



## WILLIAMSON COUNTY AND CITIES HEALTH DISTRICT

### NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### *Lone Star Circle of Care Quality Designations Recognized by WCCHD Board of Health*

June 8, 2011 (Williamson County) –

Lone Star Circle of Care, represented by Chief Medical Officer Dr. Scott Nicklebur, was recognized at the May 5<sup>th</sup> Williamson County and Cities Health District (WCCHD) Board of Health meeting for achieving two prestigious quality designations.

Lone Star Circle of Care (LSCC), with 19 clinics in Williamson County, ensures residents have access to quality primary care services regardless of their insurance status. In 2010, the National Committee for Quality Assurance recognized LSCC as a top-quality health care provider on the leading edge of best practice models for primary and preventive care, awarding the Physician Practice Connections® -- Patient-Centered Medical Home™ designation. Only 0.3% of primary care practices nationwide have received this recognition, and only a fraction of those have won Level 3 recognition—the highest level awarded. LSCC provides primary care for tens of thousands of Williamson County residents each year, including those who are uninsured and those with Medicaid and Medicare.

A medical home, also known as the patient-centered medical home (PCMH), is defined by the American Academy of Family Physicians as "an approach to providing comprehensive primary care that facilitates partnerships between individual patients and their personal providers, and when appropriate, the patient's family." The medical home model is intended to result in more personalized, coordinated, effective and efficient care and has been shown to improve health outcomes.

LSCC has also been awarded Joint Commission Accreditation, a nationally recognized "gold seal of approval" for health care. The Joint Commission is the nation's oldest, largest and most highly-respected accrediting and certification body for American health care organizations. Only 42% of community health centers in Texas have received this prized designation.

Kerry Russell, Chair of the WCCHD Board of Health, emphasized that "Having a medical home, and using it appropriately to coordinate one's acute, chronic and preventive care should be the goal for our entire population."

Recognizing the power of the medical home, WCCHD has partnered with LSCC to serve a number of county residents with chronic diseases, under a state Primary Health Care grant. LSCC provides the medical home, with access to primary care, mental health services, access to low cost medications and dental care—while WCCHD supports the patients through case management and health education. Dr. Scott Nicklebur, LSCC Chief Medical Officer, commented “We look forward to the further alignment of efforts between Lone Star Circle of Care and WCCHD to jointly address the increasing challenges we face in advancing health and wellness access in Williamson County.”

Referring to the recently released County Health Rankings, the Board noted that the Williamson County scores for preventable hospitalizations, compliance with mammography and diabetes screening in our Medicare population can largely be attributed to our primary care community and how they reflect the medical home concept. The board thanked LSCC for voluntarily seeking this designation and for serving as medical home for an increasingly large portion of the Williamson County population.

According to Dr. Chip Riggins, Executive Director of WCCHD, “We believe that LSCC’s investment in the electronic health record and other tools to support the ability to be a Patient Centered Medical Home is making a real difference, and wanted to recognize them for the effort that that requires.”

The Board of Health serves as the governing body and administrative public health board for the county and member cities with the authority to adopt rules necessary and appropriate to promote and preserve the health and safety of the public. Board directors serve without compensation for staggered three-year terms. For more information about the Board of Health, please visit our website at <http://www.wcchd.org/BoardHealth.htm>.