Public Health Funding and Policy Committee Meeting

April 10, 2024

Minutes

Committee Members Attending

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

Phillip Huang, MD, MPH – Dallas County Health and Human Services – Vice Chair

Jennifer Griffith, DrPH, MPH – Texas A&M University

Lisa Dick, Brownwood – Brown County Health Department

Sharon Whitley – Hardin County Health Department

Attendees:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Colin Crocker | Steve Eichner |  |
| Christine Murphy | Noah A Chornyak |  |
| Mohib Nawab |  |  |
| Crystal Biggs-Pope |  |  |
| Carl Mamula |  |  |
| Varun Shetty |  |  |
| Josh Hutchinson |  |  |
| Michael Comfort |  |  |
| Christina Kubenka |  |  |
| Dawn Ferriter |  |  |
| Aurelia Schmalstieg |  |  |
| Clifton Karnes |  |  |
| Fatima Kovic |  |  |
| Sai Bala |  |  |
| Nicole Knight |  |  |
| Jennifer Smith |  |  |
| Michael DeLeon |  |  |
| Glenna Laughlin |  |  |
| Imelda Garcia |  |  |
| Jennifer Griffith |  |  |
| Summer Grubb |  |  |

Chair, Mr. Stephen Williams, called the meeting to order at 9:00 am and the committee members introduced themselves.

**February 7th Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Lisa Dick motioned to approve the minutes as written. Dr. Phillip Huang seconded. Minutes approved.

**Emerging and Infectious Diseases Update:**

Dr. Varun Shetty provided the committee with an update on Avian Influenza: HPA5 and HPA1, during which he presented press releases that identified the first case in Texas. He discussed the symptoms and drug responses associated with the virus, as well as shared the CDC guidelines for infection prevention, personal protective equipment (PPE) usage, testing protocols, monitoring procedures, and treatment options. Additionally, Dr. Shetty relayed the CDC's recommendations on how to handle interactions with stray animals and children.

* Measles: As of April 4, 2024, a total of 113 measles cases have come from eighteen states. The CDC was alerting the country about the rise in measles cases. No cases reported in Texas.
* In 2023 there were a total of fifty-eight measles cases in the entire year from twenty jurisdictions. Mostly unvaccinated people have reported testing positive.
* Serogroup Y Meningococcal: An advisory was sent out by the CDC of the increase of invasive meningococcal disease that included guidelines for monitoring, treatment, and recommending people with compromised immune systems the vaccine.

**Data Modernization/Public Health Data Sharing Update:**

Ms. Imelda Garcia introduced the new Public Health and Informatics Director, Dr. Sai Bala. She updated the committee on modernizing public health in Texas. The overall goal is to improve access to multiple data sets, consolidate data repository, increase access to data visualization tools, and improve the public health outcomes.

ImmTrac2 Updates: The new Provider Activity Dashboard for PowerBI allows users to display the following reports, including historical data: Texas Immunization Provider Summary (TIPS), Provider Activity Report (PAR), and Consent Acceptance Rate Evaluation (CARE).

Maternal and Child Health (MCH) modernization projects includes TexasAIM data visualizations, transforming Healthy Texas Mothers and Babies (HTMB) Databook into Texas Health Data, creating a Parent/Guardian Form for Texas Early Hearing Detection, implementing the Maternal Mortality Review System (MMRS), and developing the Maternal Child Health Quality Improvement System (MCHQIS).

Future MCH modernization considerations include the Newborn Screening Care Coordination System (NBS), the Child Health Reporting System (CHRS), the Enhancement of MMRS, the Expansion of MCHQIS, Vital Statistics Systems, Birth Defects Registry, Blood Lead Registry, and the Reportable Conditions Knowledge Management System (RCKMS).

Questions:

Q: Dr. Phillip Huang asked how the US Digital Service works to report point of care, HIV, and STD.

A: Ms. Imelda Garcia replied that the US Digital Service sends a URL capture report and provides electronic faxing.

Q: Dr. Phillip Huang asked Ms. Imelda Garcia the name of the monthly call she mentioned.

A: Ms. Imelda Garcia replied that it is the MCH Stakeholder Workgroup.

Q: Dr. Phillip Huang asked Ms. Imelda Garcia if DSHS is still processing her COVID-19 ECR Data.

A: Ms. Imelda Garcia replied that it was not required but would continue to accept the data.

Q: Dr. Phillip Huang asked if locals were able to download the entire historical data for TB, HIV, & STD Integrated System (THISIS).

A: Ms. Imelda Garcia replied that locals should be able to within a timeline.

**Public Health Provider-Charity Care Program Update:**

Mr. Mohib Nawab updated the committee on the second year of the program. Each year had a cap of $500 million. The total claimed for year 1 was $460 million, while the total claimed for year 2 was $499 million. The amount due to providers for year 1 was $308 million and for year 2 was $324 million. For the local health departments, six locations were participating. The approval for year 1 was $33 million and the claimed amount for year 2 was $44 million.

**Annual Report Preparation:**

Ms. Glenna Laughlin reminded the committee that they were required to submit an annual report to the Legislature and then DSHS would need to respond to any recommendations. No new recommendations had been made in the past couple of years. Ms. Laughlin requested a review of the current recommendations and updates on the language before submitting them in preparation for the upcoming annual report. The committee decided to review the current information and make updates, edits, and suggestions as needed. The committee agreed that there should be two focus areas of recommendations going forward: Increased capacity and funding for LHDs and DSHS Regions and increased data modernization and access to data for LHDs. Dr. Huang agreed to review the recommendations regarding technology and data sharing. The committee will vote on the recommendations during the June meeting.

**Public Comment:**

No public comments.

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

None

**Adjourn:**

Mr. Stephen Williams adjourned the meeting.

Approved:

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Stephen L. Williams, Committee Chair Date