

BOND COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER—REDUCING INFANT MORTALITY

Since its inception in 1984 Bond Community Health Center, Inc. has worked “to improve the physical, spiritual, psychosocial and psychological well being of the residents of Leon and surrounding communities, by providing access to the highest quality, comprehensive, family health services with particular concern for the lower socio-economic groups, regardless of their ability to pay.” This mission statement spans all sexes and life cycles, including mothers and infants. Some activities specific to reducing infant mortality include:

1. culturally competent and culturally sensitive comprehensive primary care with statistically significant improvement in diabetes states and disease outcomes as reported by HRSA and the National Association of Community Health Centers
2. excellent HIV/AIDS treatment with no vertical transmission of HIV to date as reported by HRSA and the Bureau of HIV/AIDS—6-10% of all prenatal patients in care are HIV+
3. culturally aware patient education, pre-pregnancy counseling, and outreach services to encourage early entry into prenatal care
4. Ob-case management, resulting in 80% return rate for post partum and family planning/family spacing visits.
5. statistically significant improvement in outcomes in caring for the chronically hypertensive patient.
6. an active pregnancy prevention program—Implanon, IUDs, Depo-Provera, Oral Contraception, Abstinence Counseling, and Outreach
7. an active participant in the March of Dimes Vitagrant program—distributing 1,000's of bottles of folate-enriched vitamins to women in child-bearing years

In October 2005, the Leon County Board of County Commissioners allotted seed money to begin a Women and Children's Health Program at BCHC. The Center was given \$330,000 per year and asked to serve as many qualifying Leon County residents as possible in this program for three years. The Center meted out care to greater than 1000 children and 300 pregnant females yearly as funds were stretched to provide these patients with state-of-the-art medical services. However, County funds only provides for:

1. medical services of a part-time pediatrician and Obstetrician-Gynecologist
2. minimal support staff and minimal equipment

Nonetheless, the small amount of revenue from this program has been re-invested and subsidized by general revenue to provide gynecological surgery, labs, X-ray, and medical care to the uninsured woman with life-threatening problems including:

1. severe perimenopausal bleeding
2. hemorrhage secondary to uterine fibroids or dysplasia
3. precancerous and cancerous cervical or uterine lesions
4. other surgical emergencies

Bond's vision is to make its Women and Children's Health Center fully comprehensive. To address all lifecycles of a woman's life, to provide wellness/health education/pre-conception services for the entire family—including parenting and fathering skills, to provide full-time services specific to the pediatric/adolescent population, and to serve as a safe haven for all women and children it serves requires additional funding. The rate of growth of the Ob program dictates the need for a full-time obstetrician now.