



Task Force of Border Health Officials (TFBHO) APPROVED Meeting Minutes 1:00 p.m., February 14, 2024

Physical Location: Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Robert D. Moreton Building, Room M-100, First Floor 1100 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756

TEAMS Virtual/Hybrid Meeting

Table 1: TFBHO attendance at the February 14, 2024, meeting.

Table with 6 columns: MEMBER NAME, YES, NO, MEMBER NAME, YES, NO. Rows list attendees like Dr. Richard Chamberlain, Ms. Esmeralda Guajardo, etc.

Agenda Item 1: Call to order, welcome, Chair remarks, meeting logistics, and Roll Call

Dr. Arturo Rodriguez, Chair, convened the TFBHO meeting at 1:00 p.m., and welcomed attendees. Ms. Francesca Kupper, Program Specialist VI, Advisory Committee Coordination Office (ACCO), Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), provided logistical announcements, conducted the roll call, and noted a quorum was present.

Agenda Item 2: Consideration of December 7, 2023, draft meeting minutes

Dr. Rodriguez called for any edits or changes to the draft December 7, 2023, meeting minutes. Receiving no edits or changes, Dr. Rodriguez called for a motion to approve the draft.

MOTION:

Mr. Steven M. Kotsatos moved to approve the December 7, 2023, draft meeting minutes as written. Dr. Cynthia Gutiérrez seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved with no nays nor abstentions.

Agenda Item 3: Update: DSHS Immunizations Unit

Ms. Nurriya Mohammad, Epidemiologist, Immunizations Unit, DSHS; Mr. Emilio Gonzalez, State Flu Coordinator, DSHS; and Mr. Samuel Ortiz Severiano, Adult Immunization Program Team Lead, DSHS Vaccine Operations Unit, provided members with an update on vaccinations. Mr. Austin Knaplund, Vaccine Ordering Lead, Vaccine Operations Unit, DSHS Immunizations Unit, presented a PowerPoint titled "Immunization Program Update". Key points included:

- From July 1, 2023, to February 12, 2024, the top five border counties vaccinators were El Paso, Hidalgo, Cameron, Webb, and Maverick.

- Influenza has increased slightly and it continues to be on the rise as we head into peak influenza season.
- COVID-19 is still very active in our community and there is an effort to keep data up to date. The number of cases could be double what is reported because not all providers are reporting them.

Agenda Item 4: Presentation: Alzheimer’s Association

Ms. Chelsea Rangel, Public Policy Manager, Alzheimer's Association, Capital of Texas and San Antonio & South Texas Chapters, presented a PowerPoint titled “Alzheimer’s Association: Awareness and Resources”. Highlights included:

- The number of people affected by Alzheimer's and other dementias is going to increase demand for care and support, both by medical professionals as well as family, friends, and entire communities.
- The Alzheimer's epidemic is going to continue to worsen in Texas due to population growth, the aging population, and the current demographic trends. The border counties have higher rates of Alzheimer's disease among older adults compared to other areas of the state.
- Early detection of Alzheimer's can make a significant difference in managing the disease.

Agenda Item 5: Update: Border Data

Erica Mendoza, Epidemiologist of the Office of Border Public Health, DSHS, presented a PowerPoint titled “Texas Border Health Epidemiology and Data Overview”. Highlights included:

- The border counties have the highest rates of congenital syphilis. That may be due to late diagnosis or no diagnosis.
- The top ten Texas counties with the highest diagnosed diabetes and highest diabetes hospitalizations are along the border.
- The adjusted years of potential life lost by county includes all injury-related deaths. It can suggest an economic impact because people dying younger may not be able to live to their full potential.

Agenda Item 6: Discussion: 2023-2024 Recommendations Report

Dr. Rodriguez asked Ms. Karin Hopkins, Office of Border Public Health Director, DSHS, to remind the participants about the timeline for the 2023-2024 Recommendations Report. Then, Dr. Rodriguez asked Dr. Ocaranza to lead the discussion about Communicable Diseases, and High Morbidity and Mortality Conditions. The results will be included in the 2023-2024 Recommendations Report.

Agenda Item 7: Public comment

No public comment was received.

Agenda Item 8: Closing remarks, thank you and adjourn

Dr. Rodriguez adjourned the meeting at 4:13 p.m.

Please click on the link to the archived HHSC video to view, and listen to, the entirety of the February 14, 2024, Task Force of Border Health Officials (TFBHO) meeting; this video will be available for approximately two years from the date the meeting video is posted in accordance with the HHSC records retention schedule:

[Task Force of Border Health Officials \(TFBHO\)](#)