

Texas HIV Medication Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

October 28, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

Location: Microsoft Teams Virtual Hybrid Meeting

Agenda Item 1: Call Meeting to Order, Welcome and Opening Remarks

Mr. Frank Rosas, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and welcomed members, staff, and public in attendance.

Agenda Item 2: Logistical Announcement and Roll Call

Ms. Tessa Buck-Ragland, Advisory Committee Coordination Office, HHSC, proceeded with the logistics announcement, called roll, asked members to introduce themselves, and determined with a count of seven members at roll call a quorum was established. Member Nancy Miertschin was present later at 1:44 PM to make eight members present for the meeting.

Member Name	Attended
Adjei, Margaret	Yes
Alozie, Ogechika Karl, M.D.	No
Heresi, Gloria, M.D.	Yes
Hillard, Lionel	Yes
Lazarte, Susana, M.D.	Yes
Miertschin, Nancy, M.P.H.	Yes, Joined late
Rodriguez-Escobar, Yolanda, Ph.D.	No
Rosas, Frank (Chair)	Yes
Martinez, Dora, M.D.	Yes
Turner, Helen	No
Vargas, Steven	Yes

Table 1: The Texas HIV Medication Advisory Committee member attendance at the Friday, October 28, 2022, meeting.

Agenda Item 3: Consideration of the July 29, 2022, draft meeting minutes

Ms. Buck-Ragland requested a motion to approve the draft July 29, 2022, meeting minutes.

MOTION: Mr. Lionel Hillard motioned to approve the July 29, 2022 draft minutes as presented. Mr. Steven Vargas seconded the motion. Ms. Buck-Ragland conducted a roll call vote, and the motion passed with six approvals, and one abstain.

Agenda Item 4: Proposed changes to Bylaws

Mr. Rosas introduced Ms. Rashandra Hayes, legal counsel for the THMP-MAC to review and discuss the draft of the THMP-MAC Bylaws, recommended amendments.

Highlights included:

Amendments that were proposed by the subcommittee include:

- Amend Section 4 regarding composition of the committee
- Amend Section 7 regarding encouraging the election of qualified consumers as the chair

or vice chair positions

- Amend Section 9 regarding attendance of members for the full committee and subcommittees

Only the section 7 item encouraging election of qualified consumers as the chair or vice chair positions was permitted under state law and agency rules.

Discussion

This change is not different from current practice.

MOTION: Mr. Steven Vargas made the motion to approve the by-laws with the proposed amendment with a second by Lionel Hillard. Ms. Buck-Ragland conducted a vote tally. The motion passed by a unanimous vote of eight in favor.

Agenda Item 5: Public Comment

The following individuals provided oral and written public comment:

Andrew Edmondson, representing himself, addressed the following issues:

- Waitlist for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) is currently 497 individuals in spite of assurances that the back log would be eliminated
- Take Charge Texas Website was disastrous resulting in dropping people out of care

The following individuals provided virtual oral public comment:

Januari Fox, Prism Health North Texas - STI and HIV Medical Care (phntx.org), expressed her appreciation for the by-law change. She asked the committee to assemble a group of consumers to help make changes to the launch of Take Charge Texas to rescue it from the problems that currently exist.

- Pharmacy issues are numerous
- Case management issues prevent people from being able to navigate the system
- Data management issues have shown that the website goes down frequently, and the links to EHRs at the facilities frequently fail resulting in the need for paper entries.

Agenda Item 6: Department of State Health Services Updates (DSHS)

Mr. Rosas introduced Ms. Imelda Garcia, Associate Commissioner of Laboratory, and Infectious Disease Services, DSHS, and she provided the following updates.

Highlights included:

a. Agency Update

- Dr. John Hellerstedt retired, and Dr. Jennifer Shuford was named Interim Commissioner of DSHS effective October 1, 2022.
- Monkeypox Outbreak: As of October 26th, there are over 2,600 monkeypox cases in the state of Texas. We stand at #4 compared to the rest of the nation behind California, New York, and Florida.
- Texas JYNNEOS Vaccine Expanded Eligibility: People with a known or possible exposure to the monkeypox virus remain the highest priority for vaccination. Local health entities may also expand vaccination to include preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for people who are at an increased risk of monkeypox.

