Message from the Director

The Williamson County & Cities Health District saw many changes in 2001, and as I reflect on that year, I want to thank our amazing staff for all the work they have done and continue to do in the midst of change.

This report identifies many of the changes that your public health department has seen over the past 20+ years. The issues and challenges described in this report have come from the perspective of staff members that have been working for the people of Williamson County for up to 24 years.

This past year has been momentous for the Health District in so many ways. Along with the rest of the country, we have lived through the terror and pain and suffering of September 11th. The threat of bioterrorism has resulted in Health District staff working more closely than ever before with emergency services and public safety personnel to assure readiness to respond to protect the public's health and safety should the need arise.

The community's concern about access to healthcare has risen to the forefront. The economic downturn and increasing unemployment has resulted in loss of health insurance benefits for many of our neighbors. The need for reduced fee services is great. Health District staff members have worked diligently with community groups to develop more resources such as the Georgetown Community Clinic that opened its doors January 2002. I have had the opportunity to participate on a five-county area Technical Advisory Committee to look proactively at the future of healthcare for the entire region. We have been analyzing the issues facing our region and will develop recommendations. The solutions to the challenges faced in the five-county region are not the responsibility of any one entity to solve, or for a community to solve alone. All jurisdictions in the region, as well as the state, have a role to play in developing a community health infrastructure to meet whatever challenges we face in the future.

Your public health department will celebrate its 60th birthday in 2003 and we look forward to your celebrating with us. We are proud that we have the opportunity to continue providing public health services to the people of Williamson County.
Cedar Park Clinic Facilitator Diana Arteaga knows a lot about the Cedar Park community. As a nurse and now head of the Cedar Park Clinic after working the past six years for the Health District, she recalls the small clinic that was in the Cedar Park City Hall. Diana is grateful to the community of Cedar Park and county officials for providing the new clinic facility in the County Annex built in 1997.

“Immunization services have really increased. With the emphasis now on wellness promotion, we can respond to the community more; it’s a good change. There used to be no funding for anything beyond basic clinic services.”

“We’ve almost come full circle. The doctors in the community provide more of the well exams now. The Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) has helped children. Since there are now more resources to help children, we have expanded our focus to provide well exams for more adults.”

Cedar Park has seen a large population increase in one of the fastest-growing counties in the country. “We have seen more communicable disease cases, such as TB, coming through the clinic. We have maintained the clinic’s relationship with the schools and work with them on immunizations and other programs.”

Diana is pleased that WCCHD hosts the Free Clinic – supported by the Samaritan Health Ministries with volunteer doctors and nurses — and continues to refer people who are sick to these and other assistance programs. “We’re an information depot, giving information about how to get connected to the community’s helpful people and organizations. I like it! We’re in public health!”
Two clinics were in operation in Williamson County when Otelia Pachicano decided to join the Health Department in 1979. Over the years, Otelia has worked in the Taylor office as a clinic assistant, clerk, and a community service aide. She states that she saw similar problems that are still in existence today. For ten years she worked with a health promotion program for the elderly funded by the Department on Aging through a grant from the Capitol Area Planning Council (CAPCO). She accompanied a nurse to senior citizen centers around the county where she checked blood pressures, weights, and made other health measurements. Otelia says she particularly enjoys working with older adults.

Today she works at the other end of the age spectrum, traveling with Nurse Practitioner, Peggy McLean, to provide prenatal care in all four clinic sites in the county. “Sometimes I tell a young woman, ‘I knew you before you were born.’ Sometimes I see the third generation of babies in the same family. They can’t believe it!”

Otelia sees an important milestone in the Health District’s history as the initiation of more health promotion programs. She thinks the new programs have been great. The wellness programs such as Shaken Baby Awareness and Prevention offer opportunities to educate clients in prevention now, not only to deal with the results of bad behavior later.

“I see changes everywhere. So don’t get used to only one thing – it changes!”
Lewis Hayes, an Americorps/VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) with the Community Health Promotion Division in Round Rock for the past six months, finds his work challenging as he works with the different organizations that are part of the VISTA project, including the Texas Department of Health, The Health District, Americorps, and Williamson County.

Lewis has noticed the changes going on around him, mentioning the terrorist attacks on September 11th, the recession, and the way in which program funds moved around. He thinks that people at the Health District are adjusting to it – they're talking a lot about all the changes. Lewis notes the interplay of ideas, the movement, the restructuring and funding of the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) projects that he works with.

