



ANNUAL REPORT

GALVESTON COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT





Table of Contents

Intro	3
A Letter From Our CEO	4
United Board of Health	5
Public Health Initiatives	6-13
Community Health Services	14-22
Environmental Health Services	23-25
Disease Investigation Services	26-27
Business Support Services	28-35
Divisions of GCHD	36-39
GCHD Community Collaborators	40-42



MISSION

Protecting and promoting the One Health of Galveston County.

Welcome to our Annual Report, a showcase of our achievements, progress, and commitment to excellence throughout the year.

VISION

To be a pillar, promoter, protector, and provider of healthfulness in Galveston County.

VALUES

I CARE

INTEGRITY

CUSTOMER SERVICE

ACCOUNTABILITY

RESPECT

EQUALITY



We are honest, trustworthy and transparent in all we do.

We are committed to providing exceptional customer service.

We hold ourselves to high standards and take responsibility for our actions.

We uphold a standard of conduct that recognizes and values the contributions of all.

We equally value and serve all members of the community.



A Letter From Our CEO



Dear Members of the Community,

As we come together to reflect on the past year's accomplishments, I am honored to present the 2023 annual report of Galveston County Health District. This report encapsulates our collective efforts, achievements, and strides toward fostering a healthier community.

Over the past year, our dedication to protecting and promoting the One Health of Galveston County has remained unwavering. Through innovative programs, strategic partnerships, and a commitment to excellence, we have made significant progress in advancing our mission.

Our annual report showcases the remarkable achievements we have accomplished together. From expanding access to healthcare services to implementing initiatives to promote wellness and prevention, each accomplishment represents a step in our journey toward creating a healthier community for all.

I commend our team, whose passion, expertise, and tireless efforts have been the driving force behind our success. Their commitment to serving the needs of our community has been the cornerstone of our achievements.

I would also like to thank our community partners and stakeholders for their support and collaboration. Together, we have demonstrated the power of partnership and collective action in creating positive change and improving the lives of those we serve.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on our mission of protecting and promoting the One Health of Galveston County. With our shared values and goals guiding us, I am confident we will continue to make a positive impact in our community.

Thank you for your continued trust, support, and partnership. I invite you to delve into the following pages of this report to discover the milestones, achievements, and exciting prospects that define our organization.

Philip Keiser, MD

Chief Executive Officer
Local Health Authority



United Board of Health

The Galveston County United Board of Health (UBOH) sets policies that protect the everyday health and well-being of county residents through an interlocal agreement between member governments.

The board consists of five members nominated by the Galveston County Commissioner’s Court and ratified by a majority of member cities. Board members serve two-year terms, after which they are renewed or replaced.



Zach Davidson
Chairman
Director of Government Relations, Galveston County



Annette Jenkins, PHARM D
Vice Chairperson
Retired Pharmacist



Della Brown, RN
Finance Chairperson
Registered Nurse, United Methodist



Peter C. Melby, MD
Professor, Division of Infectious Diseases, Department of Internal Medicine, University of Texas Medical Branch



Erin Gurski, RN, FNP-C
Pulmonary Critical Care and Sleep Medicine Nurse Practitioner, University of Texas Medical Branch



Philip Keiser, MD
CEO - Ex officio
Professor of Medicine, University of Texas Medical Branch



Galveston County Health District had several public health initiatives in 2023, including naloxone distribution, the Children's Center closure, and an animal seizure operation.

Public Health Initiatives in 2023





Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Health Plan

The GCHD 2023-2028 Strategic Health Plan was approved by the United Board of Health in early 2023. **Five priority areas for goals were established:**

PRIORITY 1: Effectively and equitably engage and improve community health

PRIORITY 2: Be an exceptional workplace and continuously encourage staff development and retention

PRIORITY 3: Provide a financial system and structure that will sustain growth and development

PRIORITY 4: Scale and enhance public health outreach and communication

PRIORITY 5: Leverage technology and operational procedures to better predict and respond to health concerns

Progress was made under each priority. Goals that were delayed were assessed for their applicability during the annual goal assessment. Priorities and goals are tightly tied to the standards and measures set by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB).



Public Health Accreditation

GCHD began the PHAB journey a few years ago. PHAB released an updated application in late 2022 that was enhanced to be less redundant and considerate of up-to-date public health practices. After consideration of the time and resources necessary, GCHD determined the Pathways Program Track 1 & 2 would be the best application to pursue.

- PHAB training was completed by the PHAB Coordinator
- The PHAB Readiness Assessment was completed
- Document training and PHAB meetings were and are ongoing
- Formal application to pathways will be submitted end of April 2024
- The PHAB cohort begins July 2024. Documentation will be reviewed alongside an educational group of peers also engaged in the Pathways program
- Final document submissions for Pathways will be due no later than December 2024
- PHAB reviewers will reach out with any questions about submissions and responses will be required within 90 days
- After that time period, GCHD aims to be PHAB Recognized
- After the recognition determination, GCHD can decide whether to pursue Full Accreditation



Naloxone Initiative

In January 2023, Galveston Daily News reported that **Galveston County ranked 2nd in Texas for fentanyl-related deaths per capita**. The naloxone initiative was created in response to the opioid crisis as GCHD was transitioning out of the COVID-19 response in February 2023. GCHD quickly started a phased approach to address deaths - utilizing naloxone, the opioid-overdose reversal agent, and making it available for use to prevent death.



Phase 1

The first phase began with acquiring naloxone (some may recognize as Narcan, a brand name), and equipping non-medical first responders who may respond to life-threatening opioid overdose events. This phase included education of recognizing overdoses and about naloxone and how it works. It also included training of how to use and providing these first responders (GCSO, PDs, Fire, etc.) with the naloxone for use.



Phase 2

The second phase moved to a wider range of organizations such as school districts and school police departments. The same practices - education and supply were used.



Phase 3

The third phase moved to the community level - organizations and local businesses to provide naloxone to their staff or patrons, or house a "vending machine" where naloxone is stored and can be easily accessible for anyone to use - no questions asked.

Naloxone Initiative

While GCHD created an independent initiative, we also joined forces with local organizations and community stakeholders to combine efforts from a true community perspective. Creating a coalition, Galveston County Opioid Defense Effort (GCODE), allowed those who were already engaging in education, outreach, and naloxone distribution, to team with other Galveston County organizations to reduce duplication of efforts and maximize reach throughout the community. GCODE works together to provide trainings, education, outreach, and naloxone distribution throughout Galveston County. Efforts are driven by business owners, former users, affected friends and family, and a passion for the elimination of opioid-related deaths.

FIGHTING THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC IN GALVESTON COUNTY

A rise in both the intentional and unintentional use of fentanyl has increased the number of deaths related to opioid overdose.

500% FROM 2019-2022, FENTANYL-RELATED DEATHS INCREASED BY MORE THAN 500% IN TEXAS ACCORDING TO PROVISIONAL DATA FROM THE TEXAS DSHS.

258 **258 PEOPLE** HAVE DIED FROM GENERAL OVERDOSING IN GALVESTON COUNTY SINCE 2020.

Galveston County Opioid Defense Effort (GCODE)

is a community of organizations focused on fighting against the opioid epidemic in Galveston County through naloxone* distribution, naloxone administration trainings, and preventative education.

*Naloxone is a non-addictive, life-saving drug that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose when administered in a timely manner.



For more information or to join the Galveston County Opioid Defense Effort, contact the Galveston County Health District.

