

# CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE DISEASE MANAGEMENT

- SYSTEMATIC PROGRAM TO PROVIDE BEST OUTCOMES IN HEART FAILURE CARE AT CENTERS  
OF CLINICAL EXCELLENCE -

The Heart Failure Disease Management Program is a **national award winning program**, the recipient of the 2002 National Public Hospitals and Health Systems Award for Accountability and Quality Improvement at Leonard J. Chabert Medical Center. In the fall of 2006 **PBS** will *feature* this flagship heart failure program in a four part series on Chronic Disease in America.

Heart failure is the leading hospital discharge diagnosis in America in the Medicare population and the most expensive disease to treat. Louisiana has ranked **51<sup>st</sup>** in the country for the quality of care Medicare beneficiaries receive for overall cardiac care including heart failure. Louisiana Medicare patients receive the correct evidence based medicine to treat heart failure only **57%** of the time. Our goal has been to decrease admission, decrease cost, decrease mortality and improve quality of care.

Thus far hospital admissions for heart failure have decreased by 72% resulting in a cost avoidance of \$27 million over 2 years in the 8 hospital system. Mortality rates been dramatically reduced and racial and gender disparities in care are non existent with black women having the lowest mortality.

Taking advantage of the pharmaceutical sponsored programs each hospital social service program screens and enrolls patients into these free programs. As a result \$50 million per year in free drugs including lifesaving heart failure medications are dispensed at each of the 8 public hospitals. As a result of this program, **96%** of the time heart failure patients receive the evidence based medications at discharge which would rank us *first* in the country in quality of care not only for Medicare patients but for **all patients** in our programs.

Because of the robust heart failure database developed on some campuses in addition to having an indigent population and a large percent of minorities we have been invited by **Harvard's** Brigham and Women Hospital and Mass General Hospital to apply for a **\$37 million** NIH grant to develop 8 heart failure research centers in America. Two campuses have been selected by **Yale** to participate in a **NIH** sponsored clinical research trial to evaluate outpatient heart failure care.

Recently the Center for Medicare Services (CMS) and the Joint Commission for the Accreditation of Hospitals Organization (JCAHO) has developed 6 new discharge criteria for patients hospitalized with heart failure. All of the public hospitals are participating in complying with these new requirements. The new pay for performance program established by CMS will reimburse hospitals at a higher rate for scoring in the top 10% for meeting these standards.