



**EMBARGOED UNTIL: APRIL 23, 2009**

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## **Lone Star Circle of Care Opens New Community Health Clinic in South Austin**

***St. David's South Austin Hospital Donates  
\$600,000 to Clinic That Will Offer  
A New Medical Home to Underserved in South Austin***

**(April 23, 2009) AUSTIN, TEXAS**—Lone Star Circle of Care, a community health center operating a network of health clinics for the medically underserved in Central Texas, has announced the opening this month of Ben White Health Clinic, a new community health clinic that increases access to health care for the underserved in southern Travis County. Ben White Health Clinic provides primary care to all patients, regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay for services. The clinic, which began providing services earlier this month, is owned and operated by Lone Star Circle of Care (LSCC) and is partially funded through a community investment grant from St. David's South Austin Hospital, totaling about \$600,000.

Ben White Health Clinic provides primary health care services to uninsured and medically underserved patients, including those who have public health insurance but have difficulty obtaining primary health care. This includes patients with public insurance such as Medicaid, Medicare and CHIP, as well as those without any form of insurance and those with private insurance. The clinic also serves patients who have access to care through Travis County's Medical Assistance Program (MAP).

"The location of Ben White Health Clinic creates the perfect environment for the services we provide," said Jayne Pope, Chief Executive Officer of Clinical Systems for Lone Star Circle of Care. "Every day there are thousands of people in Travis County who need access to basic health care services, but who can't get the care they need because they don't have private insurance. Many of these people end up going to the Emergency Room at the nearest hospital because they have no other choice. This clinic will provide a much needed medical home for patients in a very underserved area."

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St. David's South Austin Hospital estimates that one in four patients who visit the hospital's emergency room do not have insurance. Because the clinic is located near St. David's South Austin Hospital, patients who are discharged from the hospital after treatment can be easily referred to the clinic for follow-up care and other primary care needs.

"St. David's HealthCare and Lone Star Circle of Care have a wonderful history of successful partnerships that provide much-needed services to patients and also create efficiencies within the larger health care system," Erol Akdamar, Chief Executive Officer of St. David's South Austin Hospital, said. "St. David's South Austin Hospital is pleased to be a partner in the establishment of this quality primary care clinic, which will be very convenient for the people of this area and for hospital patients with non-emergent conditions or who need follow-up care."

According to the American College of Physicians, an estimated 5 million stays in U.S. hospitals—costing more than \$26.5 billion—may have been prevented in 2000 through high-quality primary and preventive care. Primary care physicians can help lower patients' chances of illness or death from conditions such as obesity, diabetes, high cholesterol and heart disease.

"We recognize that having a primary care doctor is critically important to the health of our patients," Akdamar said. "Building a trusting, ongoing relationship with one medical professional over time can make all the difference in a patient's long-term health."

Experts cite the importance of a primary care physician and annual checkups in detecting the onset of illness at an early stage. Furthermore, the physician can promptly order the right tests and treatments for a patient if an illness is suspected. An additional benefit of a primary care physician is that he or she knows each patient's medications. The physician is aware of which drugs may not interact well with others that the patient is taking. Most importantly, the primary care physician knows what is best for the patient. He or she is equipped with the information and know-how to coordinate care by medical specialists, such as those who treat heart disease.

"The St. David's Community Health Foundation, the philanthropic arm of St. David's HealthCare, has a long and rewarding relationship with Lone Star Circle of Care in Williamson County to provide medical services there. We are delighted that this unique collaboration has been formed to address health care needs for many Austinites who do not have consistent medical care," said Earl Maxwell, Chief Executive Officer of the St. David's Community Health Foundation.

Ben White Health Clinic is operated by Lone Star Circle of Care, a community health center with federally qualified status operating 10 clinics in Central Texas. St. David's South Austin Hospital has

provided LSCC with a community investment grant to cover office space, equipment and operating costs for the first year, after which time the clinic will be self-supporting.

Ben White Health Clinic consists of 4,358 square feet in Oak Knoll Office Park, which is on Ben White Boulevard about one block west of St. David's South Austin Hospital. The clinic employs four full time providers, including two family practice physicians and two certified family nurse practitioners, as well as 12 support staff. Because of its close proximity to a major bus line, patients who lack their own mode of transportation can easily access the clinic. Ben White Health Clinic is open 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturdays, offering hardworking families with busy schedules additional time to seek the medical care they need. The clinic is projected to provide more than 10,000 patient visits in its first year of operation.

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#### **About Lone Star Circle of Care**

*Founded in 2002 in Georgetown, Texas, Lone Star Circle of Care (LSCC) is a community health clinic committed to the energetic and steadfast pursuit of quality, accessible and sustainable healthcare for the uninsured and underserved in Central Texas. Currently operating ten locations in Central Texas, LSCC provides high quality primary care for adults and children, chronic disease care, OB/GYN services, including labor and delivery, general dentistry, and mental health services. LSCC's entrepreneurial business model leverages public healthcare dollars with investments from other stakeholders, including hospital systems, charitable foundations and private donors, in order to maximize its ability to provide uncompensated care for the uninsured. LSCC is a registered 501(c)3 Texas non-profit organization and a federally qualified health center (FQHC). For more information visit [www.lscctx.org](http://www.lscctx.org).*

#### **St. David's South Austin Hospital**

*St. David's South Austin Hospital, located at 901 West Ben White Blvd., is a member of St. David's HealthCare. The facility, built in 1982, offers a comprehensive and nationally recognized cardiac program, a fully renovated maternity unit with Level I and Level II nurseries and a thriving 24-hour emergency department. St. David's South Austin Hospital was recognized for three consecutive years by health information company, Solucient: as one of the nation's 100 Top Hospitals®, and as one of the 100 Top Hospitals® for Cardiovascular Care. The hospital has received numerous other quality awards for women's services and general surgery, among other services. St. David's South Austin Hospital, with 252 patient beds, completed a \$50-million expansion project in 2004 to enhance its services and facilities. For more information, please visit [www.StDavids.com/sdsah.aspx](http://www.StDavids.com/sdsah.aspx).*

#### **St. David's Community Health Foundation**

*The vision of St. David's Community Health Foundation is to keep the promise of a better life by improving health and health care for all Central Texans. The Foundation's mission is to work with commitment, integrity, and respect to achieve our vision in our hospitals, programs, and community partnerships. For more information on St. David's Community Health Foundation, visit [www.sdchf.org](http://www.sdchf.org).*