Discussion

- Mr. Lionel Hillard asked if the numbers are going down of the unserved for vaccinations? DSHS stated we have some disparities among those getting the vaccine and those getting the disease. We are seeing the same patterns that were experienced during COVID. There is a lot of vaccine fatigue, and there are concerns about where we are administering the shots (subdermal vs the standard arm injection). There are concerns that this exposes

people to being seen (stigma). DSHS stated they provide options for patients. There have to be conversations between the provider and the patient. DSHS is reviewing the vaccine eligibility criteria.

- Dr. Susana Lazarte stated that the reason for complicated cases is uncontrolled HIV due to lack of medications and the failure of states to pursue Medicaid expansion. Monkeypox has not received the attention as COVID and Zika. Ms. Garcia commended Dr. Lazarte's hospital system for their work regarding monkeypox. Ms. Garcia also explained that THMP applications that show a coinfection of HIV and monkeypox are being prioritized to get people in care.
- Mr. Steven Vargas asked which people have never been in care compared to those who were in care but dropped from care? Ms. Garcia stated that the analysis is ongoing, and the data is not yet available. DSHS are looking at monkeypox and if they were in care, out of care, or in and out of care.

Agenda Item 7: HIV Updates

Mr. Rosas turned the floor over to Mr. Josh Hutchison, and he referenced a PowerPoint, HIV/STD Section Update

Highlights included:

a. Organizational Changes

- Effective October 1, 2022, the TB/HIV/STD Section became the HIV/STD Section.
- Redistribution of resources:
 - The Tuberculosis and Hansen's Disease (TB) Unit transitioned out of the Section
 - The Pharmacy Unit joined the Section
 - Four Electronic Lab Report (ELR) positions transitioned to the Public Health Informatics and Data Exchange (PHID) Section

b. Budget Report

- The new fiscal year began September 1. All money has been budgeted.
- Any federal funds that were not used at the end of FY22 were able to move forward and use in this year. A large budget is available right now, \$137 million. That includes projections for next year. Those funds haven't been received yet, it's an annualized projection amount.
- \$108 million spent in FY22.

c. Exceptional Item

- The Exceptional Item has been formally submitted. It is still subject to change but has been published.
- As the backlog has been significantly reduced, those clients now show up on projections and will show in the November/December projection reports which are still in progress.

Discussion:

- Mr. Hillard asked if the back log is included in the budget request? Ms. Garcia stated that with the reduction of the backlog the caseload is reflected in the base numbers. DSHS will look at the next quarter and update the numbers if needed.
- Mr. Rosas asked if there are any public meetings with the Senate Finance Committee when they discuss the Exceptional Item and Legislative Appropriations Request. This is an important time for stakeholders to present case to legislators. Mr. Rosas wants consumers included. Ms. Garcia replied that the first opportunity for the agency is this fall. DSHS will

lay out the appropriations and Exceptional Item request before the legislative session. The Committee discussed the appropriations procedures.

Agenda Item 8: THMP Update

Mr. Rosas turned the floor over to Ms. Rachel Sanor, THMP Manager, DSHS, and she provided the following update and referenced the PowerPoint handout THMP Section Update.

Highlights included:

- a. Standard Deduction
 - The rule update is expected to go into effect April 2023. THMP will continue to use the standard deduction until then. Official notification will be sent out 60 days before implementation.
- b. Take Charge Texas
 - Ms. Sanor presented the proposed enhancements with timeline. A sprint lasts about a month. Two teams from the vendor will be working on issues. The pharmacy portal issues will take about two months. This is contingent on funding; the earliest expected is December 1 which would put the pharmacy portal in the first quarter of 2023.
- c. Application Processing Timeline
 - Effective last Friday, the backlogged applications stand at 309. Self-attestations and renewals have not been backlogged for approximately six months.
- d. THMP – Staff Updates, Projections and Demographic Information
 - Brought on 12 Eligibility Determination Workers (EDWs) as contract staff and one manager. There are 5 vacancies (see slide). With the reorganization, we will be adding three client support staff. Permanent staffing will have two managers, three supervisors, 14 EDWs (one vacancy), 7 program coordinators, two ordering specialists, three administrative support, and one training specialist (vacant).
 - Demographics and Actuarial projections: Top 10 medications ordered remained the same, with slightly more fills this quarter. Slides: no significant difference in ADAP, State Pharmacy Assistance Program (SPAP) or Texas Insurance Assistance Program (TIAP).
 - ADAP data projections: As of the end of August, there was a decrease in 2022. Usage is expected to grow in 2023-26. The projections are updated monthly.
 - SPAP data: costs higher at the start of the year because of the Medicaid 'donut hole'. TIAP data: expectation is that there will be less rebound than with SPAP.
 - The Committee requested a comparison of the rate of applications in the same time period pre- and post-TCT.

