



## **MEDIA ADVISORY/REQUEST FOR COVERAGE**

**April 17, 2007**

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# **Got Health Insurance?**

If you answered yes, that's good news. But, if you've been keeping up with how much more you (and/or your employer) are paying for that coverage, you know it's not been good at all. What you may not know is that – even though you have insurance - your ability to get immediate treatment if you become seriously ill or injured may be in jeopardy.

About one-third of the Bexar County population is uninsured. And, most of those who *are* covered have no idea how the growing healthcare crisis is affecting their pocketbooks, their families' access to life-saving emergency care, and our children – *our future*.

**Everyone is at risk.** Emergency rooms often become the only place for the uninsured to receive care. These patients utilize precious ER resources – so there are fewer doctors, nurses and emergency room beds available for patients whose lives may depend on rapid treatment.

**Everyone pays the price.** The cost to treat the uninsured is financially overwhelming the healthcare system. In order to remain solvent, hospitals must increase to recoup just a portion of their losses. The result is higher healthcare costs and insurance premiums. And, as people with insurance can't afford to pay higher premiums, they drop their coverage and the number of uninsured increases even more. It's a frightening cycle. Even worse, our local taxpayers pay a larger share of the costs, because Texas (unlike other states) does not maximize federal dollars available for this care.

**The impact on our kids is unacceptable:** Children without health insurance are 400 percent more likely to rely on emergency room treatment. As a result of cuts approved by the Texas Legislature in 2003, CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program) enrollment has dropped by 40 percent statewide (27 percent in Bexar County).

**WHAT:        Healthcare Crisis Hitting (everyone's) Home - Press Conference**

**WHO:         David Hnatow, MD, Medical Director, University Hospital ER**  
**George B. Hernández, Jr, President/CEO, University Health System**  
**Sister Michelle O'Brien, Director of Adult Advocacy, CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Children's Hospital, Chair of Health Care for Every Child Coalition**

**WHEN:        Wednesday, April 18 at 1 p.m.**  
*Photo/B-Roll Op in emergency room immediately following brief remarks*

**WHERE:       University Hospital Emergency Room – 4502 Medical Drive**  
**(Meet in Corporate Communications, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, hospital main entrance)**