

May 10, 1984

News

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas
5323 Harry Hines Boulevard Dallas, Texas 75235 (214) 688-3404

CONTACT: Ann Harrell
Office: 214/688-3404
Home: 214/369-2695

****Lake June Clinic to combat adolescent pregnancy, maternal health and newborn baby problems.**

DALLAS--An open house will spotlight the opening of the Lake June Community Women's Clinic, newest of the Maternal Health and Family Planning service clinics sponsored by The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas, May 16 from 3 to 7 p.m. The clinic, located at 6925 Lake June Road, is the first clinic in a cooperative effort with the City Health and Human Services Department to offer newborn infant check-ups to women who might otherwise not be able to afford these services. The clinic began seeing patients April 1.

Patients will be seen on a confidential basis for family planning services and prenatal care, which will be given in conjunction with Parkland Memorial Hospital. In addition, newborn well-baby visits will be given in a collaborative effort with the city, says Dr. Stephen Heartwell, director of the UTHSCD Maternal Health and Family Planning Clinics.

The Lake June Clinic, which will serve the southeast Dallas area and surrounding communities, will replace the South Dallas Community Women's Clinic at 4400 Spring Ave. Last year the South Dallas operation saw 6,300 family planning patients and 1,400 prenatal patients. (These patients accounted for 7,500 family planning and 6,300 prenatal visits.) The South Dallas Clinic is far too small, clinic officials say, for this patient load, and the Lake June Clinic will serve an expanded area.

When it opens, Heartwell says, the Lake June Clinic will be one of the largest free-standing facilities of its kind in the country. The areas to be served by the clinic include: Jim Miller, half of South Dallas, Bruton, Elam, Mesquite, Balch Springs/Seagoville, Woodland Springs, some of the South Central area, East Dallas, Lakewood, White Rock, Ferguson, Rowlett and about one half of Garland.

In 1982 there were 3,775 births to girls 18 and under in Dallas County, according to statistics compiled by the Coalition on Responsible Parenthood and Adolescent Sexuality (CORPAS) and released this year in a report in conjunction with the Community Council of Greater Dallas. The report uses the phrase "adolescent pregnancy" rather than "teenage pregnancy" in a conscious effort to call attention to the fact that girls who are not yet teenagers are becoming pregnant and having children, including three twelve-year-old mothers in 1982. In 1980 and 1981 girls as young as nine delivered babies here.

The report stresses the fact the the problem is not exclusively one of the inner city. At least 100 births to adolescents were recorded in each of the four suburbs in 1982, while 1,077 of the 3,775 were delivered outside the city limits. In addition, it is projected that nearly 3,200 girls 18 and under who live in the county had abortions in 1982. This number was based on statistical projections of the National Center for Health Statistics.

(more)

Based on the 1982 Dallas statistics, more than 1,000 babies were born to adolescents in the area to be served by the Lake June Clinic. Using the national projections, it is estimated that an even larger number of pregnant adolescents in the service area received abortions.

The basic first-year cost to taxpayers for each birth to an adolescent was estimated at \$7,000 by the Texas House Select Committee on Teenage Pregnancy in 1982. That equals around \$26.5 million for that year alone in Dallas County. "With the family planning services, maternal health care for pregnant women and well-baby checks, we believe that this clinic will do much to cut expenditures for Dallas taxpayers, as well as ensure that Dallas citizens, who probably would not be able to afford it otherwise, have proper medical care," says Heartwell.

###

For B-roll, patient pictures and interviews with patients and health personnel contact Ann Harrell (688-3404) for an appointment. These will need to be done after Monday or Tuesday morning, since this office will be involved with making "pool" videotape and still pictures Wednesday morning on Stormie Jones' arrival.