409.938.7221

od@gchd.org

FACTS ABOUT FENTANYL

Fentanyl is a type of drug called an opioid. Opioids are used to treat pain. Fentanyl is one of the strongest opioids on the market, and the illegal drug markets are using other street drugs with it. If the drug you are taking is laced with a deadly dose of fentanyl, you wouldn't be able to see it, taste it, or smell it.

THERE ARE TWO TYPES

PRESCRIPTION Most medical settings will prescribe by doctor or nurse. It comes in many forms: pills, patches, or liquid. It is used to relieve pain and is prescribed under strict supervision.

ILLEGITIMATELY MANUFACTURED Made through the dark web market and can look like a prescription pill. It is often sold in small amounts to increase the chances of sale. The pills are often sold in small amounts to increase the chances of sale. The pills are often sold in small amounts to increase the chances of sale.

OVER 150 PEOPLE DIE EVERY DAY FROM OVERDOSES RELATED TO SYNTHETIC OPIOIDS LIKE FENTANYL.

HOW MUCH IS A LETHAL DOSE OF FENTANYL?

It only takes two milligrams to kill someone.

SIGNS OF AN OPIOID OVERDOSE

- Not responsive to loud conversation or bright light
- Slow or no breathing
- Blue lips or nail beds
- Weak or no pulse
- Unconscious state
- Small, pinpoint pupils

WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK SOMEONE IS OVERDOSING

- 1 CALL 9-1-1 IMMEDIATELY*
- 2 ADMINISTER NALOXONE** IF AVAILABLE
- 3 TRY TO KEEP THE PERSON AWAKE AND BREATHING
- 4 LAY THE PERSON ON THEIR SIDE TO PREVENT CHOKING
- 5 STAY WITH THEM UNTIL EMERGENCY WORKERS ARRIVE

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT NALOXONE, VISIT: www.gchd.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT NALOXONE, VISIT: www.gchd.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT NALOXONE, VISIT: www.gchd.org

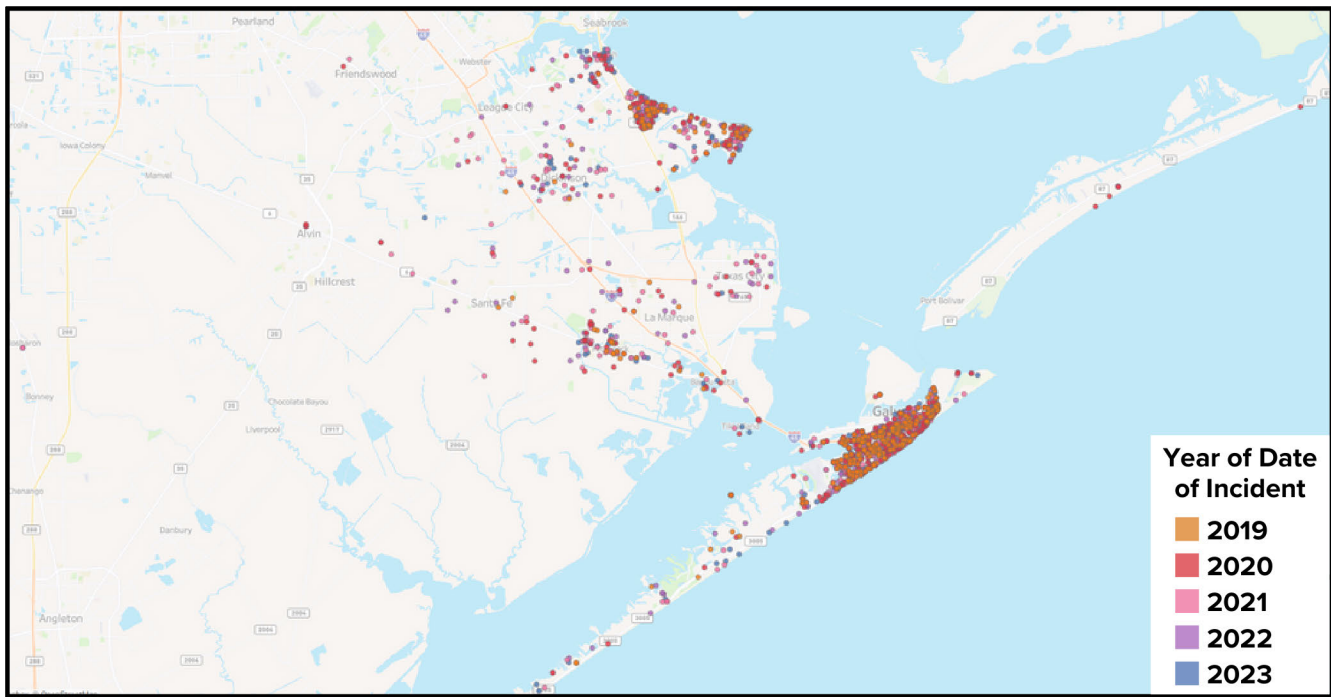




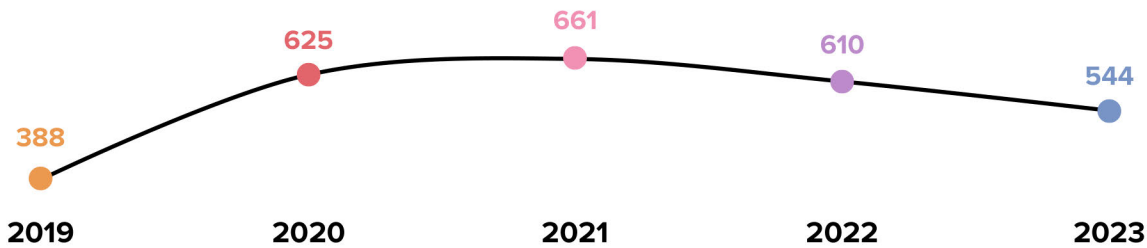
Naloxone Initiative

Any program would be incomplete without the evidence to support its progress. As part of the GCHD initiative, data has been collected from the Galveston Area Ambulance Authority (GAAA), and Galveston County Medical Examiner's Office (ME). Analyzation of EMS calls and death data provides the perspective of overall morbidity, and guides locations of interventions, such as where to place vending machines or hold outreaches. This data is continuously collected and is being used to build a dashboard to visualize progress.

OPIOID ASSOCIATED INCIDENTS BY INCIDENT ADDRESS



OPIOID ASSOCIATED INCIDENTS BY YEAR



These opioid incidences include residents as well as non-residents of Galveston County. Some incidents lack specific addresses but are still represented in the line chart.



Children’s Center

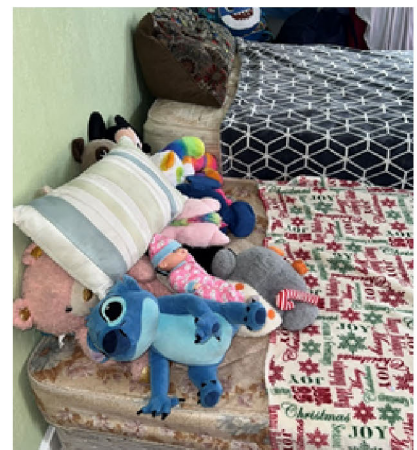
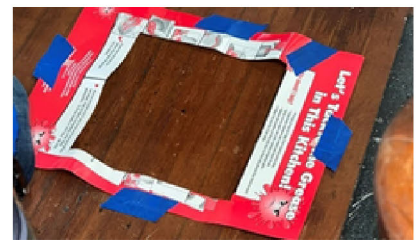
In early March 2023, the Public Health Nurses were asked to provide an inspection at the home of a child who had tested positive for high blood lead levels. During that visit, it was discovered that the child lived at a group home (The Children’s Center) along with her mother and 3 older siblings. The family had lived at the center for 4 years but were uninsured and the other children had never been tested for lead. The PHNs worked with Coastal Health and Wellness to obtain lead testing for the 3 siblings. Two of the siblings tested positive for elevated lead levels.

