

## **David S. Lopez Named Interim CEO**

HCHD is the fourth largest public healthcare system in U.S.

By John F. Martinez  
Harris County Hospital District

Chief Operating Officer David S. Lopez has been named interim head of the Harris County Hospital District following the resignation of President and CEO John A. Guest.

The HCHD Board of Managers, the hospital district's governing body, made their decision March 12 during a special meeting.

Lopez has been chief operating officer since July 2000. He held the position of President and CEO of Memorial Medical Center in Corpus Christi for five years. He has 27 years of healthcare experience.

"I'm excited about the opportunity and the potential of this organization," Lopez said. "The commitment of our staff toward achieving our goals and objectives has been the reason for the hospital district's success and is critical to our future endeavors."

He credits Guest with a lot of the financial stability now enjoyed by HCHD.

"We are unequivocally much better off now than we were four years ago because of John Guest," he said. "He's a major reason for our current success and our continued success. As we continue our role of providing quality patient care, we're going to need the support of our employees, the community, our physicians, the medical schools and all our partners."

HCHD now has a solid strategic plan to get the organization to 2015.

Guest was hired as President and CEO in March 2000 after an extensive search process. He held the CEO position in San Antonio for the Bexar County Hospital District.

"I have enjoyed working with John the four years he was CEO. He brought us forward through tough times and we appreciate his energy and willingness to put business strategies into the organization," said Mary Spinks, Chair of the Board of Managers. "We wish him all the best in his future endeavors. With David Lopez serving as interim CEO, I believe we will have a smooth transition."

Spinks said the board will next form a committee and select a firm to do a candidate search. She expects the process to last at least six months.

The hospital district is the fourth largest public metropolitan healthcare system in the nation. It comprises three hospitals – Ben Taub General Hospital, Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital and Quentin Mease Community Hospital – 11 community health centers, 13 satellite homeless shelter clinics, an HIV/AIDS facility, a dental center, five school-based clinics and five mobile health units.