“I understand now how hard it is for non-profits to operate; they have to be ready for anything, all kinds of changes. Funding of projects has changed dramatically in this recession.”

Coming to Americorps/VISTA after two years of college in Ohio, Lewis notes, “I have gotten good experience here to accompany my college opportunities. It helps me understand what I want to do with my education when I return to college next year. I am looking at working in new fields: planning, public administration, public health.”

“One of the big events that comes to mind since I began working here was finally getting data on county roadways, a long process. I wrote letters, made phone calls, and it still took months to get information. The breakthrough came when I met with local officials about the county roads to add to our information about bicycle safety routes. That opened up possibilities for funding, printing maps, and other programs.”

Ironically, Lewis feels as though he is getting more from the community than he is giving to the community – “a huge, wide experience. The best thing that has happened in the VISTA program for me has been working in so many different fields.” It is a classic win/win situation.
Nurse Practitioner Peggy McLean, eyes sparkling, talks about what the healthcare situation looked like in 1978 when she first became employed by the Health Department. At that time, the major focus was on providing school nurse services to 10 schools within the county, giving immunizations, providing well child health exams, and providing prenatal care to women who didn’t have financial resources to get care from a private physician. Physicians would come into the health clinics to provide care for high-risk pregnant women, and a pediatrician would treat children who were ill. “Georgetown and Taylor hospitals were the only hospitals delivering babies.” Screening for syphilis was done along with a TB skin test administered to all food handlers within the county. In the 1980’s these screenings were eliminated and, more appropriately, food handler education was instituted.

Peggy remembers, nurses referred clients to community resources such as the Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul, Lions Clubs, and the ‘Crippled Children’s Program.’ “The WCCHD Social Services Division was established in 1986 and greatly enhanced the mission of the Health District. The Community Health Promotion Division was established in the 1990’s and has been the leader in community assessment and in implementing programs in response to specific needs of communities.”

“I feel that the Health District has been so successful because it has identified and assessed community needs and has responded to them. Change has broadened the horizon, expanded partnerships, identified goals and built community coalitions. In 1978 we were reactive, and in 2001-2002 we are proactive – quite a change indeed.”
PAULO PINTO – DIRECTOR,  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Paulo Pinto, Director of the Environmental Services Division, started working as an Inspector in 1983, enjoying 10 years working in the field. He became Director of the Division in 1992. “When I started working here, there was only the Environmental Division, plus WIC and Nursing. Actually, when the Environmental Division began in the 1960’s, there was only one inspector for the entire county!”

“We regulate septic systems, perform restaurant inspections, and serve as flood plain administrators for the county. As is the case with all regulatory programs, we walk a fine line between being perceived as too tough and too lenient,” says Paulo with a slow smile that lets you know there is a lot more behind the story.

Paulo has watched Williamson County evolve from a ranching and farming area to a more urban community. “We used to see farms and mobile homes everywhere. There was a cattle auction in Georgetown – now it’s gone. I miss the old days of seeing the farmers playing checkers. And the County’s mentality has changed. The attitude used to be, ‘This is MY land.’ These days many people see the need for more regulations to protect water quality now and for the future.”

Milestones that Paulo notes involve state and county regulations. In 1999, the Board of Health revised the County’s septic system regulations. In order to better protect the water supply, some requirements were made stricter than the State regulations, such as a minimum of one acre to install a septic system.

How does Paulo feel about all the changes? “I miss the old days when we enjoyed a smaller population county, but the good part is that there are more restaurants to enjoy!”
COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION

The Community Health Promotion Division coordinates, plans, and promotes positive behavioral and environmental change within Williamson County communities through partnerships with United Ways, faith communities, educational institutions, city governments, and hospital/health organizations. The staff supports healthy community initiatives by initiating and participating in needs and asset assessment activities, is the media contact for the Health District, and maintains the website. The division coordinates Public Health Week activities and the development of the annual report. Staff participate in multiple collaborations and coalitions and in many community development initiatives. Special programs provided through this division include the Parish Nurse/Health Ministries Program; Youth Activity, Weight and Nutrition Program (YAWN); Shaken Baby Awareness Campaign; and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) community outreach program.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Environmental Health Services Division is concerned with the protection of the environment and enforcement of County, State and Federal regulations such as On-Site Sewage Facilities (OSSF) regulations. This office is the designated Flood Plain administrator for Williamson County. Our environmental health programs focus on preventing environmental conditions that could be harmful to your health. All food establishments in the county are routinely inspected up to four times each year, and more often if significant violations are identified. School food programs are inspected three times each year. This team also inspects daycares. Food handler education classes are provided throughout the county every week. The staff investigates complaints of public health nuisance violations and participates in special community initiatives such as motor oil recycling and hazardous household waste clean-up days.

