
Stock Epinephrine Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Monday, October 16, 2023

10:00 a.m.

APPROVED Meeting Minutes

Virtual: Teams Meeting Platform

In Person Meeting Site:

Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)

Robert D. Moreton Building

Room M-100, First Floor

1100 W 49th St

Austin, TX 78756

Agenda Item 1: Welcome/Call to order/Introduction of members and staff

Dr. Drew Bird, Chair, called the Stock Epinephrine Advisory Committee (SEAC) meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. Bird informed the committee that Agenda Item #4 will be presented before Agenda Item #3.

Ms. Jacqueline Thompson, Advisory Committee Coordination Office, Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) read the logistical announcements and stated the meeting was being conducted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Ms. Jacqueline Thompson conducted the member roll call and announced the presence of quorum.

Dr. Drew Bird, Chair, welcomed committee members and members of the public and asked Ms. Raiza Ruiz, Community Health Worker and School Health Branch Manager, to introduce DSHS staff. She asked DSHS staff to introduce themselves.

Table 1: The Stock Epinephrine Advisory Committee member attendance at the Monday, October 16, 2023 meeting.

Member name	Attended	Member name	Attended
Bethea, Louise, MD	Y	Jeffrey, Douglas, MD	Y
Bird, Drew, MD	Y	Rivera, Jose, Pharm.D.	Y

Member name	Attended	Member name	Attended
Bostic, Natalie, RN	Y	Rozneck, Paulette, MSN	Y
Buheis, Maria, MD	Y	Ruiz, Raiza	Y
Davis, Carla, MD	Y	Svatek, Mandie, MD	Y
Freeman, Theodore, MD	Y	Swan, Sally, RN	Y
Gonzalez-Reyes, Erika, MD	Y	Varshney, Pooja, MD	Y

Agenda Item 2: Consideration of October 14, 2022, draft meeting minutes

Dr. Drew Bird, Chair, referred members to the draft minutes emailed by the program liaison and called for any edits. Hearing none, Dr. Bird called for a motion to approve the minutes of the October 14, 2022, meeting.

Motion: Dr. Louise Bethea moved to approve the minutes as presented from the October 14, 2022 meeting. Dr. Theodore Freeman seconded the motion. Following a roll call vote, the motion passed by a majority vote with 12 Approves (Bethea, Bird, Bostic, Buheis, Davis, Freeman, Jeffrey, Rivera, Rozneck, Ruiz, Swan, Varshney), 0 Disapprove, and 1 Abstention (Svatek).

Agenda Item 4: Discussion on rules and implementation of Senate Bill 294 from the 88th Legislative Session, 2023

Dr. Drew Bird, Chair recognized Ms. Dianna Pierson, School Health Nurse Team Lead, to facilitate the discussion on rules and implementation of Senate Bill (SB) 294 from the 88th Legislative Session, 2023. Highlights of presentation and member discussion included:

Ms. Pierson's presentation covered the passing of SB 294 relating to medications for respiratory distress, including the new requirements in the bill: new advisory committee duties, policy requirements for schools, reporting for schools, rule implementation, and SEAC recommendations on rule language.

Dr. Drew Bird, Chair asked that based on the name change recommendation from Stock Epinephrine Advisory Committee (SEAC) to Stock Medication Advisory

Committee (SMAC), if it's anticipated that the committee will be responsible for additional medications or will it be limited to the committee's scope.

- Ms. Raiza Ruiz stated it will depend on the Legislature and if they place the additional medications under the scope of the committee. She explained it is not up to DSHS to decide.

Dr. Bird asked if there are changes to the scope of the committee, can the committee give recommendations to increase representation on the committee to include specialists in certain areas.

- Ms. Ruiz stated this is also up to the Legislature, but the committee could provide public comment and participate when the bill is proposed. She explained DSHS only implements policy and provides administrative support.

Dr. Pooja Varshney asks if the proposed name can be modified to be based on the medications the committee has been charged with advising.

- Ms. Ruiz stated that is a committee decision. She asks for Mr. John Chacón, HHSC Advisory Committee Coordination Office, to confirm that the committee cannot decide on a name today because we need to provide public notice for the action. Mr. Chacón confirmed.

