

**Public Health Region 7 Antimicrobial Stewardship Regional Advisory
Committee
Meeting Minutes
July 6, 2023
9 AM – 11 AM**

Microsoft TEAMS

Table 1: PHR 7 Antimicrobial Stewardship Regional Advisory Committee member attendance at 7/6/2023 meeting.

MEMBER NAME	YES	NO	MEMBER NAME	YES	NO
Rama Thyagarajan	X				
Chelsea Vaughn	X				
Betsy Kirkpatrick	X				
Kathryn Rose	X				
Brian Cooper		X			

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Call to Order

Ms. Vanessa Pierce called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. She announced the meeting was being recorded and transcribed. The minutes of the meeting will be available later for public review. Attendees were asked to turn cameras and microphones on when speaking and off when not speaking.

Agenda Item 2: Introduction of Members

Ms. Pierce welcomed and thanked the members for their time and dedication to improving antimicrobial stewardship (AS) in Public Health Region (PHR) 7. Each member introduced themselves as follows:

- Dr. Rama Thyagarajan is a physician with over twenty years of experience. She is assistant professor in the Department of Internal Medicine of Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin and provides infectious diseases (ID) care at Dell Seton Medical Center at UT Austin since 2019. She serves as the system physician leader for infectious disease and antimicrobial stewardship in her current position and served for many years in prior positions.

- Ms. Chelsea Vaughn is the Director of Nursing at the Marbridge Foundation. She has been a nurse since 2010. Her nursing background includes emergency services, mental health, long term care and home health.
- Ms. Betsy Kirkpatrick has been a Registered Nurse since 1976 and is certified in infection control. She started her nursing career as a staff nurse and transitioned to infection preventionist in 1998. Since 2015, she has been working in public health performing multidrug-resistant organism (MDRO) surveillance and assisting healthcare facilities with infectious disease outbreaks.
- Dr. Kathryn Rose is a pediatric infectious disease pharmacist. For the past 6 years she has served as the Division Director of Clinical Pharmacy for the Central and West Texas Division of St. David's Healthcare/HCA. Previously she practiced as a pediatric infectious diseases Clinical Pharmacy Specialist and Clinical Pharmacy Manager leading efforts in antimicrobial stewardship and education.
- Dr. Brian Cooper was unable to attend. Ms. Pierce provided an overview of his biography. Dr. Cooper received his undergraduate degree in Biopsychology from the University of Michigan and his medical degree from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. He completed his residency in Internal Medicine at Banner Good Samaritan Hospital and the VA systems in Phoenix, AZ, prior to moving to Austin in 2009. Since joining Elite Patient Care/Curana full time, Dr. Cooper has devoted significant time and effort improving the quality of care at all his associated facilities, including but not limited to antibiotic stewardship, palliative care, transitional care medicine, and utilization review.

Agenda Item 3: Introduction of DSHS/HHSV Representatives

Ms. Pierce thanked the following Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) attendees who joined the meeting: Ms. Daniella Rodriguez, PHR 7 Healthcare-associated Infection (HAI) Epidemiologist; Ms. Danielle Kim, Antimicrobial Resistance Epidemiologist; and Ms. Sheri Mead, Quality Monitoring Program Representative, HHSC.

Ms. Pierce reported Dr. Sharon Melville Regional Medical Director, PHR 7 was unable to join the meeting today but the committee looks forward to her participation at future meetings.

Ms. Pierce thanked the alternate committee members for attending as well.

Agenda Item 4: Ethics Discussion

Mr. David Reisman was unable to attend the meeting. The overview of advisory committee ethics will be deferred to the next meeting.

Agenda Item 5: Regional Information Discussion

Ms. Daniella Rodriguez and Ms. Danielle Kim presented the regional AS and MDRO information for PHR 7. Highlights of the presentation included:

- Texas Notifiable Conditions list is used to guide reporting of certain diseases and outbreaks to local, regional and state health departments [Notifiable Conditions | Texas DSHS](#)
- MDROs included on the Texas Notifiable Conditions list include *Candida auris* (*C. auris*), carbapenem-resistant *Enterobacterales* (CRE), *Klebsiella* species and *E. coli*; vancomycin intermediate *Staphylococcus aureus* (VISA), and vancomycin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (VRSA)
- Fifteen counties in PHR 7 had at least one reportable MDRO in 2021. Cases are counted by patient's county of residence.
- Twenty-one counties in PHR 7 had at least one reportable MDRO reported in 2022. Data is provisional, not final.
- The Antimicrobial Resistance Laboratory Network (ARLN) was established to enhance laboratory capacity to quickly identify and contain antimicrobial resistance, track changes and provide outbreak response support.
- The DSHS State Lab in Austin is the ARLN for Texas.
- Although certain MDROs are required to be reported as a notifiable condition, the submission of isolates to the ARLN for testing is voluntary. *Candida auris* is the only isolate required to be submitted.
- The case counts may differ between the MDROs identified by the ARLN and those reported as a Texas Notifiable Condition.
- Antibiograms are tables created to show an organism's antimicrobial susceptibility and guide appropriate treatment selection.
- Antibiograms for 2020 and 2021 were created for each of the Texas public health regions using isolate susceptibility data of HAI-causing organisms reported to the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN).