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING

The Public Health Nursing Division offers preventive health care services to families who do not have access to private care. Public health nurses provide prenatal care, child health check-ups, immunizations, and selected adult health screenings. Communicable disease prevention and control services include: tuberculosis (TB) and sexually transmitted disease (STD) diagnosis and treatment; HIV outreach; education, counseling, and testing; and communicable disease reporting, investigation, follow-up, and tracking. The Vaccine for Children (VFC) program is administered through this division. Community physicians and clinics are provided with vaccine to administer to eligible children and the immunization status of their patients is evaluated. The staff also provides health education and referral to other community services. WCCHD contracts with 3 local physicians to provide specialized consultation in maternal health, child health, adult health, and communicable diseases. The communicable disease physician consultant also serves as the Williamson County Health Authority. These physicians consult with nursing staff, review plans of care, and authorize standing delegation orders. They do not provide direct care in the Health District clinics. Clients who require medical diagnosis and treatment are referred to physicians and clinics in the community, and Health District nurses provide follow-up.

SOCIAL SERVICES

With funding from the Texas Department of Health (TDH) Bureau of Community Oriented Public Health (COPH), the Social Services Division arranges for primary and preventive health care services for eligible individuals through the WCCHD nursing clinics and through community physicians and clinics. This staff also administers the Williamson County’s Indigent Health Care Program (CIHCP). The Social Services Division is designated by the Governor’s office as the information & referral (I & R) center for Williamson County. A social worker is "on-call” during business hours to quickly respond to requests for information and assistance with health and social services needs. The social work staff provides case management services to high-risk pregnant women and children, and also medically fragile children who receive Medicaid benefits. The Rx Access program is administered through this division and assists eligible low-income people with chronic illness who have no other source for medication assistance. The Children’s Health Insurance (CHIP) outreach program is administered through this division. A Texas Department of Human Services (TDHS) Eligibility Specialist works on-site in WCCHD offices to determine Medicaid eligibility for children and pregnant women.

WOMEN, INFANTS, & CHILDREN NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a federally funded program coordinated by The Texas Department of Health. WIC provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and food vouchers to pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, and children less than five years of age. Food vouchers are redeemable for healthy foods such as milk, eggs, and cheese at area grocery stores. WIC services are provided at each of the Health District’s four offices, as well as Bartlett Head Start, and Seton Northwest Hospital. WIC also maintains an active breastfeeding peer counseling program. WIC peer counselors are WIC mothers that have breastfed at least one child, and have gone through extensive training to enable them to support and encourage other breastfeeding moms. The peer counselors offer their services at all four main clinic sites, as well as follow-up phone calls and home visits as needed. WIC representatives also participate in the Williamson County Breastfeeding Coalition and offer community nutrition education activities.
Trish Bailey joined the Health Department staff in 1983 as a clerk in Georgetown’s Public Health Nursing clinic. Trish’s caring attitude toward the people served at the clinic shines through when she discusses those years. She talks about the well child clients at the clinic, the prenatal clinic and all those immunizations. “There were only the Georgetown and Taylor clinics then, followed several years later by the Round Rock and Cedar Park clinics.” Trish’s role expanded to include traveling between the four clinics to provide clerical assistance. Through the years she developed the “change mindset” that has helped her stay interested and involved. For the past three years, she is one of the friendly faces and voices that assist the public in the Environmental Services Division. She says that the clerks such as herself are the “gatekeepers” for all inspections, including septic system and restaurant permits. The summer months are busiest, when the dry weather spurs a lot of building in the county.

“I do not feel overburdened by all the changes that have taken place. Those changes have been positive and good changes. You have to adopt the attitude that ‘I’m better off now.’ September 11th was a negative event that had some positive outcomes. People care more for each other now. I always want to be involved in the giving aspect of work.”
Jean Jackson- Administrative Technician, Women, Infants and Children Nutrition Program (WIC)

1978 was the beginning of Jean Jackson’s work at WCCHD to help large numbers of needy people. As an Administrative Technician, she has watched her world of work in the Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition (WIC) program evolve from “laid back” to “nuke it – fast – microwave it.” When Jean sees clients who have come to the clinic for WIC services, she finds that some also need housing and referrals to other assistance. It’s all part of her job.