In mid-March, the PHNs returned with the Environmental Department of GCHD to conduct testing of the grounds and buildings at the facility. During that visit, access to the entire facility was provided. We found grossly unsanitary living conditions for all of the families living at The Children’s Center including rat, roach, and bedbug infestations. The buildings were very poorly maintained, and in one building there was sewage running down the wall of the kitchen when the upstairs toilets were flushed.

Late March the results of the environmental investigation were returned and showed very high levels of lead in ground soil, as well as lead-based paint flaking and peeling in some of the homes of the facility. A second environmental study was requested by Dr. Keiser to coincide with lead-level testing of all residents and employees of The Children’s Center. The Children’s Center employees were notified of the need for a second inspection, as well as an offer for free lead testing for all residents and employees. A total of 33 people chose to be tested at no cost to themselves.

On April 6, the GCHD clinical laboratory, Environmental Department, PHNs, and GCHD CEO and Local Medical Authority arrived, accompanied by Galveston County Constables and Galveston County Facility Managers. While the laboratory and PHNs were conducting the lead testing on residents, the rest of the team began the Environmental Inspection. During the inspection, the living conditions were found to be so unsanitary and the contaminated soil so pervasive that Dr. Keiser decided to close The Children’s Center, effective that day.

PHNs from GCHD worked with employees of The Children’s Center as well as staff from St. Vincent’s House during the next several weeks to find housing for each of the displaced residents, a total of 49 people. Funding for the re-housing was provided in part by St. Vincent’s and by GCHD. All residents were eventually re-housed. Employees at GCHD also donated household goods, furnishings and funds to help residents re-settle in new apartments.



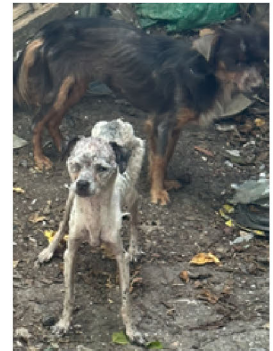
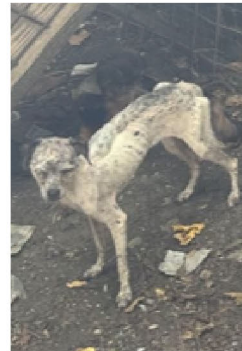


Animal Seizure

On September 13, 2023, in Santa Fe, Texas, the Animal Resource Center (ARC) executed a remarkable seizure operation, rescuing 21 animals from deplorable conditions of cruelty.

With unwavering dedication and meticulous care, the ARC swiftly intervened, ensuring the safety and well-being of these innocent animals. Following the legal proceedings, the courts awarded the ARC custody of all rescued animals. Through collaborative efforts with various rescue groups, the ARC facilitated the seamless transition of these animals into loving homes.

Today, it brings immense joy to report that each animal has found a forever family, thriving, and flourishing in environments filled with love and care. This successful endeavor stands as a testament to the ARC's commitment to safeguarding the welfare of animals in need, restoring hope, and building brighter futures for every life entrusted in our care.



*Pictured left:
Autumn during
the cruelty
seizure.*

*Pictured right:
Autumn now!
Autumn was
sent to a
rescue, nursed
back to health,
and has been
adopted!*





Outbreaks

An outbreak is a sudden increase in the disease frequency, related to time, place, and observed population.

Norovirus Outbreak at 3 Schools

Reported April 20, 2023

The Epidemiology Department was notified of a large number of children exhibiting gastrointestinal illness at a Galveston County elementary school. Two more schools from the same ISD subsequently reported having a greater than usual amount of gastrointestinal the next day. The schools were given preventive measures such as good hand hygiene, cleaning/disinfection, as well as the exclusion of ill staff and students. The first school voluntarily closed and began pandemic cleaning of the facility. The Epidemiology Department conducted an investigation and found that most of the children became ill after an assembly in the auditorium that showcased a variety animals. Food and animal sources were ruled out which made this outbreak a suspected person to person transmission event. The final case count included 234 suspect and 4 lab confirmed cases of Norovirus.

Legionella Outbreak Associated with a Hotel

Reported July 7, 2023

The Epidemiology Department was notified of 3 people testing positive for Legionella after staying at a Galveston County hotel. Epidemiology and Environmental Health worked together to inspect and provide the hotel with guidance. The Epidemiology Department recommended the hotel hire a Legionella contractor to collect and test water samples and several of the samples came back positive for Legionella. The Epidemiology Department requested the hotel set up a testing schedule with the Legionella contractor and a Legionella remediation plan based on CDC guidelines was implemented by the hotel. The hotel closed the impacted areas for remediation. All samples collected after the Legionella remediation plan was implemented have tested negative.

COVID-19 Outbreak at a Nursing Home

Reported December 14, 2023

The Epidemiology Department was notified of a COVID-19 outbreak at a nursing home involving 60 individuals (44 residents and 16 staff). Upon investigation, it was discovered that many of the residents tested positive after attending an activities session at the facility. The nursing home was given precautionary measures which included signage alerting visitors of the outbreak, exclusion of ill staff from work, surveillance testing of exposed, cohorting and isolating of the ill. On December 29, the facility performed a mass testing which yielded zero positive results.



Community Health Services



Community Health Services improves the health and well-being of the community by encouraging, supporting and empowering residents to be healthy and self-sufficient.

COVID-19 in 2023

In 2023, GCHD transitioned from the disaster relief phase of the pandemic to surveillance following the ending of the federal disaster declaration in May 2023 and state declaration in June 2023. GCHD provided free COVID-19 community Test-to-Treat program services to 120 county residents from January to May 2023 prior to ending the program, as COVID-19 testing, and treatment options became more readily available. In September 2023, approval of the universally available COVID-19 vaccines ended. The new presentation of the 23/24 COVID vaccines changed to being covered by insurance and was added to the Texas Vaccines for Children Program (TVFC) for children up to 18 years, and to the Adult Safety Net (ASN) program for uninsured/underinsured adults. 751 COVID-19 vaccines were administered by GCHD in 2023.



Confinement Team

The Confinement Team established PRN COVID-19 testing with the Galveston County Juvenile Center, increasing the population eligible for free COVID-19 testing and treatment. In doing this, GCHD created a rapport with Galveston County confinement system officials, broadening opportunities for further healthcare collaboration in the future.

104
Outreaches attended

674
Patients tested

12
Patients treated





Immunizations

Our Immunizations Department protects the health and well-being of our community by providing children and adults protection against vaccine-preventable diseases.

3,056

Patients seen

6,275

Vaccines administered

57

Outreach events attended



Galveston County Health District BACK TO SCHOOL VACCINATIONS

- July 18
8 AM - 6 PM
- July 19
8 AM - 4 PM
- July 20
8 AM - 4 PM
- Aug. 1
8 AM - 6 PM
- Aug. 2
8 AM - 4 PM
- Aug. 3
8 AM - 4 PM

TVFC VACCINE (State supplied) ELIGIBILITY & FEES

Any children 18 years of age or younger who meet at least one of the following criteria are eligible for TVFC vaccines:

- Enrolled in Medicaid
- Does NOT have health insurance
- American Indian
- Alaskan Native
- Underinsured
(Child's current insurance does not cover vaccines, or only covers a select few vaccines.)

