



Harris County Hospital District

Media Contact: Connie Chavez
Office: 713-566-4370
Cell: 713-240-6484
Connie_Chavez@hchd.tmc.edu
On-call pager: 713-566-6430

NEWS RELEASE

Bringing Expectant Mothers Together

HOUSTON (Oct. 1, 2007) – You’ve heard about group therapy, but group check-ups? That’s the concept behind the Centering Pregnancy Program offered by the Harris County Hospital District obstetrics clinic at La Nueva Casa, a City of Houston health center.

The program’s goal is to integrate the three major components of prenatal care: health assessment, education and support. Expectant mothers are grouped together according to their anticipated month of delivery. Together, they attend 10 group prenatal care visits led by a nurse-midwife.

During a typical session, expectant mothers sit in a circle to talk about their overall health, side effects, and concerns, including any changes since their last check-up. One by one, they are then led to a separate area of the room to have their physical examination.

By attending the two-hour group sessions, the women are able to spend more time with their provider, asking questions and discussing symptoms or concerns. The group also provides a dynamic, safe environment for learning and sharing. Being among peers, other pregnant women they can relate to, allows patients to openly discuss their experiences and to learn from others who may be in similar situations.

While group prenatal care may be a unique concept, the program’s participants say that they like the caring and sharing environment the program provides and they enjoy having other pregnant women to talk to.

“Patients sometimes have to wait up to several hours before they see their doctor for an appointment, and then they only have a certain amount of time in order to ask questions about their pregnancy,” said Cynthia Wade, nurse-midwife in charge of the Centering Pregnancy Program. “Through this program, they are able to spend additional time with a group of other pregnant women they can talk to, and have the opportunity to spend more time asking questions and learning about their pregnancy.”

The Harris County Hospital District is the public health care system for the nation’s third most-populous county. It provides more than one million health care visits each year to uninsured and underinsured residents of Harris County. The hospital district operates Ben Taub General Hospital, Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital, Quentin Mease Community Hospital, and an extensive network of community-based clinics, health centers, and mobile health units.

###