



TBGH/DFWBGH Media Contact: Cary Conway
Telephone: 972-731-9242
Email: cary@conwaycommunication.com

Texas Business Group on Health Releases Annual Report on the Status of Diabetes in Texas

Dallas has highest prevalence of type 2 diabetes and Houston sees 32% increase over last year; complete report available online

DALLAS – September 9, 2008 – The Texas Business Group on Health (TBGH), a non-profit business association, announced today the release of its third annual report on the prevalence, cost and quality of care for Texans with type 2 diabetes. The report includes information for key local markets across the state including Austin, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth/Arlington, Houston and San Antonio. Providing state and national benchmarks that can help providers and employers identify better opportunities to serve the needs of their patients and employees, the report is publicly available and can be accessed at TBGH's website: <http://www.tbgh.org/pressroom.htm>.

New to this year's report is the addition of diabetes statistics in Dallas compared to similar markets across the nation including Boston, Denver, Seattle, and Minneapolis/St. Paul.

"This information is an important resource for Texas communities to alert the public to the alarming growth and increasing severity of diabetes, the importance of measuring and improving physician performance in appropriate testing, and the critical need to engage all stakeholders, including employers and their employees, in combating diabetes," said Marianne Fazen, president and CEO of TBGH and executive director for the Dallas-Fort Worth Business Group on Health, a member of TBGH. "The report helps define the current landscape and sets the agenda for making progress in the battle against diabetes."

The Dallas-Fort Worth Business Group and its health care partners will use the information for the Dallas and Fort Worth/Arlington areas for their community-wide diabetes care improvement initiative, called the Partnership for Peak Healthcare Performance, to help validate its physician performance ratings in the metroplex. Likewise, the Harris County Medical Society will be able to use the data in its diabetes quality improvement demonstration project in Houston.

Prevalence of diabetes

In 2007, Dallas had the most type 2 diabetes patients of the six markets profiled in this report (119,924). Although this is only a one percent increase over the year before, it is nearly twice as many as in Houston (60,185), despite the similarity in size of these two major metropolitan areas. However, unlike Dallas, Houston experienced a 32 percent increase in the number of type 2 diabetes patients, the highest increase of the six profiled markets.

Severity greater than national average

Type 2 diabetes severity levels are higher in Texas than the national average, with almost 13 percent of Texans with this type of diabetes having two or more complications compared with just over nine percent nationally.

Cost of diabetes care is higher

The cost of treating commercially insured type 2 diabetes patients in Texas hospitals in 2007, regardless of setting (inpatient, outpatient, emergency room), was slightly higher than the national average of \$43,606. Fort Worth/Arlington had the highest inpatient charges (\$57,434) compared to the other five Texas markets, up nearly 24 percent from the previous year.

In contrast, inpatient hospital charges in Houston dropped 12 percent, to \$55,531, which is more in line with what Dallas hospitals charged for inpatient type 2 diabetes care last year (\$54,061).

Physician office charges in Dallas for treating type 2 diabetes were considerably higher (\$6,750) than the national average of \$2,818, regardless of the type of insurance. The lowest physician charges were seen in El Paso and Fort Worth/Arlington.

Texas lags the nation in appropriate diabetes care

Several tests are recommended for diagnosing and managing patients with type 2 diabetes, including the hemoglobin A1C test (A1C), which shows how the average blood glucose has been over the past three months, cholesterol test, urine test to detect kidney damage, and eye exam to prevent or defer possible blindness. Unfortunately, Texas continues to lag the nation in appropriate testing for diabetes. Less than 70 percent of Texans with type 2 diabetes received an A1C test in 2007, compared to the national average of 74 percent.

Only Austin outperformed the national average. Here 79 percent of these patients received the A1C test. However, Austin fell behind the rest of Texas and the nation in percentage of patients that received eye exams. Only 58.5 percent of Austin type 2 diabetes patients had eye exams in 2007, compared to the Texas average of 63.1 percent and the national average of 69.2 percent.

About the Texas Business Group on Health

The Texas Business Group on Health (TBGH), founded in 1985, is a non-profit 501c (6) organization dedicated to the development and support of community-based employer coalitions across Texas. For additional information: www.tbgh.org.

About the Dallas-Fort Worth Business Group on Health

The Dallas-Fort Worth Business Group on Health is a 140-member coalition of Dallas and Fort Worth area employers and health care stakeholders committed to market-based health care reform. Members include American Airlines, Bell Helicopter-Textron, Brinker International, Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, JC Penney, Neiman Marcus, Sabre Holdings, Southwest Airlines, Texas Instruments and Vought Aircraft Industries. A member of the National Business Coalition on Health, DFWBGH's goals are to empower employers and their employees to make informed health care purchasing decisions and to encourage health care providers to continuously improve their performance. www.dfwbgh.org.

About the Texas Type 2 Diabetes Report for 2008

The Texas Type 2 Diabetes Report for 2008 helps TBGH fulfill its mission of helping local employers play an active and enthusiastic role in promoting cost-effective delivery of quality health care to the benefit of the community. The report was produced with assistance from sanofi-aventis U.S. The complete report is available in electronic format on the TBGH website at <http://www.tbgh.org/pressroom.htm> and the DFWBGH website at <http://www.dfwbgh.org/documents/DiabetesReport2008.pdf>, and may be downloaded free of charge.

###