Public Health Funding and Policy Committee Meeting

October 7th, 2020

Minutes

Committee Members Attending

Lou Kreidler, RN, BSN - Wichita Falls – Wichita County Public Health District

Stephen Williams, MEd, MPA - Houston Health Department – Chair

Phil Huang, MD, MPH – Dallas County Health and Human Services

Sharon Melville, MD, MPH – DSHS, Public Health Region 7

Emilie Prot, DO, MPH – DSHS, Public Health Region 11

Julie St. John, DrPH – Texas Tech University

Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH - Harris County Public Health

Attendees:

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| Shelle Tarbox | Rafael Alberti | Cliffton Karnes |
| Glenna Laughlin | Mackenzie Spahn | Colin Crocker |
| Angel Angco-Barrera | Steve Eichner | Michelle Austin |
| Michael DeLeon | Nancy Ejuma | Shannon Brown |
| Dora Fogle | Caroline (guest) | Imelda Garcia |
| Albert Cheng | Peter Hajmasy | Christina Ly |
| Lindsey Lanagan | Seth Henderson | Illy Jaffer |
| Joel De Jesus | Jennifer Smith | Lauren Kalbfell |
| Lisa Kirsch | Lara Lamprecht | Lissette Osborne |
| Nicole D | Nicole Delany | Shannon Richter |
| Lillian Ringsdorf | Shannon (guest) | Jennifer Sims |
| Rachel Sonne | Lisa Steffek | Jeff Swanson |
| Todd Dickerson | Julia VonAlexander | Veronica Karam |
| Steven Shafer |  |  |

Chair, Stephen Williams, called the meeting to order at 9:03 am and called roll.

**September 9th Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Lou Kreidler moved to approve the minutes, Dr. Julie St. John seconded. Motion carried. Minutes approved.

**Laboratory Electronic Reporting Recommendations**

Ms. Imelda Garcia gave an overview of issues DSHS is working to resolve with electronic lab reporting. The CDC has advised a hold on implementing new requirements into NEDSS until they are able to get more details. The Division for Laboratory and Infectious Disease Services (LIDS) is working with health providers to relay the importance of submitting all data components. They have also spoken with state legislators about these issues and the quality of the data being submitted.

Dr. Phil Huang asked if there was a way to standardize the reporting, as each vendor is submitting the data in different forms.

Ms. Imelda Garcia is working with Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) and the mobile vendors to refine the quality issues and will take feedback to resolve these issues.

The committee’s recommendations to DSHS on this topic are as follows:

1. Ensure electronic lab reporting for laboratories & hospital systems lead directly to Local Health Department (LHD), Public Health Region (PHR), and the central office for all reportable conditions
2. Ensure complete data sets by implementing a data checking tool
3. Implement regular compliance reports for labs and hospital systems. These reports should include, at a minimum, the quantity of electronic lab results, the frequency of incomplete data fields, reconcile data format of line list for consistency, and average turnaround time from date of specimen collection to date results received by DSHS.
4. Augment electronic lab reporting for reportable conditions to offer interoperability and compatibility between LHD and DSHS.
5. Assist LHD with resources to develop and enhance electronic lab reporting infrastructure, where needed.

Mr. Stephen Williams stated that it would be beneficial to set up a conversation where contracted data system consultants can be brought together in the hopes of focusing in on this discussion more and the possibility of creating a conceptual framework.

Ms. Imelda Garcia has been in contact with Amanda Crawford with the Department of Information Resources and is working to have someone from their team facilitate a conversation to begin building this vision of better connectivity. She will work with Glenna Laughlin and the committee in establishing a meeting for this road map.

Mr. Stephen Williams entertained a motion to formalize these recommendations as written. Dr. Philip Huang motioned, and Dr. Sharon Melville seconded.

**1115 Waiver Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment Program Transition**

Ms. Lauren Kalbfell updated that there is an opportunity for volunteers to be involved in future planning. Meetings are expected to convene starting next week and interested parties should reach out to the waiver inbox at TXHealthcareTransformation@hhsc.state.tx.us.

