

# The Center for Community Health Development

## *Celebrating 10 years of Accomplishments*

OCTOBER 2011



*The Brazos Valley Health Partnership Board at the Brazos Valley Health Summit, 2010 (missing from picture: Judge Mike Sutherland)*

## The Brazos Valley Health Partnership

The Brazos Valley Health Partnership (BVHP) organized in July 2002 in response to the findings of the Brazos Valley Health Status Assessment conducted by the Center for Community Health Development (CCHD) earlier that same year. The BVHP mission of improving health status and increasing access to health care in the seven-county Brazos Valley region would be accomplished through the collaboration of services and creation of local partnerships. In its early formation, BVHP operated as an open forum of approximately 30 local and regional health and social services organizations that worked through topical task groups that would plan and develop solutions leading to health improvement in the Brazos Valley.

BVHP's first initiative was focused on establishing an access to care model in rural communities that would co-locate health care and ancillary services in locally supported facilities referred to as a "health resource centers." BVHP members worked in conjunction with CCHD to finalize the health resource center model and to secure funding to create resource centers and a volunteer-based transportation program in four rural Brazos Valley communities. A three-year federal Healthy Community Access Program grant provided seed funding for BVHP and CCHD to offer start-up assistance to rural communities willing to commit to providing long-term support and local management of their local health resource centers. With local commitment in place, BVHP and CCHD identified regional health and social services providers who were willing to expand their services to the rural health resource centers in Madisonville (Madison County); Centerville (Leon County); Navasota (Grimes County); and Caldwell and Somerville (both in Burleson County).

Throughout the resource center development process, BVHP worked with county-wide advisory boards that oversaw the design and implementation of their community's center. By 2006, each of these advisory boards was absorbed by their county government, transitioning to a formally appointed county health resource commission that would provide permanent oversight for the health resource center in their community. BVHP invited county health resource commission representatives to serve on the BVHP leadership team that had been formed to manage the activities of the Healthy Community Access Program grant.



**Center for Community Health Development**

160 SRPH Administration Building | College Station, TX 77843-1266 | 979.458.0937 | Fax 979.862.8371 | [www.srph.tamhsc.edu](http://www.srph.tamhsc.edu)

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*In 2011, the BVHP introduced a new website as part of its rebranding process.*

As the grant activities wrapped up near the end of 2006, the BVHP leadership team chose to meet with regional providers and community leaders in a series of meetings to discuss the direction of the BVHP beyond the grant. These meetings resulted in the creation of a regional leadership task group that would explore the possibility of reorganizing the BVHP as a regional non-profit aimed at supporting local health improvement. The task group, the Executive Strategic Advisory Council, recommended that BVHP organize as a community non-profit with its board members representing the four counties that had established health resource centers. In April 2008, all four county health resource commissions voted to reorganize the BVHP as a non-profit corporation. By April 2009, the BVHP had incorporated in the state of Texas and had received federal and state tax exempt status.

The BVHP is now governed by an eight-member board representing the Madison, Burleson, Leon, and Grimes Health Resource Commissions. As such, the board's mission is "to support the health resource commissions and their communities in improving health and well-being. Furthermore, the BVHP as a regional entity will develop collective strategies that, implemented locally, will leverage and cultivate resources to improve access to services in the Brazos Valley." In 2010, the BVHP Board partnered with the CCHD to conduct the third regional health assessment and release the findings in a regional health summit in September 2010. Currently, the BVHP Board is focused on developing a grants management infrastructure to support local projects; crafting a regional intervention strategy to address at least one rural community health priority; serving as a CCHD's community engagement advisory board; and collaborating with CCHD to conduct and benefit from community-based participatory research.



*Britt Allen and Judge Mike Sutherland participate in a joint meeting between the BVHP and CCHD, 2009.*



*The new Brazos Valley Health Partnership logo, revealed in October 2011.*

"As a community group, we have emphasized the need to meet local community priorities as identified in the Brazos Valley Health Assessments and in each health resource commission's strategic plans. Our resource centers are able to seek partnerships with providers based on what the communities say they need. We are able to work with providers to customize services for our communities to maximize the efforts of the providers and the benefit to the community."  
— Britt Allen, BVHP President

"The Brazos Valley Health Partnership has evolved into a strong voice for rural communities that is active in finding creative strategies to address local health issues. As a partner, BVHP provides us valuable input and feedback as we work together to improve health. The commitment and energy of these board members is commendable, and their communities are better for it."  
— Dr. Monica Wendel, CCHD Director

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