TVFC Vaccines Administrative Fees:
One Vaccine: \$3
Two or More Vaccines: \$24

PRIVATE VACCINES ARE AVAILABLE.
Vaccine prices may vary.

TEXAS VACCINES FOR CHILDREN (TVFC) PROGRAM

Your child may be eligible for free vaccines. The Texas Vaccines for Children (TVFC) program provides free vaccines to children who qualify.

- Is my child eligible for the TVFC program?**
- Children age 18 years or younger are eligible if they meet one or more of the following criteria:
- American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Medicaid eligible
 - Uninsured*
 - Underinsured*
 - Enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
- *Underinsured means that your child has health insurance, but the insurance policy doesn't cover any vaccines or doesn't cover certain recommended vaccines.
*Vaccines must be provided through a CHIP provider.

What is the cost?
There is no charge for the vaccines given by TVFC providers to eligible children. Health care providers may charge other fees related to the visit, such as fees for giving a shot, office visit, and non-vaccine services.



The Immunizations Department **increased the number of outreach events they attended by 67% from 2022 to 2023** and represented multiple programs, such as ImmTrac2, PHBPP, and TVFC.

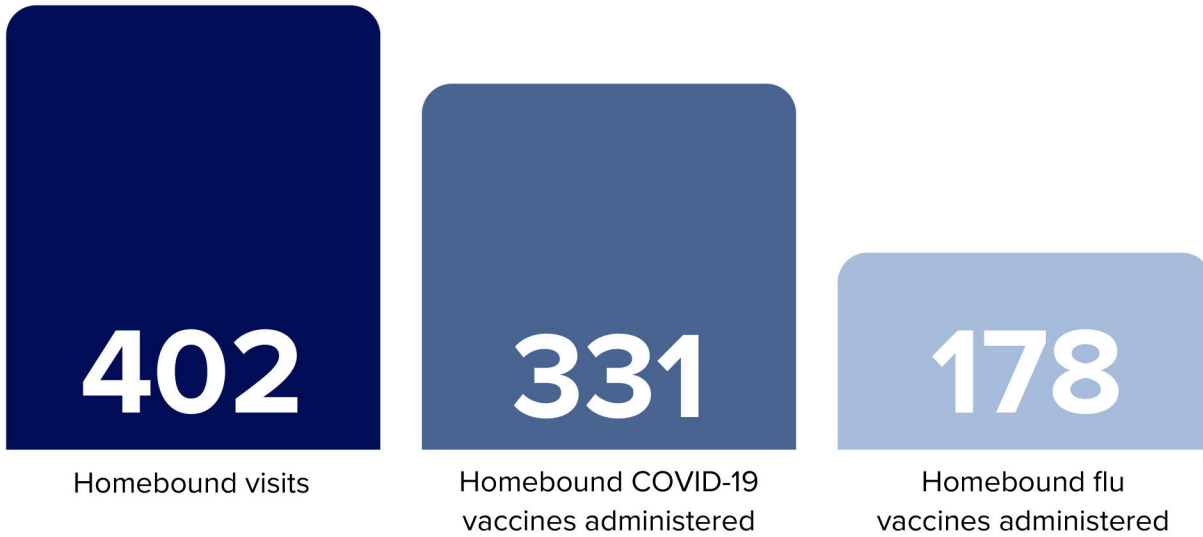




Public Health Nursing (PHN)

Our Public Health Nursing division protects the health and well-being of the community by working in partnership with health district programs, residents and organizations to help ensure healthy lives. Public health nurses provide home follow-up care, immunizations for homebound patients, health education and referral of clients to appropriate agencies for assistance.

PHN HOMEBOUND PROGRAM



167
Health fairs & outreaches

667
Blood pressures taken



551
Blood sugars taken

31
Elevated blood lead level investigations





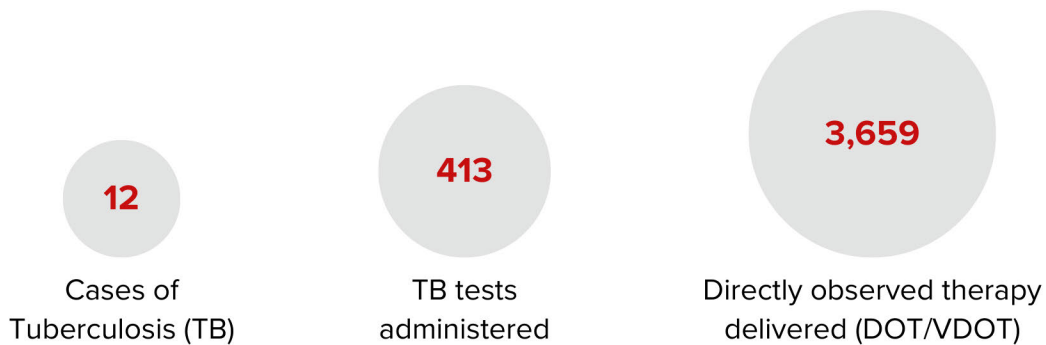
HIV/STD Services

The HIV/STD department provides discreet counseling, access to services, disease investigation, and reporting for Galveston, Brazoria, and Chambers counties with the overarching goal of disease elimination. The department is divided into surveillance staff who maintain records, provide front-line customer service, and assign case work to the disease intervention specialists who conduct the public health follow-up fieldwork. By providing patient education, disease intervention, and partner elicitation, the dedicated HIV/STD staff work to end the HIV epidemic.



Tuberculosis (TB)

The TB program is a DSHS funded grant which has allocated funds to support the prevention and control of cases in Galveston County. The TB department provides treatment to people with TB disease and TB infection.





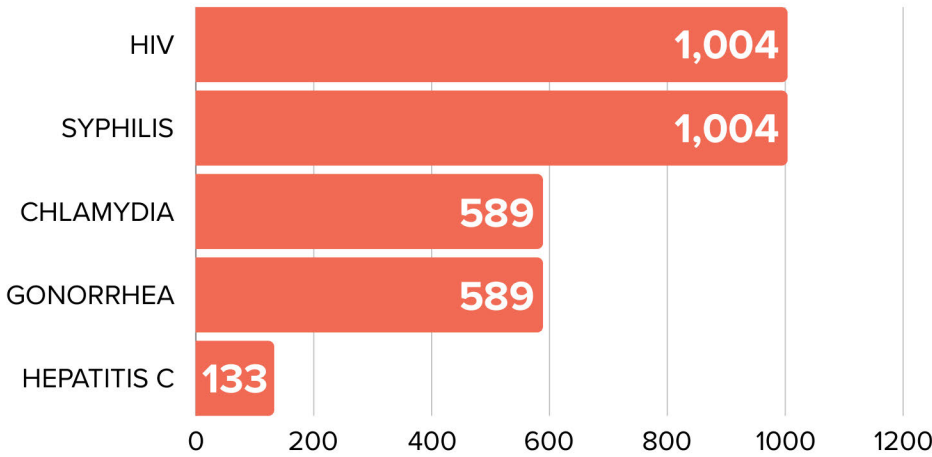
Healthy Concepts



Our mission at Healthy Concepts Clinic (HCC) is to promote sexual health equity through education, testing, and treatment with a neutral gender approach to the communities of Brazoria, Galveston, and Matagorda counties.

