

# The Center for Community Health Development

## *Celebrating 10 years of Accomplishments*

FEBRUARY 2011



*Burleson County seniors pose for a picture before leaving for a shopping trip.*

## The Health Resource Center Transportation Program

Transportation was identified as the number one barrier in accessing care in the 2002 Brazos Valley Health Assessment conducted by the Center for Community Health Development and the Brazos Valley Health Partnership. At that time, over two thirds of rural residents responded in a survey that they traveled 45 minutes or more for health services. Not only was distance identified as a challenge, the limited availability and expense of public transportation was also considered a large obstacle in reaching health care services. Although the seven-county region has a public transportation system, buses are only available on a demand and response system in the Brazos Valley's six rural counties and can be unaffordable for some residents who need to make multiple stops.

In response to the 2002 assessment findings, the Brazos Valley Health Partnership was determined to develop an affordable transportation option that would be available through local health resource centers in Madisonville,

Centerville, Caldwell, Somerville, and Navasota. Through federal grant funding received in 2003, mini-vans were purchased and placed at each resource center to serve as a new transportation option for local residents who needed transportation to health related destinations.

Each health resource center transportation program is managed through the local health resource center. Appointments for rides are made 48 hours prior to the pick-up time through the health resource center office manager. In three of the communities, volunteer drivers transport local residents to doctor's appointments, senior meals programs, pharmacies, and many other destinations both within their community and to the regional hub of Bryan-College Station. The only qualifications for the riders are all destinations must be health related and they must not have any other means of transportation or must not be able to transport themselves.

**Center for Community Health Development**

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# Celebrating 10 years of Accomplishments

## Transportation Program (continued)

In the 2006 and 2010 Brazos Valley Health Assessments, transportation was still named a top barrier in accessing care. As a result, the health resource centers and the health resource commissions that oversee the centers continue to seek partnerships and resources not only to maintain the current transportation services but to expand to try to meet the needs of their residents. The transportation programs have key partners that provide both financial and in-kind support, including the Brazos Valley Council of Governments' Area Agency on Aging (BVAAA) and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). AAA provides direct funding subsidies for the transportation of seniors and the RSVP program helps with the recruitment of volunteer drivers, conducting driver background checks and driver training.



Since 2003, over 19,000 rides have been given by the five health resource centers which include the Burleson Health Resource Center in Caldwell, the Burleson Health Resource Center in Somerville, the Grimes Health Resource Center in Navasota, the Leon Health Resource Center in Centerville, and the Madison Health Resource Center in Madisonville.

For more information regarding the Health Resource Center Transportation Program, contact the Center for Community Health Development at [cchd@srph.tamhsc.edu](mailto:cchd@srph.tamhsc.edu).

## Rider Testimonials

“This is a kind and helpful courteous service for people who have no means of transportation...It’s a blessing in my life.”

“I honestly don't know what I would do without the van services. The van picks me up and takes me to my physical therapist. I would have no other way if it weren't for you all...”

“I would like to express my thankfulness for your concern for the citizens here in our community for the transportation van. It’s needed so much to transport people to the doctor’s office and other places they may need to go. Thank God for those of you who care.”

“We have needed a way to get our seniors together for field trips. It’s difficult for us to take our own vehicles out of town. The BHRC bus has been a great way to bring us together.”

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