

## Response to Questions on the FY 2010 County's Line of Business & Schools Program Review Processes Fall 2008

**Request By:** Supervisor Hyland

**Question:** What is the cost per visit at each of the Health Department's Community Health Care Network Centers (CHCN)? Is there a more affordable way to provide this service?

**Response:** The average actual per visit cost for the entire CHCN program in FY 2008 was \$153.70. The average patient has 3.0 visits to the center in the course of a year. The breakdown by center is as follows:

Bailey's: \$152.42/visit or \$457.26/year  
North: \$153.23/visit or \$459.69 /year  
South: \$155.91/visit or \$467.73/year

This per visit cost incorporates all expenses associated with CHCN including all primary health care, laboratory tests, pharmaceuticals, specialty care, radiology and medical social work services.

In benchmarking other community primary care centers in the U.S., CHCN is recognized as a model, not only for its unique private/public structure but also for its cost effectiveness and efficiency. For example, in Hillsborough County, Florida the annual cost per patient is \$4,548 while the cost per patient at Health Resource and Services Administration (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) funded primary health care centers is \$1,998 (as of FY 2007). Both of these benchmarks include both lab and pharmaceutical costs.

It is normal for CHCN patients to make more than one doctor visit in any given enrollment period due to the complexity of a typical case. With the exception of exams for newborns and females seeking family planning services (representing 4 percent of the 664 patients seen in a year), the other 96 percent of patients make repeat visits.

CHCN expenditures are leveraged significantly. The amount spent on specialty care reflects only about 20 percent of the actual cost of care. The County spends roughly \$480,000 for services valued at \$2,400,000, due to the contributed hours of 280 volunteer specialists in the community. In addition, medications valued at over \$4,500,000 are obtained from pharmaceutical companies through aggressive staff pursuit of patient assistance program resources and unique free bulk-shipment arrangements with the pharmaceutical companies.