Mr. Stephen Williams would like to make sure that there is proper representation within these meetings from a small, medium, and large LHDs.

Ms. Lauren Kalbfell provided an update on two work groups currently being established with personnel from the Health Care Transformation Waiver team under Medicaid/HHSC and the Provider Finance Division also under HHSC. These two work groups will focus on hospitals and physician practices on the topic of exploring options for direct payment programs incorporating lessoned learned from Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) and working off existing supplemental funding streams. Brittany Bills has been hired within HHSC as the new Director of 1115 Waiver Strategy. Ms. Lauren Kalbfell further clarified that DSRIP ends in 2021, and the 1115 waiver ends October 2022, but that it does not mean the waiver will go away, completely.

Mr. Stephen Williams stated that the formalization of the role of public health is something that should be discussed because of the upcoming loss of DSRIP funding. Ms. Lauren Kalbfell agreed to address this within the planning meetings and work groups.

Mr. Stephen Williams would like to look to the group committee that was created before to touch base on the 1115 waiver. He would like to include Casie Stoughton and Robert Kirkpatrick on the workgroup.

**Public Health Technology Work Group**

Dr. Lara Lamprecht provided a brief background of the Technology work group stating that it had created a charter and prioritized the activities they would work on. They are working on scheduling the next meeting and plan to bring the new Associate Commissioner for Program Operations in the workgroup. He comes from IT and will be able to provide valuable insight and recommendations. There is a rule out for public comment based on House Bill 3704 from the last legislation session. The rule requires DSHS to have a process and agreements in place for data sharing, specifically for local governmental public health purposes. It has been through the policy council, and they are working on the processes now. DSHS is also working on hiring a Data Governance Director to help lead efforts in establishing an informatics strategy and creating policies around data sharing to provide more consistency. DSHS is conducting a review of all the major datasets to understand what policies were surrounding them and updating them as needed.

Mr. Stephen Williams asked what the relationship between lab reporting and the technology workgroups is. Dr. Lara Lamprecht responded that they plan to meet with the Associate Commissioner for Program Operations and pull together the people that are involved with electronic lab reporting to streamline these efforts together in the most reasonable way possible.

Dr. Phil Huang asked how the data use agreements (DUAs) and memorandums of understanding (MOU)s fit in with these new processes?

Dr. Lara Lamprecht responded that there will be a broader MOU with appendices for each of the major datasets, rather than having multiple programs working on creating their own agreements from scratch. There will need to be follow up with the LHDs to find out what kind of data they need.

**Annual Report 2020**

Ms. Glenna Laughlin stated that Government Affairs would like the committee to come up with an idea of when the 2020 annual report it might be completed. Previously, the committee agreed to shoot for a December submission, but at this point it is considered behind.

Mr. Stephen Williams would like the recommendations to take priority over the report and formalize a letter to the Commissioner with the recommendations. The committee was asked if there are any other suggested recommendations.

Dr. Umair Shah motioned to add a recommendation based off COVID-19 vaccine distribution. The recommendation is to include local health authority (LHA) representation in the process of determining equitable vaccine allocation and distribution throughout the state. Dr. Emilie Prot seconded this motion.

Dr. Umair Shah motioned that the state should provide the committee with an outline of all COVID-19 related funding the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) has received from the federal level, the amount of those funds that have been allocated to local public health and plans for funding moving forward. Ms. Lou Kreidler would like to make sure that it is not just Cares Act funding that is spoken of but all funding that was allocated. Ms. Lou Kreidler seconded the motion.

**Public Comment**

No public comments were provided.

**Timelines, Next steps, Announcements and Future Meeting Dates**

Dr. Umair Shah would like some form of after action review from DSHS for post COVID-19 response during an upcoming meeting.

Ms. Jennifer Sims said she has been a part of these discussions and can update on them.

Mr. Stephen Williams would like to schedule the next meeting three weeks from this meeting. He would like to have it open to COVID related topics and to discuss the December meeting.

**Adjourn**

Ms. Lou Kreidler made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Umair Shah seconded. Motion carried.

Approved:

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Stephen L. Williams, Committee Chair Date