



Rural Development

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USDA GRANT SUPPORTS TELEMEDICINE IN GONZALES COUNTY

TEMPLE, April 8, 2014 – USDA Rural Development has announced funding for the Gonzales Healthcare Systems Foundation to advance healthcare technology and further increase the standard of patient care in Gonzales County.

“We are pleased to partner with the Gonzales Healthcare Systems to provide the most up-to-date medical equipment ensuring rural residents have access to quality healthcare without leaving their local community,” said Paco Valentin, USDA Rural Development State Director.

A grant through USDA’s Distance Learning and Telemedicine program for almost \$300,000 will be used to improve critical teleradiological services provided by Gonzales Hospital. The funding announced today will be used to update the current teleradiological equipment making it possible for radiologists located several hours from the hospital to have immediate access to imaging sent from the Gonzales Hospital. This will provide for quicker collaboration and diagnosis between the local hospital and Radiology Partners-Houston, a practice highly specialized in every facet of radiology. The Gonzales Hospital currently serves patients with over 18,000 radiological diagnostic services annually. Clinical specialties such as cardiology, endoscopy, mammography, orthopedic, neurology, intracerebral angiography, vascular, gastroenterology, interventional, pediatric, musculoskeletal and bronchoscopy rely on the hospital’s radiological capacity to transmit visual data imaging and accompanying information.

“The new technology is truly a lifesaving technology for our patient base, said Connie Kacir. “The ability to insure the delivery of all patient imaging for expedited diagnosis results from radiologist with sub-specialty training and credentialing from Radiology Partners-Houston will save lives in Gonzales. Our hospital is supported with 24/7 access to the same team of radiology specialists serving Memorial Hermann Hospital System in Houston who is rated in the top 1% among hospitals in the nation. We are honored by USDA providing us funding to serve our patients with the gold standard in healthcare.”

“The USDA has assisted Gonzales Healthcare Systems Foundation in two recent projects with grants that will assist the patients of Gonzales Memorial Hospital in obtaining leading edge diagnostic treatment, said Chuck Norris, CEO of Gonzales Healthcare Systems.” “We are most appreciative of this assistance and offer our sincere gratitude to everyone at the USDA that was involved in these funding opportunities.”

Rural Development programs provide funding for rural health IT infrastructure and expand local access to high quality health care services for rural Americans nationwide. These programs include the Community Facilities loan and grant program, the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant program and the Rural Economic Development loan and grant program. For information on this and other USDA Rural Development programs in Texas, visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/TX.html>.

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