



Task Force of Border Health Officials (TFBHO) APPROVED Meeting Minutes 1:00 p.m., October 11, 2023

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 October 11, 2023, 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, Project Manager, 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 August 9, 2023, draft meeting minutes

Dr. Rodriguez called for any edits or changes to the draft August 9, 2023, meeting minutes. Receiving no edits or changes, Dr. Rodriguez called for a motion to approve the draft.

MOTION:

Mr. Eduardo Olivarez moved to approve the August 9, 2023, draft meeting minutes as written. Mr. Steven M. Kotsatos seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved with no nays nor abstentions.

Agenda Item 3: Update: DSHS Immunizations Unit

Mr. Greg Leos, Director, Assessment, Compliance and Epidemiology Branch, Immunizations Unit, DSHS, and Ms. Mona Crowley, Lead Nurse-Immunizations Unit, DSHS, provided members with an update on vaccinations. Ms. Rae Plaza, Program Specialist V, Vaccine Operations Unit, Immunizations Unit, DSHS, presented a PowerPoint titled "Immunization Program Update" and Mr. Samuel Ortiz Severiano, Adult Immunization Program Team Lead, Immunizations Unit, DSHS, presented a PowerPoint titled "ASN Bridge Program Update".

Key points included:

- Immunizations Unit is working diligently with the manufacturer to get COVID vaccines needed quickly to start vaccinating as many people as possible.

- There is no free COVID vaccine for the general public. People need to use their own insurance, and some could be eligible for the Texas Vaccines for Children Program (TVFC), DSHS Adult Safety Net Program (ASN), or CDC's Bridge Access Program.
- State and local health department clinics, as well as federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics are eligible for both TVFC and ASN.
- The border has good vaccination rates, consistent through COVID.

Agenda Item 4: Update: Border Data

Mr. Sudeep Neupane, Interim Epidemiologist, Office of Border Public Health, DSHS, presented a PowerPoint titled "Texas Border Health Data Overview.", with information about maternal and child health, accidents and injuries in border counties, and border crossings.

Agenda Item 6: Presentation: Health Information Exchange

Ms. Emily Hartmann, Executive Director, PHIX, presented a Power Point titled "PHIX El Paso's Health Information Exchange". Highlights included:

- The value of clinicians having access at point of care to clinical data of the clients: Rehospitalization or readmissions decreased by 61%.
- The need to work on both sides of the border to exchange data for individual patient care and for public health and epidemiology purposes as efficiently and effectively as possible. Also, to look at different ways data can be collected electronically during emergency responses.

Dr. Sheila Magoon, Executive Director, Buena Vida y Salud, LLC, presented a PowerPoint titled "State of the Art Health Information Exchange". Highlights included:

- A framework of data exchange similar to the highway systems across the U.S.
- The necessity of having consistent, normalized, and unified formatting of data in a methodical way, and to share it electronically in meaningful ways.

Agenda Item 5: Update: Operation Border Health Preparedness

This agenda item was tabled.

Agenda Item 7: Discussion: Reporting Method and Sub-Committees

Ms. Karin Hopkins, OBPH Director, presented a PowerPoint titled "Discussion for the 2024 Recommendations Report.". She reviewed the timeline and gave guidance for the discussion.

Dr. Rodriguez asked Mr. Olivarez to lead the discussion about Environmental Health. The results will be included in the 2023-2024 Recommendations Report. The discussion about the second topic, Human Resource Infrastructure, was postponed until the next meeting.

Agenda Item 8: Public comment

No public comment was received.

Agenda Item 9: Closing remarks, thank you and adjourn

Dr. Rodriguez adjourned the meeting at 4:43 p.m.

Please click on the link to the archived HHSC video to view, and listen to, the entirety of the October 11, 2023, 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 \(TFBHO\)](#)