Healthy Concepts aims to remove the barriers and stigmas that stop so many of us from getting tested. We work to have an open and candid dialogue with our patients about sexual health, the benefits to everyone concerning PrEP, and the need to be tested at least once a year.

NUMBER OF PATIENTS TESTED BY HCC



273
Patients treated in the clinic

120
Outreaches attended



HCC established relationships with local colleges for testing events and symposiums.



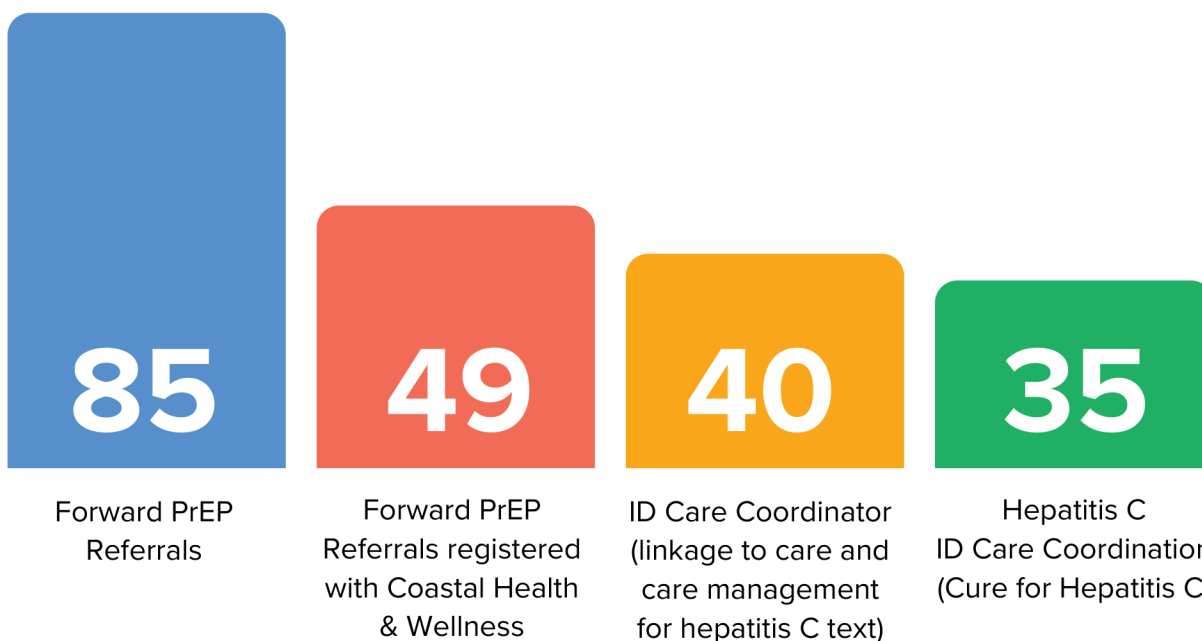
FORWARD PrEP



The FORWARD PrEP program implements evidence based and evidenced-informed approaches for HIV prevention and care services to increase uptake of PrEP and HIV screening and testing in Galveston County at Healthy Concepts Clinic. FORWARD PrEP program is to help prevent and protect all individuals who are at risk for HIV acquisition through sexual encounter and/or IV drug use. Scaling up HIV prevention service and care services to priority population delivers key prevention strategies to populations hardest hit by HIV.

FORWARD PrEP program initiative is closely aligned and complementary with the HIV Plan and the Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. (EHE) goals to achieve the common goal of HIV prevention and HIV care Continuum, not only through innovative care models, but also through collaboration with local, state, federal, and community partners. Through evidenced-based practices and implementation, FORWARD PrEP continues to scale up HIV prevention through enhanced case/care management for people with HIV with linkages to care and expedited PrEP provision and uptake with a PrEP navigator at HCC to coordinate and collaborate PrEP provision and warm referrals to our local community Health clinic, Coastal Health and Wellness (CHW).

This new HIV prevention initiative not only empowers individuals to take an active role in staying healthy, but also promotes taking control of their sexual health by enrolling with HCC FORWARD PrEP program.



In 2023:

- The EHE Strategic Plan was created to initiate rapid PrEP or same-day PrEP for priority population or substantial risk for HIV acquisition with FORWARD PrEP program at HCC.
- Community engagement and health awareness with youth was increased through sexual health and healthy relationships education of college students at COM: Sex Symposium and Texas A&M.



Community Engagement

Our main goal is to identify health disparities of targeted populations throughout Galveston County. Through our many programs/services such as HEAL (healthy eating, active living), community outreach, health screening initiatives, the Health Equity Advisory Council, School Health Advisory commitments, and relationship building we are tasked with bringing awareness of the district’s commitment to protecting and promoting the One Health of Galveston County.

72 Health Screenings	83 Health & Resource Fairs	7 Sponsorships Received
124 Community Partner Meetings	10 Health Education Classes	4 Financial Literacy Classes
21 Data Collections	33 HEAL Classes	24 Presentations



The Community Engagement Department established partnerships with local health organizations, community leaders, and stakeholders to gather insights and perspectives on health disparities.

A Community Health Assessment was conducted in collaboration with community members and community partners, pinpointing specific health disparities prevalent in the community. The assessment included facilitated community forums, 1-on-1 interviews, and focus groups, to openly discuss health disparities and garner community input.



Women, Infants and Children (WIC)



WIC provides supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk.

58,438 total WIC benefits issued in 2023.

94 total after-hours calls and texts received from the 24/7 breastfeeding emergency line.



In 2023:

The USDA provided increased funding to WIC agencies across Texas to allow WIC participants the ability to purchase additional fruits and vegetables due to inflation.

With increased funding, WIC staff had to serve three times the amount of clients each month to successfully download WIC benefits for purchase.

While serving an increased amount of clients each month, the GCHD WIC agency significantly increased new WIC participation during this time.

GCHD's WIC department was one of the first agencies across Texas to open their doors and provide face-to-face services after the public health emergency waiver expired. GCHD WIC staff started to re-train on all clinical and laboratory services that were provided to clients pre-COVID. Staff trained each month leading up to the reopening, and clients and staff were thrilled to be face to face again with one another.

GCHD WIC hosted the Summer Meals Program in 2023. Clients and children were able to return in-person for lunch with WIC each week.



Environmental Health Services protects public health and well-being by inspecting, investigating, and monitoring air, water, and food safety.