Agenda Item 7: Vote on Chairperson

Ms. Pierce introduced the vote for committee chairperson and read the list of responsibilities of the chairperson, as stated in the bylaws. No nominations

were received prior to the meeting. Members were asked to nominate a chairperson.

- Dr. Thyagarajan nominated herself.
- Ms. Vaughn also nominated Dr. Thyagarajan.
- Ms. Pierce launched a poll for vote by ballot. Only committee members may cast a vote.
- Dr. Thyagarajan received four votes and was unanimously chosen as the PHR 7 Antimicrobial Stewardship Regional Advisory Committee Chairperson.

Agenda Item 8: Vote on Bylaws

Ms. Pierce introduced the vote on the advisory committee bylaws. The proposed bylaws were sent to members on June 23, 2023 for review and opportunity to suggest revisions. No revisions were suggested prior to or during this meeting.

- Ms. Vaughn motioned to hold a verbal vote on the bylaws.
- Ms. Kirkpatrick seconded the motion.
- Ms. Pierce called on each of the four members to cast a verbal vote.
- Dr. Thyagarajan reported she has not read the bylaws and abstained from voting.
- Dr. Cooper was not in attendance.
- The bylaws were approved as written with three yes votes. Three votes represented a majority vote.
- The bylaws will be sent out to the committee members for signatures and stored on record.

Agenda Item 9: Public Comment and Open Forum

Ms. Pierce allowed time for public comments to be shared. No members of the public offered comments.

Ms. Pierce opened the floor for Open Forum:

- Dr. Thyagarajan suggested obtaining a community antibiogram applicable at the county or region level.
 - Healthcare providers are asking for susceptibility rates, particularly for urinary and respiratory pathogens, to increase their role in antimicrobial stewardship.
 - DSHS antibiogram are biased to hospital patients, not applicable for other non-hospital settings.

- Local healthcare systems are not willing to share their resistance data because it is related to hospitalized patients and not the community at large.
- Obtain permission from DSHS to contact large commercial labs to see if they are willing to filter susceptibility data by county.
 - Ms. Melissa LeBrun and a pharmacy intern have been working on a similar project to gain DSHS leadership approval to obtain data from labs and facilities.
 - Ms. LeBrun agreed to work collaboratively with this Committee on the project.
- Dr. Thyagarajan commented it is important to educate providers how to use antibiogram when prescribing therapy.
- Ms. Sheri Mead reported the Texas HHSC Quality Monitoring Program (QMP) helps long term care facilities with evidence-based best practices and long-term care facilities have a quality measure to obtain an antibiogram.
- Ms. Mead can provide this Committee channels of communication to facilities as needed.
- Ms. Kirkpatrick suggested it be mandatory that hospital and commercial labs submit carbapenem-resistant isolates to the Austin State Lab.
 - Ms. Pierce suggested lab personnel could be invited to a future meeting to discuss.
- Dr. Thyagarajan requested the number of nursing and long term care facilities to understand the scope of need for AS educational resources and support to staff and leaders.
 - Ms. Pierce agreed to provide that number.
- Dr. Thyagarajan suggested providing AS education to healthcare facilities and the community at large.
 - Suggested educational topics included: definition of AS; use of antibiogram; management of urinary tract infections; appropriate collection of urine culture specimens.
- Dr. Geoffrey McCrossan, who serves as an attending physician at many long-term facilities, requested education include patients and families who pressure providers to prescribe antibiotics.
- Dr. Thyagarajan suggested educational attention specifically on urinary tract infections (UTIs), urine specimen collection, urinary pathogen antibiogram.
- Dr. Rose agreed with focus on UTIs but also suggested to look at community education for appropriate treatment of otitis media and pneumonia.

Agenda Item 10: Next Meeting and Agenda Items

Ms. Pierce suggested members should decide on future meetings. According to House Bill 1848, members are only required to meet once per year. The members need to vote to meet additional times this year.

- Ms. Pierce called on each member to cast a vote.
- The proposal to meet again this year passed unanimously with three votes.
- Ms. Pierce announced she will reach out to members within the next few months to schedule another meeting.

Ms. Pierce asked for suggested agenda items for the next meeting. The following ideas were proposed:

- Develop antibiograms applicable to the community/county level
 - engage State lab and commercial labs in this process
 - educate providers on use of antibiograms.
- Establish a subcommittee to address UTI, urine culture collection and infection prevention processes in skilled nursing facilities.
 - gather tools and resources to review, revise and distribute.
 - DSHS to develop meeting criteria for a subcommittee.
- Develop a plan to address community antimicrobial stewardship expectations and practices, including teaching patients and families.

Agenda Item 11: Adjourn

Ms. Pierce adjourned the meeting at 10:43 a.m.