Thinking back to the late 1970’s, Jean remembers being at home and getting a phone call about the WIC program. She was invited to a meeting with the Director of the Health Department, and decided after the meeting to join the staff to initiate the WIC program in Williamson County. At first, Jean also assisted in the child health and maternity clinics, taking weights and heights, and helped in the immunization clinics. Now 100% of her time is involved in WIC activities.

Jean says she sees third, and soon to be fourth, generation clients at the Georgetown clinic. Women that she sees now are the same ones she saw as shadowy figures before their births, then as infants, then as mothers keeping their children well, and now finds even those children grown and having children of their own. She has been employed at the same clinic the entire time and has also taken on some program administrative responsibilities.

When Jean leaves the clinic for the day and goes home, she needs a few quiet moments to rest and reflect on her day, and on all the years of similar days. But differences also come to mind. She feels that 2001 went by so fast. “We’re growing so fast as a community.” Jean lives in Georgetown, and feels “They’re all my kids. I see them at the grocery store. The children say, ‘Mom, there’s the WIC lady,’ or ‘My Doctor is here.’ With some, you have that little smile. You’re worn out, but it’s worth it. It’s that personal connection. We’re helping the infants get a good start in life. The need is there.”
Gracie Saucedo, Primary Health Care (PHC) Eligibility Coordinator, has noticed many new faces since she first began working as a Clerk in the Round Rock clinic in 1993, and “it’s all for the better,” as the Health District has changed with the growing needs of Williamson County.

Milestones that Gracie has observed include establishment of Medicaid Managed Care and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). “I used to weigh and measure about 20 kids a day and worked with seven nurses, and now there are three. The well child numbers are lower these days; after two months of age, babies are referred to primary physicians when they become enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP.”

“Through the Primary Health Care program we are now helping more adults, such as diabetics, with measuring their blood sugar levels and we encourage them to get yearly exams to stay healthy.”

Gracie travels to all four clinics and certifies clients for the PHC program. She verifies residency, income, dependency, and schedules people into the clinics for Health Risk Assessments. “If some people do not qualify for the Primary Health Care program, we offer alternatives such as the RxAccess pharmacy assistance program operated by the Social Services Division. Adults who need help paying for several different medications appreciate this program. We also make sure clients know about the HELPLINE that Social Services operates.”

“2001 was a great year! I started my new job with PHC eligibility and I really enjoy working with co-workers in all four WCCHD offices. I really enjoy the outcomes that the Primary Health Care program brings, and I like meeting people from all walks of life.”
Bride Roberts, Assistant Director of the Social Services Division, has been employed with the Health District for 16 years. First employed with the Environmental Services Division in Georgetown, Bride recalls that the Health Department, now the Health District, had about 30 employees at that time—the number is now several times that. “Georgetown and Taylor had the only offices then. The Health District has changed as the local communities have grown and changed.” Bride says that the Health District has expanded its services to accommodate the large increase in new people, and has adapted with changes in funding—a flexible organization by necessity!

Bride’s job responsibilities broadened in 1988 with a switch from Environmental Services to the Social Services Division, which had been launched in 1986 when the Health District was contracted to administer the County Indigent Health Care Program. 1987 saw the first State grant for the Primary Health Care Program (PHC), and the staff expanded to handle the work. The division grew to incorporate screening for all health and human service programs, including Medicaid and CHIP, the Children's Health Insurance Program. An office that had only one computer at first, and no network, now boasts a completely automated system for screening, eligibility and bill payment.

“We have integrated eligibility – we match people with the programs they need,” according to Bride. “Now 20 people work in the Social Services Division, including case workers, information and referral specialists, a Medicaid worker, Children Health Insurance Program (CHIP) outreach staff, a nurse case manager, and the Division Director. The division processes more than $1 million per year in healthcare payments to doctors, hospitals and pharmacies.”

