



TEXAS Women's Healthcare COALITION

FY 2020-2021 Legislative Appropriations Request Recommendations Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition April 23, 2018

Thank you for this opportunity to provide recommendations for HHSC's Legislative Appropriations Request. The Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition (TWHC) and its 78 healthcare, faith, and community-based member organizations are dedicated to improving the health and well-being of Texas women, babies, and families by ensuring access to preventive healthcare for all Texas women. Access to preventive and preconception care—including health screenings and contraception—means healthy, planned pregnancies and early detection of cancers and other treatable conditions.

The TWHC commends HHSC's efforts around maintaining funding for the state's women's health and family planning programs during the last legislative appropriations process for the 85th legislative session. In such a tight budget year, the appropriation of level funding for the state's women's health programs represented a major victory.

However, there is still more work to be done. Texas women face high maternal mortality rates with Black women facing the highest risk. Mothers with substance use disorder are also at higher risk as drug overdose is the second leading cause of maternal deathⁱ. Given these major challenges facing Texas women and the programs that serve them, it is more important now than ever that Texas prioritize women's preventive healthcare access.

Included below are the TWHC's LAR recommendations:

1. **Continued investment in women's preventive healthcare is critical, particularly as the state's new programs stabilize and continue working to enroll more providers and clients alike.** The TWHC strongly encourages HHSC to request increased funding for women's health services programs in the base budget for 2020-2021. Stability in our state's programs is essential if Texas hopes to strengthen its family planning network and reach more of the nearly 1.8 million Texas women in need of basic preventive servicesⁱⁱ.
2. **The TWHC strongly supports providing additional funding for the HHSC Family Planning Program (FPP).** The Family Planning program plays a crucial role in the state and demand for family planning services remains high. Many FPP contractors report that they ran out of funds early in the last fiscal year. The TWHC

supports requesting increased funding for the FPP to ensure that women depending on this program have access to services all year. Also, now that all women's health programs are in the same budget strategy, it is highly recommended that funding be allocated to programs based on need and demand.

3. **Investing to improve services to women by increasing access to the most effective, long-lasting forms of contraception (implants and intrauterine devices) can be helpful in saving costs long-term.** Long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) such as implants and IUDs are twenty times more effective than other methods, and are considered a first-line option for women by medical organizations. However, their high upfront cost can be a barrier to providing them. The state has already taken important steps to increase access to LARCs, but more can be done:
- Increase provider training and education on long acting reversible contraception, including training that specifically targets immediate postpartum insertion of LARCs;
 - Increase outreach to educate Texas women about LARCs;
 - Regularly review and adjust payments for LARCs purchased directly by physicians or clinics to ensure women can obtain the device during an office visit rather than returning later when the device is ordered from a specialty pharmacy;
 - Set aside LARC specific funds for providers unable to stock LARCs on hand due to cost;
 - Enable CHIP Perinate to cover immediate postpartum insertion of LARCs.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and for your support for women's preventive healthcare. If you have any questions or we can provide further information, please contact me at JRealini@TexasWHC.org.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet P. Realini MD MPH". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Janet P. Realini, MD, MPH
Steering Committee Chair, Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition

Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition Steering Committee Members

Texas Medical Association
District XI (Texas) American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
Texas Academy of Family Physicians
Texas Association of Community Health Centers
Methodist Healthcare Ministries
Teaching Hospitals of Texas
Women's Health and Family Planning Association of Texas
Texans Care for Children
Center for Public Policy Priorities
Healthy Futures of Texas

Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition General Members

Access Esperanza Clinics Inc.	National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
Amistad Community Health Center	North Harris Montgomery Advanced Practice Nurse Society
Austin Advanced Practice Nurses	North Texas Alliance to Reduce Teen Pregnancy
Austin Physicians for Social Responsibility	North Texas Nurse Practitioners
AWHONN Texas	Panhandle Nurse Practitioner Association
Brazos Valley Community Action Agency, Inc.	Pasadena Health Center
Brazos Valley Nurse Practitioner Association	People's Community Clinic
Cardea	Port Arthur Housing Authority
Center for Community Health, UNTHSC	Pregnancy and Postpartum Health Alliance of Texas
Central Texas Nurse Practitioners	SALVERE (Striving to Achieve Literacy via Education, Research, and Engagement)
Children's Hospital Association of Texas	San Antonio Metropolitan Health District
Coalition for Nurses in Advanced Practice	San Antonio Nurses in Advanced Practice
Coastal Bend Advanced Practice Nurses	Schneider Communications
Coastal Bend Wellness Foundation	South Plains Nurse Practitioner Association
Community Healthcare Center	South Texas Family Planning & Health Corp.
Consortium of Texas Certified Nurse Midwives	Southeast Texas Nurse Practitioner Associates
Department of Ob/Gyn of UNTHSC and the ForHER Institute	Special Health Resources
El Buen Samaritano	St. David's Foundation
El Centro De Corazón	Susan Wolfe and Associates
El Paso Area Advanced Practice Nurse Association	Texas Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley	Texas Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
Fort Worth Region Nurse Practitioners	Texas Council on Family Violence
Gateway to Care	Texas Health Institute
Good Neighbor Health Center	Texas Hospital Association
Haven Health	Texas Medical Association Alliance
Hill Country Advanced Practice Nurses & Physicians	Texas Nurse Practitioners
Assistants Association	Texas Nurses Association
Houston Area Chapter of NAPNAP	Texas Pediatric Society
Houston Area Nurse Practitioners	Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry
League of Women Voters of Texas	The Contraceptive Initiative
Legacy Community Health Services	The SAFE Alliance
March of Dimes - Texas	The Women's Fund for Health Education and Resiliency
Mental Health America of Greater Houston	University Health System
National Council of Jewish Women—Texas State Policy	Valley AIDS Council
Advocacy Network	Women's & Men's Health Services of the Coastal Bend, Inc.

ⁱ Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Task Force and Texas Department of State Health Services, Joint Biennial Report As Required by Chapter 34, Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 34.015, July, 2016.

ⁱⁱ Frost JJ, et al. "Contraceptive Needs and Services, 2014 Update," New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2016. FY 2016.