

**Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee
Meeting Minutes
Friday, June 3, 2022
9:00 a.m.**

**Virtual: Teams Meeting Platform
Location: North Austin Complex (NAC),
NAC Rooms: 1.401, 1.402, 1.403 & 1.404,
First Floor, 4601 W Guadalupe Street, Austin, TX 78751**

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order, Welcome, Introductions, Roll Call

Dr. Lisa Hollier, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed the committee members, the wonderful staff that support the committee and the members of the public who are in attendance.

Dr. Hollier, Chair, paused for a moment of silence for Texas families forever impacted by the loss of a mother. She then turned the floor over to Ms. Sallie Allen, HHSC, Advisory Committee Coordination Office. Ms. Allen read logistical announcements, called roll, and asked the members to provide a brief introduction, providing their name, profession, organization, and location, and determined a quorum was present.

Table 1: Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee attendance Friday, June 3, 2022, meeting.

MEMBER NAME	IN ATTENDANCE
Dr. Eumenia Castro	No
Dr. Kendall Crowns	No
Dr. Meitra Doty	Yes
Dr. Kelly Fegan-Bohm	Yes
Dr. Manda Hall	Yes
Dr. James Hill	Yes
Dr. Lisa Hollier	Yes
Dr. Sherri Onyiego	No
Dr. Carla Ortique	Yes
Dr. Lavannya Pandit	No
Ms. Nancy Puig	No
Dr. Amy Raines-Milenkov	Yes
Dr. Christina Murphey	No
Dr. Patrick Ramsey	Yes
Dr. Robin Page	Yes
Ms. Nakeenya Wilson	Yes
VACANT	

Agenda Item 2: Consideration of March 4, 2022, draft Meeting Minutes

Ms. Allen noted members received a copy of the March 4, 2022, meeting minutes in their electronic packet and she requested a motion.

MOTION:

Dr. Carla Ortique made the motion to approve the March 4, 2022, meeting minutes as presented. Dr. Patrick Ramsey seconded the motion. Ms. Allen conducted a roll call vote, and the motion passed unanimously with ten approves, no disapproves, and no abstentions.

Agenda Item 3: Subcommittee on Maternal Health Disparities Update

Dr. Hollier introduced Dr. Carla Ortique and turned the floor over to her to provide the subcommittee update.

Highlights included:

- Acknowledge previous month as Asian American Pacific Islanders month and this month, National Pride month. There are concerns that these groups have been historically excluded from goods and services in our country.
- The May 24, 2022 mass shooting at Uvalde school is a tragic reminder of the prevalence of gun violence in the country. Unfortunately, gun violence impacts maternal health as per the 2020 report which found that violence contributed to 13% of pregnancy related deaths and firearms were frequently involved. According to Johns Hopkins University analysis of Centers for Disease Control data there has been 45,222-gun related deaths in our country in the year 2020, which is the last year for which we have complete data.
- Subcommittee met in March and May and discussed:
 - Development of recommendations based on review 2019 maternal death cohort specific to the goal of eliminating racial disparity in maternal health outcomes for the 2022 upcoming legislative report.
 - Literature regarding the impact of bias on health outcomes and potential best practices were shared and discussed.
 - Update on the remaining timeline of the discrimination assessment and social determinants of health or dash tool pilot study was provided.
 - Final participant surveys are being collected and analyzed, and internal refinement of the tool is ongoing.
 - Received an update regarding the CDC's anticipated rollout of a community vital signs tool that will be available for all states participating in the Maternal Mortality Review Information Application (MMRIA) database.
- Lastly, welcomed the newest member of the subcommittee, Ms. Nakeenya Wilson. She is a community advocate and blends her lived experience, education and work as an educator, mediator, and restorative justice practitioner to bring a fresh and critically important perspective to the maternal death review process.

Agenda Item 4: Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee Operational and Maternal Health and Safety Initiative Updates

Dr. Hollier provided updates, then turned the floor over to Ms. Julie Stagg MSN, RN, IBCLC, RLC, DSHS, Healthy Texas Mothers and Babies (HTMB) Branch Manager, to provide additional updates. Dr. Hollier provided the following update.