Bride remarks, “The work here is not visible to the community. Many staff are quietly working on phones and computers. Most county residents aren’t aware of our services until they need us.” But they do find out. The HELPLINE, Social Services' Information and Referral service for Williamson County, handled nearly 13,000 calls for health and human service information in 2001, doubling the volume from the previous year.
Through a cooperative agreement among the governing bodies of the cities of Georgetown, Round Rock, Taylor, Cedar Park and the County Commissioners’ Court, the Williamson County & Cities Health District was organized as a health district in 1989. Prior to that date the organization was known as the Williamson County Health Department.

The Williamson County Board of Health is the administrative authority and oversees the operation of the Health District. Each city appoints one citizen representative and the Commissioners’ Court appoints two representatives to the Board of Health for staggered 3-year terms. The Williamson County & Cities Health District Director is a non-voting member.

The Board of Health meets at least quarterly. Currently, the Board meets every two months. Meetings are open to the public.

2001 Board of Health

Mary Faith Sterk, Chair
Lettie A. Lee, Vice Chair
Tim Mikeska, Secretary
Scott D. Evans
Katherine M. Galloway
Margaret R. Fink
Karen Wilson

Williamson County
City of Georgetown
City of Taylor
Williamson County
City of Cedar Park
City of Round Rock
WCCHD Director
Williamson County & Cities Health District funding is derived from contributions from the member governments, Texas Department of Health contracts, client fees, Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement, United Way contributions and other grants, contracts, and contributions. The Health District’s fiscal year is January-December and the current operating budget is more than $3.6 million. In addition to funds, Williamson County contributes facilities, utilities, janitorial and maintenance services, telephone, payroll processing, administration of the employee benefits program, workers’ compensation insurance, vehicle insurance, and computer network support.

### 2001 Funding

**Funding Sources 2001**

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<td>Williamson County</td>
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<td>City Contributions</td>
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<td>Cedar Park</td>
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### Funding Trends, 1998-2001

- **Service Fees**
- **Medicaid/Medicare**
- **Other**
- **State**
- **Local**

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<td>2001</td>
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### Health District Services: 2001

#### Environmental Health
- **Food Establishment Inspections** 2,641 inspections completed
- **Food Handler Education Classes** 129 classes provided
- **Septic System (OSSF) Inspections** 4,818 systems inspected
- **New Subdivision Reviews** 228 reviews
- **Flood Plain Administration** 112 construction evaluations

#### Social Services
- **Total HELPLINE calls** 12,967 calls
- **Primary Health Care Program** 1,323 persons
- **County Indigent Health Care Program** 582 persons assisted
- **Diabetic Management Services** 129 clients
- **Case Management** 413 cases
- **RxAccess** 352 individuals assisted
- **Dept. of Human Service eligibility** 720 assisted
- **Children Health Insurance Program** 6,300 assisted with application

#### Women Infants’ and Children’s Nutrition Program (WIC)
- **Clinic Sites:**
  - Georgetown: 10,599
  - Taylor: 8,142
  - Round Rock: 17,382
  - Cedar Park: 11,086
  - Seton North West Hospital: 981
  - Bartlett Head Start: 547
- **Total:** 48,737

#### Public Health Nursing
- **Prenatal Services** 3,014 clinic visits
- **Child Health** 543 clinic visits
- **Communicable Disease** 761 reported
- **Immunizations** 244 investigated

#### Community Health Promotion
- **Conducted Community Assessments** 6 reports completed
- **Provided Worksite Wellness Programs** 6,450 employees
- **Supported Faith Community Wellness** 32 churches
- **Taught Shaken Baby Education Classes** 231 conducted
- **Organized Health Fairs** 7 implemented
- **Mapped Walking Trails** 179 completed
Office Locations

CEDAR PARK CLINIC
350 Discovery Blvd.
Cedar Park, TX 78613
512-260-4240

GEORGETOWN CLINIC
100 West 3rd
Georgetown, TX 78626
512-930-4386

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
301 Main Street
Georgetown, TX 78626
512-930-4390

SOCIAL SERVICES
211 Commerce Cove #114
Round Rock, TX 78664
512-248-3252

TAYLOR CLINIC
115 West 6th
Taylor, TX 76574
512-352-5201

ROUND ROCK CLINIC
211 Commerce Cove #109
Round Rock, TX 78664
512-248-3257

COMMUNITY HEALTH
211 Commerce Cove #113
Round Rock, TX 78664
512-248-3255

ADMINISTRATION
100 West 3rd
Georgetown, TX 78626
512-930-4387

Williamson County

HELPLINE

248-3252

or

1-800-890-6296

www.publichealthwilliamson.org