MOTION: Mr. Steven Vargas made motion to create a moratorium in dropping people from care for six months while the issues are addressed in Take Charge Texas System (TCT). The motion was seconded by Mr. Lionel Hillard. Chair Rosas noted that the motion is to present recommendations to HHSC of creating a moratorium in dropping people from care for six months while the issues are addressed in TCT. Mr. Rosas asked Ms. Buck-Ragland to call for a vote of the members. Ms. Buck-Ragland conducted a roll call vote, and the motion passed with seven approvals, and one abstain vote. With the majority vote to approve, the motion passed.

MOTION: Mr. Steven Vargas made a motion to form a Take Charge Texas consumer workgroup to advise HHSC on recommendations on the improvements needed in Take Charge Texas. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lionel Hillard. Chair Rosas asked Ms. Buck-Ragland to call for a vote of the members. Ms. Buck-Ragland asked members for any further discussion, and then proceeded to conduct a roll call vote, the motion passed with the majority: six approvals, one against, and one abstain vote.

Agenda Item 9: Sub-Committee Reports

a. Eligibility – Mr. Frank Rosas

- Mr. Rosas stated that the Eligibility Subcommittee discussed much of what Ms. Sanor presented and went over applications and TCT rollout.

b. Formulary – Dr. Susanna Lazarte

- Dr. Lazarte stated that the Formulary Subcommittee discussed TPOXX for monkeypox in persons living with HIV; TPOXX was approved for smallpox treatment and is under investigation for use on monkeypox. Cabenuva will be included in the Exceptional Item. The Subcommittee reviewed the Drug Formulary and will review again as there was no conclusion. The subcommittee requested to have the actuary investigate the cost of re-adding the top ten non-HIV meds. The subcommittee will meet again on January 10.

c. Governance/Data – Ms. Nancy Miertschin

- Ms. Miertschin stated that the subcommittee discussed the bylaws. Mr. Rosas stated that the bylaws were finalized. Ms. Hayes was a big help. Perhaps it would be a good idea to have someone present to the Committee about procedures.
- Mr. Vargas stated that he was lacking information on how to get things from the subcommittee to the full MAC.

Agenda Item 10: 2023 Meeting Dates and Times

The Committee decided on the following dates for the 2023 meetings:

- January 13, 2023
- April 14, 2023
- July 14, 2023
- October 6, 2023

Agenda Item 11: Review of action items and agenda topics for next meeting

Mr. Rosas, Chair, stated the next meeting is scheduled for January 13, 2023.

Agenda items for the next Committee meeting included:

- Ms. Miertschin reminded the Committee that she will be retiring before the end of the year, and the Committee should plan to appoint another in her place.
- DSHS is to follow up to Committee members with dates for the agency to present the Legislative Appropriations Request and Exceptional Item to legislature.
- Rate of applications in the same time period pre- and post-TCT.
- Breakdown of recertification denials and the reasons to be presented during the Eligibility Subcommittee meeting and MAC.

Agenda Item 12: Adjournment

Mr. Rosas, Chair, thanked the members and the public and adjourned the meeting at 4:24 pm.

To view and listen to the archived video of the October 28, 2022, Texas HIV Medication Advisory Committee meeting in its' entirety, click on the link below.

[Texas HIV Medication Program Medication Advisory Committee](#)