Highlights included:

- Over the past ten years, the number of MMRCs has more than doubled. In 2011, there were 19 and today there are a total of 50 existing MMRCs in the U.S.
- The CDC is currently supporting 31 states for the Enhancing Reviews and Surveillance to Eliminate Maternal Mortality (ERASE MM) Program. This funding directly supports agencies and organizations that coordinate and manage Maternal Mortality Review Committees to identify, review, and characterize maternal deaths; and identify prevention opportunities. Expansions are in the works -- the CDC has received additional funding to expand their capacity to assist review committees and released additional funding opportunities.
- Of 50 existing MMRCs in the U.S., 48 use the Maternal Mortality Review Information Application, often simply called MMRIA, to guide deliberation, and more are planning to use it.
- For the last 6 years, committee members from states and jurisdictions using this application for maternal mortality reviews have come together for an annual conference to connect, share, and learn. Following is brief synopsis of the virtual meeting held May 11-12, 2022 and key sessions included topics such as:
 - Strategies and Approaches to Prioritization and Action Planning Based on MMRC Recommendations
 - Using MMRIA to Document Discrimination and Racism
 - Scale Up of Community Vital Signs Dashboards, presented by Dr. Michael Kramer with Emory University School of Public Health.
 - These dashboards are very similar to the Socio-Spatial Dashboards that the Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Committee (MMMRC) have been using. Dr. Carla Ortique and the Subcommittee on Maternal Health Disparities are to be commended for their impetus to create this for Texas.
 - Both nationally and here in Texas, the motivation for creating these 'Community Vital Signs dashboards' came out of the recognition of inequity in maternal mortality risk by race and by place.
 - A past report from nine states using the MMRIA system noted 3 major barriers to the identification of contributing factors at the community level were identified (See below) and this information was published in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology.
 - 1) Need for an evidence-based conceptual model
 - 2) Socio-spatial Data

- 3) Understanding of links to action
 - The identified indicators were tested by assessing the relationship between the indicators and pregnancy-related mortality using the national PMSS system. The authors identified both protective and risk factors. With these important findings, the community vital signs (CVS) project group has moved forward to extend the availability of the CVS to the jurisdictions using MMRIA.
 - In 2022, committee members will be able to access the resources which include training resources for the committee members and the Community vital signs documents for maternal deaths that are being reviewed.
- A Delphi Report Out on the Pregnancy-Relatedness of Overdoses and Suicides, addressed the following:
 - The CDC has been working to standardize the criteria for the determination of pregnancy relatedness in overdoses and suicides.
 - The Utah MMRC developed initial criteria which have been tested and modified.
 - A group of committee representatives from across the state used the Delphi method to come to consensus, and preliminary results were presented to the MMRIA User Meeting (MUM) group. A full publication is pending in the next several months.

Dr. Hollier turned the floor over to Ms. Julie Stagg, DSHS, Healthy Texas Mothers and Babies (HTMB) Branch Manager, DSHS to provide the following update.

Highlights included:

ERASE MM

- In April 2022, 5 DSHS staff, 2 University of North Texas Health Science Center staff, and our 2 MMMRC Chairs attended the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s annual Maternal Mortality Review Information Application (MMRIA) User Meeting in April to network with other state MMMRCs to exchange best practices for maternal mortality review.
- Also in April, DSHS submitted the continuation application for participation in the fourth year of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s Enhancing Reviews and Surveillance to Eliminate Maternal Mortality Program or ERASE MM.

Member Quarterly Survey

In December of last year, our team surveyed Texas MMMRC members to learn about opportunities to improve the quality of the review process.

Through the survey, it was learned that:

- The current MMMRC workload has been reasonable and manageable.
- Members feel adequately prepared to discuss cases with the group.
- Case assignment and MMMRC information has been easy to access.
- DSHS Program staff and MMMRC Chairs have been responsive to questions.

- Responsibilities and assignments as the Lead Team Member on cases have been easy to understand.
- It has been helpful to display the committee decisions form during the meeting.
- The virtual platforms have been easy to use.
- Members reported that the committee always or sometimes comes to a consensus when filling out the committee decisions form.
- Most members felt the amount of case detail in case reports is appropriate.

