of the President's 5-year expansion initiative:

Health Center of Southeast Texas	Cleveland
Legacy Community Health Services	Houston
Community Health Net. of Lubbock	Lubbock

Congratulations to Our Advocacy Contest Winners!

Thanks to everyone who participated in the petition drive for this year's advocacy contest! Texas provided almost 4,000 handwritten and online signatures to the national effort to encourage the President and Congress to support the health center program over the coming years. NACHC is still tallying the final signature count. We'll keep you updated on the total signature number as well as let you know how Texas did compared to other states.

But, in *Texas*, hats off to **Gateway Community Health Center in Laredo** - they took first prize, a set of TACHC's recently released Optimizing Coordinated Clinical Care manuals, with well over 1,700 signatures. **Community Health Service Agency in Greenville** came in second with almost 900 signatures, and **Vida Y Salud Health Systems in Crystal City** took third place with over 200 signatures. Remember, the contest was based not just on the *number* of signatures, but the ratio of signatures to the number of users at each center according to the 2005 UDS in order to level the playing field between large and small centers.

Women's Health Program Three Visit Project Amendment Update

Unfortunately, folks, we're still waiting to hear. CMS has still not approved the Women's Health Program project amendment that includes both additional codes for coverage under the program and reimbursement for up to three visits per year for FQHCs. HHSC says that CMS staff immediately involved with the waiver, their supervisors, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which had some questions early on in the amendment process, have all signed off on our three visit issue. Apparently there are some higher ups at CMS that need to have questions answered. The sense is still that this provision should not be a problem, but it is, unfortunately, taking longer than we all expected. We will keep you posted. Remember, our three visit reimbursement as well as WHP reimbursement for additional codes will be retroactive *only* until the date of CMS approval and *not* September 1. Please keep appealing any denied claims.

TACHC Annual Conference: October 20-24, 2007 in Austin, TX!

The TACHC 24th Annual Conference will be held here in Austin this October at the Sheraton Austin Hotel downtown. Register [here](#), and remember that Friday, September 28 is the deadline for Early Bird Registration! Check out the attached agenda, and don't forget to sign up for our first annual 5K Fun Run and Walk on Saturday October 20!

Foster Care Managed Care

As you know, HHSC is beginning to implement its new foster care managed care program, to be known as STAR Health. HHSC plans for all children in foster care in Texas to be enrolled with Superior under one separate Medicaid managed care contract. HHSC recently announced that STAR Health will begin enrolling participants in March 2008, and children in foster care will begin receiving services through the program in April 2008. For more info see <http://www.hhs.state.tx.us/medicaid/FosterCare.shtml>. Health centers should be working with Superior now to finalize contracts for these services, especially if you serve large numbers of foster care children. If you have questions about these contracts, please contact [Cecile Carson](#) at TACHC.

HB 109 Implementation Going Forward

HHSC is moving ahead with implementation of HB 109, the CHIP Restoration bill that passed during the last legislative session. The bill extends the eligibility period for families from six months to 12 months, raises asset limits, eliminates the 90 day waiting period for uninsured children, and allows child care expenses to be deducted from families' gross income. HHSC is certainly watching the Federal debate on CHIP reauthorization and expansion. Their decisions will ultimately have an effect on Texas's CHIP program, but the immediate future for Texas CHIP kids is brightening.

HHSC Promoting New Nurse Family Partnership Program

HHSC is promoting a new program called the Nurse-Family Partnership. The new program employs registered nurses to make home visits to low income women who are pregnant for the first time. Home visits will continue from pregnancy until the child turns two. HHSC will be providing grants to organizations who implement the program that will range from \$700,000-\$900,000. They expect to release an RFP toward the end of CY 2007.

An important consideration, however, is that HHSC currently has funding for this program only for one year, the second year of the 2008-2009 biennial budget. Contractors will be expected to continue the program for the required two years if they are awarded funds. The legislature may elect to continue funding this program during the 2009 legislative session, but the chance they will not fund it is a risk contractors will need to be willing to take.

You can learn more details about the program [here](#) including information about technical assistance webcasts scheduled for October 18, November 20, and December 11. You can also learn more about the national Nurse Family Partnership effort at www.nursefamilypartnership.org

New Requirements for Tamper Resistant Prescription Pads in Medicaid

Beginning October 1, 2007, hand-written, prescriptions for Medicaid outpatient drugs will only be reimbursable if written on a tamper-resistant prescription pad. The mandate was enacted as a fraud reducing measure in the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-28). On August 17, 2007, CMS issued guidance to State Medicaid Agencies regarding the use of tamper-resistant prescription pads.

Beginning October 1, 2007, a tamper-resistant prescription pad must contain at least one of the following three characteristics:

1. One or more industry-recognized features designed to prevent unauthorized copying of a completed or blank prescription form.
2. One or more industry-recognized features designed to prevent the erasure or modification of information written on the prescription by the prescriber.
3. One or more industry-recognized features designed to prevent the use of counterfeit prescription forms

Beginning October 1, 2008, a tamper-resistant prescription pad must contain all of the above three characteristics. For more information on this issue, contact [Lynn Ford](#) at the TACHC office.

Registry Link for New Advocates

Here's a little competitive push for you: The state of Missouri has over 1,000 advocates signed up in their advocacy network. Texas has 800. Ask your friends and coworkers to sign up with community health centers! Click [here](#)