Environmental Health Services

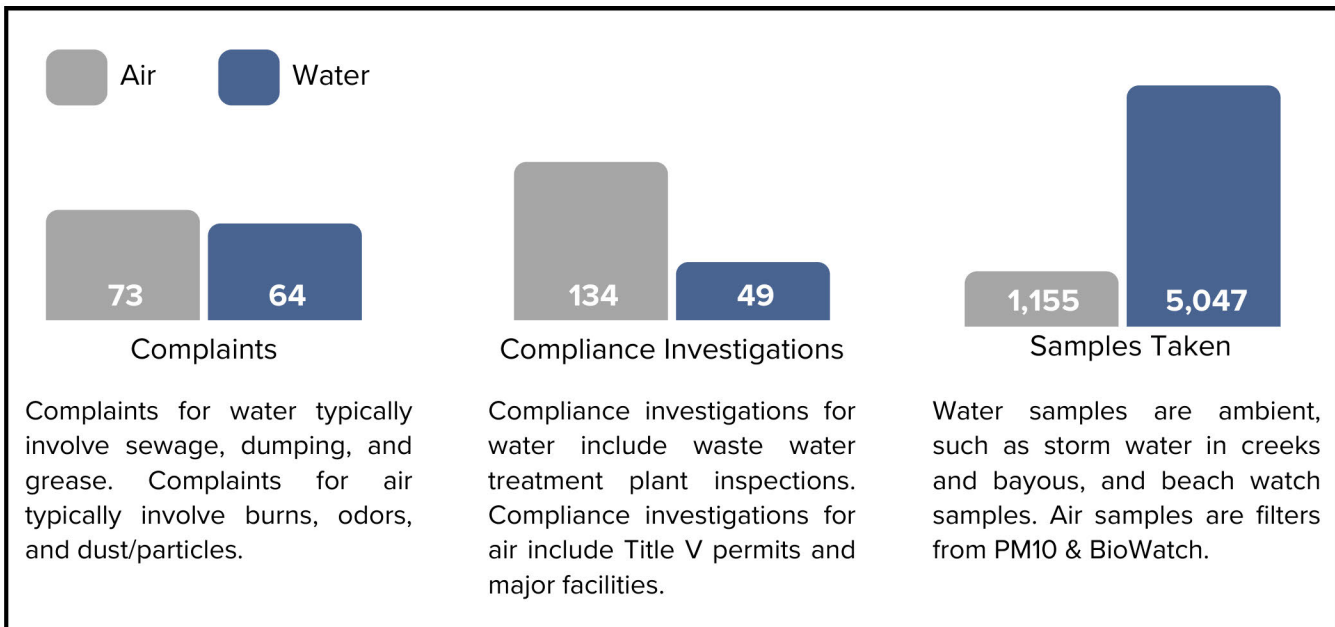




Air & Water Pollution Services

Air Pollution Services assists the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) with permitting, compliance inspections, complaint investigations, enforcement, lead cases, and air monitoring within Galveston County.

Water Pollution Services is contracted by Galveston County and several cities to conduct wastewater treatment plant inspections, complaint investigations, grease trap inspections, and sampling of ambient water sources.



In 2023:

- Air Pollution Services received the UTMB President’s Award Grant Project.
- Air Pollution Services started developing the PM2.5 Air Sensor Network.
- Water Pollution Services completed the Year 5 requirements and reporting of the Storm Water Management Plan (FY19-23).
- Water Pollution Services secured another sampling contract with Galveston Park Board.
- Water Pollution Services compiled storm water historical data, replaced 33 sites, and updated routes.



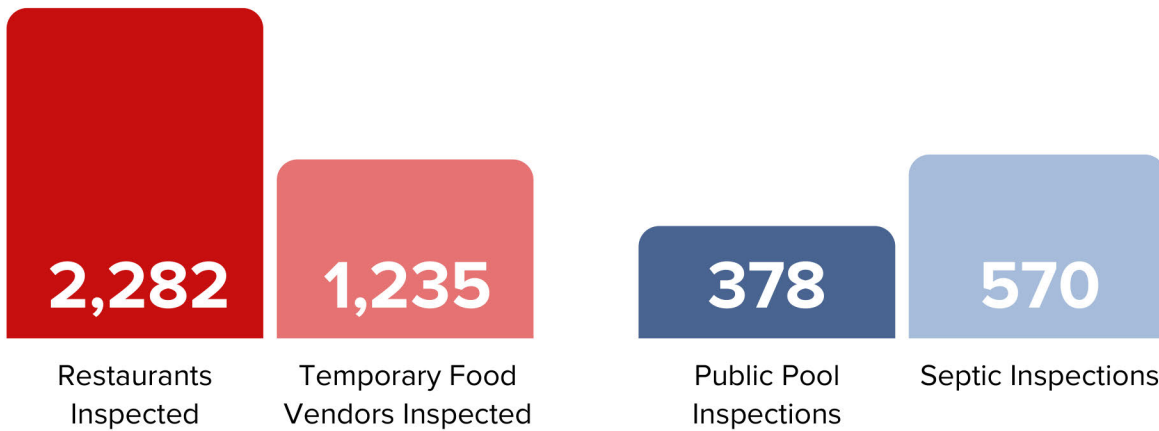


Consumer Health Services

Consumer Health Services is responsible for the permitting, inspection, investigation and enforcement of rules and regulations that govern food establishments, on-site sewage facilities, swimming pools and public health nuisances.

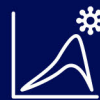
In 2023:

- Consumer Health Services hired four new staff members and created a new position to assist with septic inspections.
- The department fostered a team environment with their new staff and began to rebuild morale.
- Consumer Health Services began catching up on past due inspections and invoices, as well as updating and revamping old policies and procedures.
- Director of Environmental Health Programs Ronald Schultz retired after 37 years of service to public health and the health district. He was instrumental to the environmental health program and contributed significantly to improving the public's health in Galveston County.





Disease Investigation Services



Our Epidemiology Services division protects public health and well-being by conducting surveillance for the occurrence of diseases and other health conditions and implementing appropriate interventions and control measures in the event of outbreaks.



Epidemiology

Epidemiology is the study of how often diseases occur in different groups of people and why. Epidemiological information is used to plan and evaluate strategies to prevent illness and as a guide to the management of patients in whom disease has already developed.

37,258

Infectious disease investigations conducted

139,050

Reported cases

23

Controlled outbreaks

In 2023:

- Over 90% of cases were investigated within 30 days of receipt.
- All staff completed and received certification in pandemic preparedness and response from the Texas Epidemic Public Health Institute (TEPHI).



Data Program

In 2023, our Data Program:

- Successfully created a pilot for Salmonella to test bidirectional reporting with DSHS.
- Developed a curated training model in Salesforce for the team to be better equipped within Salesforce environment.
- Created an outbreak model to better handle outbreaks internally.





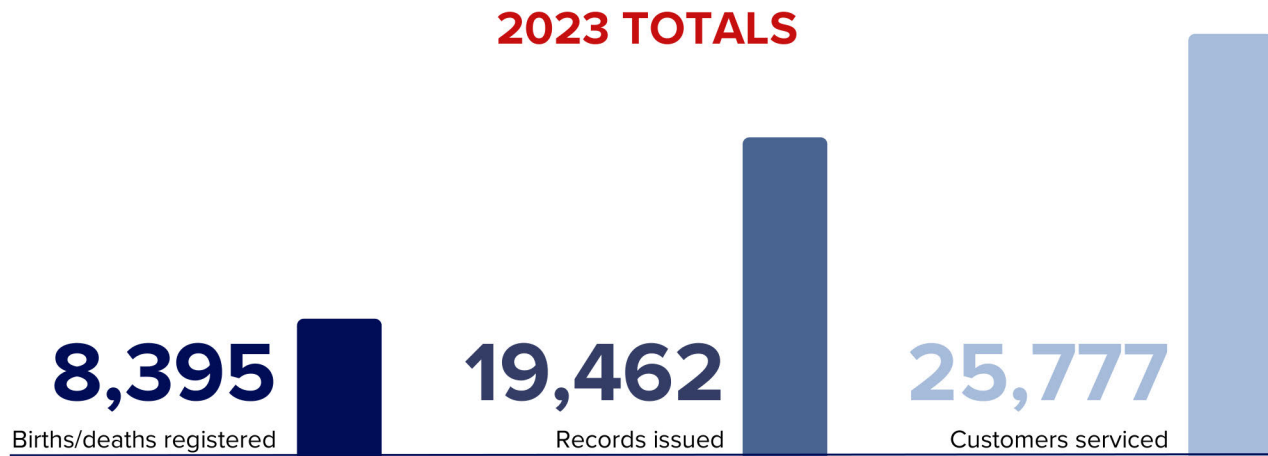
Business Support Services



Business Support Services enable the production or provision of services to the organization's customers and support other processes and functions of the organization.