Factors that were identified as areas of improvement included:

- Some members found that the platform DSHS uses to share case information was not always easy to use.
 - In response, DSHS Program staff has provided members with additional training and information about using the platform.
- During hybrid meetings, members participating virtually have sometimes had issues with not being able to hear in-person members during the meeting.
 - Issues with audio have been addressed and DSHS Program staff have identified a DSHS IT contact to troubleshoot when needed.
- The processes to determine if discrimination contributed to a death and preventability, particularly systemic racism, is challenging.
 - The MMMRC Subcommittee on Maternal Health Disparities plans to review the Discrimination Assessment and Social Determinants of Health (DASH Tool) and the DASH Tool Technical Guide for opportunities to better facilitate discussions of discrimination during case review.
 - DSHS Program staff attend monthly meetings with other state MMRC staff. Systemic racism is a form of discrimination that many MMRCs are struggling to identify. As information to address this issue by other states is made available, DSHS Program staff will pass that information to committee members.

Closing comments

- Ms. Stagg took a moment to thank the Review Committee member's volunteerism and ongoing commitment to this very important work to improve maternal health and safety in Texas.

Over this past quarter, TexasAIM hosted its birthing center workshop series to share maternal safety information about obstetric hemorrhage, hypertension, and substance use disorder with the Texas Licensed Birthing Center workforce. Also, this quarter, for the Hear Her Texas maternal health and safety campaign, focus groups were held across the state with women who experienced maternal morbidity to test messaging and seek input on educational resources. This month, market research, including in-depth interviews with health care providers, will continue.

- Thirty-one cases were reviewed and closed during the May 20th and June 2nd closed executive sessions. Additional cases will be review more today.
- DSHS MCH staff and partners at the University of North Texas Health Science Center are already starting to prepare 2020 cases for review, and the DSHS Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Team has begun linking identifying cases and requesting records for the 2021 cohort.

Dr. Hollier thanked Ms. Stagg and all the members for their dedication and hard work.

Agenda Item 5: Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee Duties Overview and Legislative Guidance

Dr. Hollier introduced and turned the floor over to Ms. Natalie Adelaja, JD, Policy Department, Legal Services Division, HHSC, to provide the updates.

Highlights included:

- A review of the MMMRC duties under the statute and executing your duties as committee members.
- Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee is established under Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 34 and this statute governs the duties and the activities of the committee.
- Additionally, Texas government code Chapter 551 and the Texas Administrative Code Title 25 Chapter 37 outline the procedures for committee meetings, and the committee is also governed internally by the committees' bylaws.
- Description of the committees' duties as laid out in Chapter 34, specifically section 34.005, were reviewed with the members.
- To avoid any appearance of impropriety, please always bring conflicts of interest or questions regarding potential conflicts of interest to the attention of DSHS support staff.
- Under Texas health and Safety Code section 34.015, the committee is required to deliver its biennial report to members of the legislature, including the governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, and the appropriate committees of the legislature. In accordance with the Review Committee's Bylaws, members may not participate in legislative or advocacy activities in their official capacity as committee members without written approval from the chair, DSHS ethics office, in coordination with the HHSC Government Relations Office and the Review Committee liaison.
- Committee members may participate in legislative or advocacy activities in their personal or professional capacity without approval.

Dr. Hollier thanked Ms. Adelaja for her willingness to join the meeting and provide this very important update for all the committee members.

Agenda Item 6: Future Agenda Items

Dr. Hollier opened discussion for new business and potential agenda items for the next meeting scheduled for September 2, 2022. Hearing none, she proceeded to the next agenda item.

Agenda Item 7: Public Comment

No written public comment was received.

Agenda Item 8: Executive Session

Dr. Hollier read the legislation allowing the Review Committee to move into a closed executive session. Ms. Allen announced to members of the public that this concluded the open meeting for the morning and the public was informed that the review committee would return later in the afternoon to open the closed session and then adjourn.

Agenda Item 9: Open Session & Adjournment

Dr. Hollier opened the MMMRC meeting at 4:17 pm and hearing no new business, adjourned at 4:17 pm.

Below is the link to the archived video of the June 3, 2022, Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC) that will be available for viewing approximately two years from date meeting was posted on website and based on the DSHS records retention schedule.

<https://texashhsc.swagit.com/videos/174900>