

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**NOTICE OF FORMAL REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

COMMITTEE: Public Health  
Interim Charge 1

TIME & DATE: N/A  
Monday, October 5, 2020

PLACE: N/A

CHAIR: Rep. Senfronia Thompson

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Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and uncertainty as to scheduling safe interim hearings at this time, the House Committee on Public Health is requesting written submissions from interested parties and the public in regards to the topics listed below.

Submissions received in response to this request will be transmitted to members of the committee and posted on the House website at <https://house.texas.gov/committees/committee/requests-for-information/>.

**Submission Guidelines**

- Submissions must be in Microsoft Word.
- Submissions are limited to five (5) pages in length. The page limit is not inclusive of any photos, graphs, spreadsheets, charts, etc. the submitter chooses to include.
- Please submit a separate document for each topic and indicate the subject along with the applicable bill number(s) for which you are responding.
- Submissions must include the submitter name, organization or entity (if applicable and an authorized representative), mailing address, email, and telephone number).
- Please include "Interim Charge 1" on the email subject line.
- Submissions must be sent via email to **PublicHealth@house.texas.gov**
- All submissions are **due by Friday, October 16, 2020 at 5PM (CST)**.

The Committee seeks responses to the Interim Charge listed below:

**Interim Charge 1:** Monitor the agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 86th Legislature. Conduct active oversight of all associated rulemaking and other governmental actions taken to ensure intended legislative outcome of all legislation, including the following:

**Related to Women/Maternal/Infant Health**

- **HB 253**, which requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to develop and implement a five-year strategic plan to address postpartum depression. Monitor the development of the strategic plan to ensure it provides strategies to improve access to postpartum depression screening, referral, treatment, and support services.
- **SB 436**, which requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), in conjunction with the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Task Force, to develop and implement statewide initiatives to improve maternal and newborn health for women with opioid use disorder. Examine the process by which DSHS and the Task Force develop and implement the initiatives, and, if applicable, monitor the development of the optional pilot program authorized by the legislation.
- **SB 748**, which creates a newborn screening preservation account and requires the development of a program to provide prenatal and postpartum care through telehealth or telemedicine in certain counties, a high risk maternal care coordination services pilot program, and a pregnancy medical home pilot program. Monitor the rulemaking process at HHSC and conduct oversight of the creation of the newborn screening preservation account and the maternal health programs. Identify any challenges that arise in funding the account or implementing the programs. Ensure the required agencies are providing adequate data collection on maternal mortality rates, maternity care, and postpartum depression in the state.
- **SB 749**, which relates to designating levels of neonatal and maternal care for hospitals and establishes an appeal process, waiver agreement, and telemedicine exceptions. Monitor HHSC's rulemaking process.
- **HB 750**, which directs HHSC to evaluate and develop a limited postpartum care package for new mothers enrolled in the Healthy Texas Women (HTW) program and to develop strategies to ensure continuity of care for new mothers who transition from Medicaid for Pregnant Women into HTW. Monitor HHSC's rulemaking process and the evaluation and development of the postpartum care package in HTW.
- **SB 2132**, which requires additional information to be provided to new mothers enrolled in HTW. Monitor HHSC's rulemaking process.

#### Related to Controlled Substances/Opioids

- **HB 2174**, which establishes limits on prescribing opioids for acute pain and institutes certain requirements for controlled substance prescription submissions and continuing education for prescribers.
- **HB 3284**, which revises the circumstances under which the Texas State Board of Pharmacy (TSBP) may allow access to information relating to controlled substances prescriptions. Monitor the collaboration between TSBP and the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners in implementing the legislation.
- **HB 3285**, which creates programs and initiatives to prevent and respond to opioid addiction, misuse, abuse, and overdose and

identify and treat co-occurring substance use disorders and mental illness. Monitor the process by which the Governor's Criminal Justice Division will award grants to law enforcement agencies for opioid antagonists. Conduct oversight of the process related to Medicaid reimbursement for medication-assisted treatment. Examine the impact of the opioid crisis on Texas' seniors, and review any programs and services available to prevent and treat opioid misuse among that population.

- **HHSC Rider 34**, which requires HHSC to evaluate opioid drug prescribing practices under Medicaid and assess the extent to which they align with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

#### Related to Rural Health

- **HB 3934**, which provides rural hospitals with the authority to establish a health care collaborative.
- **SB 170**, which relates to the reimbursement of rural hospitals under Medicaid. Monitor the reimbursement methodology developed by HHSC.
- **SB 633**, which provides the authority to assemble local mental health authorities (LMHA) in rural areas into groups in order to ensure access to mental health services in those areas. Conduct oversight of the process of grouping individual LMHAs and the development of a plan for each group to increase capacity and access.
- **SB 1621**, which creates a rural hospital strategic plan.

#### Related to General Monitoring

- **HB 871**, which authorizes certain rural hospitals to satisfy trauma facility designation requirements through the use of telemedicine. Monitor HHSC's rulemaking process.
- **HB 1501**, which creates the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council. Monitor the transfer of the regulation of psychologists, marriage and family therapists, professional counselors, and social workers to the new council.
- **HB 1504**, which continues the Texas Medical Board until September 1, 2031. Review and identify any challenges related to the processing of complaints, including due process concerns and the independence of the Board. Make recommendations for additional modifications to address these challenges.
- **HB 3148**, which establishes provisions related to the administration and oversight of investigational adult stem cell treatments. Monitor the creation of the investigational stem cell registry.
- **HB 3703**, which expands eligibility for low-THC cannabis prescriptions. Monitor HHSC's rulemaking process.
- **HB 4455**, which authorizes a health professional to provide a mental health service via telemedicine or telehealth services to a patient located outside of Texas.
- **SB 21**, which raises the age to purchase tobacco from 18 to 21.
- **SB 670**, which relates to ensuring reimbursement of telemedicine

and telehealth services and expanding which facilities may receive reimbursement for those services.

**Related to Behavioral Health**

- **HB 18**, which enhances school safety and mental health resources for students and school personnel and works to reduce the stigma around mental health conditions. Monitor the process by which state agencies coordinate to implement the legislation and their compliance with various requirements, including providing required guidelines and resources to schools.
- **HB 19**, which places non-physician mental health professionals at education service centers to provide resources for educators and administrators in school districts and charter schools.
- **HB 906**, which creates the Collaborative Task Force on Public School Mental Health Services.
- **SB 11**, which creates the Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium to facilitate access to mental health care services through telehealth and expands the mental health workforce through training and funding opportunities. Monitor the creation of the consortium and agencies' rulemaking processes. Review how school districts are spending their school safety allotment.

*In the event it becomes feasible to safely conduct a public meeting, the Committee reserves the right to hold an in-person hearing on these charges.*

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