Birth and Death Records

Our Birth & Death Records (Vital Statistics) division registers and issues certified copies of birth and death records and provides assistance to those seeking records not locally available.



In 2023:

The Vital Statistics department actively worked with vendors to create a new database program to secure all vital records.

New services were added to Vital-Chek online ordering, providing birth or death records at will call, express mailing, and a portal for funeral homes to expedite the ordering process.



Human Resources



Total Retention Rate: 84% **Total Turnover Rate: 25%**



In 2023:

- HR implemented a new HRIS system (UKG) onboarding system.
- The department had a successful self-insured benefits open enrollment rate of 99% with a new online enrollment platform.
- Internship programs were expanded by collaborating with the Texas Chiropractic College, UTMB, Galveston College, and College of the Mainland.

Circle of Excellence

GCHD developed and implemented a new employee recognition program, the Circle of Excellence. Employees are nominated by their co-workers, and one winner is selected per division, per quarter. Weekly shout-outs are also sent out for employees who have gone above and beyond.





Communications



GCHD.ORG


646,789
website views in 2023

194,006
unique users

TRAFFIC ACQUISITION



Source	Percentage
Organic Search	65.1%
Direct	26.9%
Social	3.9%
Referral	4.1%




@GCHDINFO

Our content reached
321,118
people in 2023

576 new
page follows

29,203
page visits in 2023

443 new
page likes



@GCHDINFO

46,286 views in
2023

117 new
subscribers

346 hours of
watch time

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



@GCHDINFO



Galveston County Health District



Fleet and Facilities

In 2023, GCHD hired a Fleet and Facilities Manager.

Fleet and Facilities added a much-needed mobile mechanic position in 2023. The mobile mechanic repairs all GCHD vehicles and completes preventative maintenance. The position is responsible for 49 vehicles at all GCHD sites from Kemah to Galveston. Many working hours have been saved by utilizing this new employee, as individual departments and employees with little to no mechanical knowledge are no longer responsible for scheduling maintenance, state inspections, and/or repairs. Our fleet vehicles are now receiving the attention they need on the spot, and care is taken to initiate a faster response to potential issues.

A work order system was implemented in 2023. The system opens virtual tickets for vehicle maintenance and facility needs. It allows for streamlining maintenance and repairs more efficiently by prioritizing immediate needs and having a bidirectional communication process with customers.

GCHD entered into an agreement with Galveston County Road and Bridge. The agreement allows a lower rate of charges for GCHD when large-scale repairs are needed within a fully functional mechanical shop.

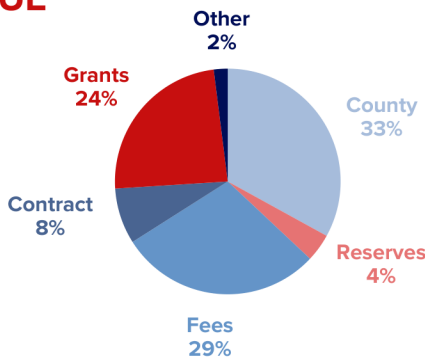




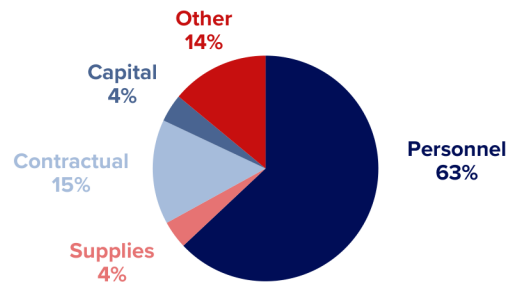
Accounting

The accounting department provides District-wide support consisting of accounts payable & receivable, payroll, general ledger maintenance, asset management, audit support, annual budget development & forecasting, grant funding oversight, and financial policies & procedures. Financial leadership also provides quantitative financial information to support short- and long-term strategic initiatives and program performance assessments and accountability across the District.

REVENUE



EXPENSES



Purchasing

The Purchasing Department is responsible for buying everything for GCHD. We support the Animal Resource Center, Galveston Area Ambulance Authority, Coastal Health & Wellness and Public Health. From cotton balls and paperclips, to x-rays machines and ambulances, we procure every item that our staff needs to function daily. We do our best to provide cost savings for the Health District and provide quality supplies to our staff and patients.

2,119

Vendors

4,334

Purchase Orders

18

Requests for Proposals (RFPs)

PURCHASE ORDERS BY BRANCH



Information Technology

6,123

Tickets opened

↑ **126%**

Increase from last year

6,051

Tickets closed

↑ **122%**

Increase from last year

TECHNOLOGY REFRESHED

50 Laptops

75 Desktops

75 Monitors

20 Copiers

Average time to close a ticket in **2023:**

🕒 **9 HOURS**

VS

Average time to close a ticket in **2022:**

🕒 **24.8 HOURS**

IT Projects Completed in 2023

- TCISD School-Based Clinic
- CHW Call Center Redesign
- New Cybersecurity Policy
- Wi-Fi upgrade for all sites
- Multiple complete department relocations
- Establishing a Helpdesk for Facilities and Communications

In 2023:

- IT created 214 new user logins or updated existing users.
- IT performed 12 network cable installations.
- IT configured iPads for telemedicine use in Coastal Health & Wellness.





Public Health Preparedness

Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) strengthens the county's health security by mitigating, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters, infectious diseases, terrorism, and mass casualty emergencies.

The Public Health Emergency Preparedness department developed and conducted monthly safety committee meetings for GCHD staff that covered a wide array of scenarios and hazards to better train and prepare staff for emergency responses.

GCHD collaborated interdepartmentally and with community partners, including local industry, local ISDs, port authority, and county emergency management, and federal partners, including Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and the National Weather Service, for real-world responses, workshops, and trainings.



Medical Reserve Corps

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is a community-based, civilian, volunteer program that helps build the public health infrastructure of communities nationwide. Each MRC unit is organized and trained to address a wide range of challenges from public health education to disaster response.



Scan the QR code for more information on the Galveston County MRC and how to volunteer.



Galveston County Health District divisions serve the community by providing animal services through the Animal Resource Center; emergency medical services through the Galveston Area Ambulance Authority; and medical, dental, and counseling services at Coastal Health & Wellness.

Divisions of GCHD





Galveston County Animal Resource Center



The Animal Resource Center provides animal services to Bayou Vista, Hitchcock, Kemah, La Marque, Texas City, Tiki Island, Santa Fe, Clear Lake Shores and unincorporated Galveston County, as outlined in an inter-local agreement.

♥ **2,036**

Shelter animals were adopted, rescued, or reunited in 2023

↑ **9%**

Low-cost clinic revenue increase

↓ **5%**

Euthanasia rate decrease



Providing Safety, Shelter, and Second Chances for Animals in our County.



