FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sept. 27, 2010
CONTACT: Beth Phillips, beth.phillips@ttuhsc.edu
(806) 743-2143

Combest Center Celebrates
“National Nurse-Managed Health Clinic Week” Oct. 3-9

A new national campaign has been launched to recognize the important work of health clinics like the Larry Combest Community Health and Wellness Center, 301 40th St. The Combest Center is a nurse-managed health clinic operated by the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) School of Nursing within one of Lubbock’s medically underserved areas.

There are 250 nurse-managed health clinics in the U.S., which serve as crucial health care access points in areas where primary care physicians are in short supply. These health centers provide primary care, health promotion and disease prevention services to patients least likely to receive ongoing health care. This population includes clients of all ages who are uninsured, underinsured, living in poverty or members of racial and ethnic minority groups who lack access to primary care. Nurse-managed health clinics also play an important role in health professions education. The majority are affiliated with schools and colleges of nursing and serve as clinical education and practice sites for health professions students and faculty.

In recognition of their work, the National Nursing Centers Consortium (NNCC) along with nurse practitioners and registered nurses from across the nation will converge on the nation’s capitol to celebrate National Nurse-Managed Health Clinic Week, Oct. 3-9, 2010. An opening ceremony and news conference will take place Oct. 4 from 10-11 a.m. in Washington DC.

When President Obama signed health care reform into law in March 2010, it signaled the beginning of a new era for nurse-led health care – with the creation of a $50 million grant program to support innovative safety net providers like the Combest Center.

Office of Communications

An EEO/Affirmative Action Institution

-More-
“The Larry Combest Community Health and Wellness Center participates in the celebration of the National Nurse-Managed Health Centers Week by recognizing its patients, its providers of primary health care and its staff, without which we wouldn’t be in existence,” said Chris Esperat, Ph.D., R.N., professor and associate dean of Clinical Services and Community Engagement, and The CH Foundation Regents Professor in Rural Health Disparities at the TTUHSC School of Nursing. “The Combest Center further improves access to quality health care services for residents of its catchment areas by providing home visitation services through the Nurse-Family Partnership program and the Patient Navigator program for chronic disease self management.”

In March of 2009, the Combest Center achieved status as a federally qualified health center (FQHC). It has thus joined the ranks of a very few of the nation’s nurse-managed health centers which are recognized FQHCs, Esperat said. The center achieved FQHC status as a public entity and a Not For Profit 501C3 governing board model, and this further sets it apart from the vast majority of the traditional private, non-profit FQHCs.

For more information about the Combest Center, contact Michelle Hunter, TTUHSC School of Nursing, at (806) 743-9355.

For more breaking news and experts, follow @ttuhscnews on Twitter.