The ARC acquired a dedicated transport van marking a significant milestone in our mission to care for and increase our efforts in our live release outcomes.



www.gchd.org/arc



409.948.2485

Galveston Area Ambulance Authority



Galveston Area Ambulance Authority (GAAA), also known as Galveston County Health District EMS, has provided life-saving service to the residents of Galveston Island since 1975. We serve Kemah, Clear Lake Shores, Bayou Vista, Hitchcock, Jamaica Beach, Galveston, the Village of Tiki Island and unincorporated areas of Galveston County, including Bacliff, Bayshore and San Leon.

 **18,905**

Total 911 calls

 **20,879**

Total calls

GAAA Attended

36 preparedness meetings with various partners in the county and other counties

21 public relation events



Cardiac survival rates improved with the addition of LUCAS devices and epinephrine drips. The LUCAS device is an easy-to-use mechanical chest compression device that helps lifesaving teams deliver high-quality, guidelines-consistent chest compressions to sudden cardiac arrest patients; in the field, on the move, and in the hospital.

Providing life-saving services to the residents of Galveston County since 1975.

GAAA participated with Galveston Fire Department and Galveston Police Department to create a comprehensive plan for coordinated response during major events such as Mardi Gras and Lone Star Rally.



Scan the QR code above to learn more about GAAA.



Coastal Health & Wellness



11,582

Unduplicated patients

↑ 25%

Increase in unduplicated patients

+43,304

Visits

↑ 36%

Increase in visits



League City Regional Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting



School Based Health Center Grand Opening

4,741

New patients

↑ 42%

Increase in new patients

38

New hires

↑ 31%

Increase in new hires

Current Programs in Development

- Galveston County Employee Program
- School-Based Health Center
- Texas Chiropractic College Partnership
- Home-Based Care Program
- 340B Pharmacy
- Electronic Health Record Optimization
- Women's Health
- Infectious Disease Care Clinic
- Revenue Cycle Management Optimization Project
- Behavioral Health Integration

In 2023, Coastal Health & Wellness was awarded four HRSA badges for the first time in Coastal history.



409.938.2234

www.coastalhw.org



GCHD Community Collaborators



Galveston County Health District has collaborated with citizens, agencies, organizations, and businesses around the community to make formal, sustained commitments to accomplish a shared mission, vision, and values.



Community Collaborators

CITIES IN GALVESTON COUNTY

Bayou Vista
 Clear Lake Shores
 Dickinson
 Friendswood
 Galveston
 Hitchcock
 Jamaica Beach
 Kemah
 La Marque
 League City
 Bolivar
 Santa Fe
 Texas City
 Tiki Island

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

AMOCO Federal Credit Union
 Ashland Chemical
 Discount Tire
 Galveston County Road and Bridge
 Galveston Specialty Pharmacy
 Gulf Coast Water Authority
 H-E-B
 Hitchcock Hometown Pharmacy
 Inside Edge Consulting
 Marathon Petroleum
 O'Reilly's Auto Parts
 Walmart Pharmacies
 Wellby Financial
 Workforce Solutions

HEALTHCARE

AIDS Education & Training Center (AETC)
 American Heart Association
 Coastal Health & Wellness
 Community Health Network
 Cancer Prevention and Research Institute
 Gulf Coast Blood Center
 HCA Mainland
 Houston Health Department
 Houston Methodist Clear Lake
 Infection Control & Healthcare Epidemiology UTMB
 PAM Health Rehabilitation
 Shriners Hospitals for Children
 Taking Our Best Shot
 The Rose - Breast Center of Excellence UTMB
 University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB)
 UTMB Student Health

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Access Care of Coastal Texas, Inc (ACCT)
 ADA House Women's Center
 American Red Cross Gulf Coast
 Bay Area Recovery Center
 Beacon of Hope
 Catholic Charities
 Child Protective Services
 Christus, Our Daily Bread
 Children's Center, Inc.
 Connect Transit
 DePelchin Children's Center
 Family Service Center
 Galveston Beach Patrol
 Galveston Central Church
 Galveston County Food Bank
 Galveston County Veterans Services
 Galveston Housing Authority
 Gulf Coast Center
 Gulf Coast Transit District
 Higher Up Texas
 HIS Ministries
 Hitchcock Family Welfare
 Houston Area HIV & Aging Coalition
 Interfaith Caring Ministries
 Island Transit
 Jesse Tree, Inc.
 M.I. Lewis Social Services Center
 Maximus
 Meals on Wheels Galveston County
 Moody Early Childhood Center
 Mounting Horizons
 NAMI Gulf Coast Resource & Crisis Center
 Resource Crisis Center
 Ronald McDonald House
 Salvation Army
 Social Security Administration
 St. Hope Foundation
 St. Vincent's House
 Texas Advanced Health Education Center East
 United Way Mainland
 UTMB Health Resource Center



Community Collaborators

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Clear Creek ISD
Dickinson ISD
Friendswood ISD
Galveston ISD
High Island ISD
Hitchcock ISD
Santa Fe ISD
Texas City ISD

HIGHER EDUCATION

Alvin Community College
Baylor School of Nursing
College of the Mainland
Galveston College
Texas A&M University at Galveston
University of Texas Medical Branch

ORGANIZATIONS & COALITIONS

African American Health Coalition
Bay Area Council on Drugs & Alcohol
Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership
Boys & Girls Club Galveston
Brazoria County Pride
Coast Guard - Central Texas Coastal Area Committee
Coffee Connection
Dickinson Public Library
Galveston Bay Estuary Program
Galveston Bay Foundation
Galveston County Fair & Rodeo
Galveston County Food Bank
Galveston County Homeless Coalition
Galveston County Jail
Galveston County Local Emergency Planning Committee
Galveston Pride
Galveston County Teen Parenting Coalition
Galveston County Opioid Defense Efforts
General Land Office – Clean Coast Texas
Gulf Coast Outreach Services
Helen Hall Public Library
Houston Pride
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Juvenile Detention Center
League City Chamber of Commerce
Lone Star Bike Rally
Mae S Bruce Public Library
Mardi Gras! Galveston
Moore Memorial Public Library
National Weather Service
Office of Emergency Management (OEM)
Our Daily Bread


Recovery Oriented Systems of Care
Rosenberg Public Library
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
Texas City/La Marque Chamber of Commerce
The Resource Group
Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc
Trash Bash
Veterans Administration
Wright Cuney

LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES

Ashton Parke Canter
Autumn Springs
Bay Oaks Health Care Center
Bayou Pines Care Center
Baywind Village Convalescent Center
Brawner Sunset Haven
Cascades At Galveston
Friendship Haven Healthcare And Rehabilitation Center
Galveston County Adult Health Day Care
Gambles Personal Touch Care Home
Golden Years Assisted Living Facility
Gulf Breeze
Harbourview Care Center Inc
Heritage Crossing
Holland House
La Vita Bella
Laurel House
Libbies Place
Moody Neurorehabilitation Center
Morada Friendswood
Morningstar
Orchard Park At Vicory Lakes
Regent Care Center Of League City
Sandpiper Cove Apartments
Seabreeze Nursing And Rehabilitation
Seasons Personal Care Home
Serenity Gardens
Sodalis Texas City
Solidago Health And Rehabilitation
The Cottages At Clear Lake
The Crossings Retirement Community
The Independence Village
The Lakes At Texas City
The Meridian
The Mildred House Inc
The Phoenix Post-Acute
The Shoal
Transitional Learning Center At Galveston
Village on the Park



 www.gchd.org

 409-938-7221

 9850 Emmett F. Lowry Expressway, Texas City, TX 77591

     @gchdinfo // Galveston County Health District