Dr. Bird asks for guidance on how the process works.

- Ms. Ruiz states Dr. Bird can call additional meetings to make that decision and the whole committee will have to vote on the name change.

Ms. Natalie Bostic asks if there will be separate reporting forms for the school nurses for epinephrine and medications for respiratory distress.

- Ms. Pierson stated there will be separate reporting forms and they will be posted on the School Health Program webpage.

Dr. Douglas Jeffrey asks if the original committee was formed in statute of a previous bill. Dr. Jeffrey asks if it limits to certain medications for allergies and anaphylaxis.

- Ms. Ruiz stated the initial bill was only for epinephrine auto injectors, but this new bill added medications for respiratory distress in the same Texas Education Code.

Dr. Louise Bethea suggested SAAAC as a new name. Dr. Bird thanks Dr. Bethea for her suggestion.

Agenda Item 3: Asthma 411 presentation on best practices when helping schools adopt unassigned asthma policies

Dr. Drew Bird, Chair, recognized Dr. Leslie Allsopp, Asthma 411 Faculty Partner, to facilitate the discussion on best practices when helping schools adopt unassigned asthma policies. Highlights of presentation and member discussion included:

- Dr. Allsopp shared an overview and considerations of SB 294 and Texas Administrative Code Title 25, Chapter 40, Subchapter D; best practice recommendations, national resources, and lesson learned from Asthma 411; and dissemination and implementation of unassigned albuterol to improve asthma outcomes.
- Dr. Bird thanked Dr. Allsopp for her presentation. He asked for clarification from DSHS that SB 294 is asking the committee to consider ways in which to implement policy that allows for albuterol to be stocked to help the school system. He asked if they are asking for the committee to form a subcommittee to address the need.
 - Ms. Ruiz stated the statute is silent about how the committee will address it, and just adds it to the scope of the committee. If SEAC wants to form a subcommittee, that is up to the committee.
- Dr. Bird asked what the timeline is for this process. Ms. Ruiz stated there is no implementation timeline, just a preferred date.
- Dr. Bird shared concerns that there are not any primary care physicians, social workers, or pulmonologists who specialize in the care of patients with severe asthma and implementing this work in the school system. He felt this would give a multidisciplinary approach to medications of respiratory distress.
 - Ms. Ruiz stated non-members can serve on subcommittees and provide input.
- Dr. Theodore Freeman thanked Dr. Allsopp for her presentation and stated it would be nice to get the whole state together on this.
- Dr. Carla Davis asked Dr. Allsopp about the role of telemedicine to connect with physician offices in the care of children with asthma.
 - Dr. Allsopp stated this is a critical factor to consider. She shared that many schools in her area are adopting contracts with

telemedicine providers and emphasized utilization of these resources.

- Dr. Freeman asked about allergists and immunologists in the coalition. Dr. Allsopp apologized and stated they did include a pediatric pulmonologist. She further stated the need for an integrated perspective.
- Dr. Freeman asked about the importance of medication availability for school field trips and outside of school hours. Dr. Allsopp stated it's critical and a change in the current legislation as it permits schools to make that available.
- Dr. Mandie Svatek stated she agrees with the idea of a subcommittee and collaboration.
- Ms. Natalie Bostic asked when Asthma 411 implemented the program in Tarrant County, how did they receive supplies to maintain the unassigned medication for respiratory distress.
 - Dr. Allsopp stated it was a complex process with a lot of logistic involved. She then stated Cook Children's volunteered to make the supplies and medications available on an ongoing basis and provide an annual symposium for school asthma services. She emphasized that it's a group initiative to get the standing orders reviewed, resigned every year.
- Ms. Natalie Bostic asked how the medication was being dispensed. Dr. Allsopp responded they use a dual-valved holding chamber device.

Agenda Item 5: Discussion and recommendations related to resources for the SEAC Allergies and Anaphylaxis webpage

Dr. Drew Bird, Chair, led the discussion regarding recommendations related to resources for the SEAC Allergies and Anaphylaxis webpage. Dr. Bird asked the committee if there are any requests for updates or edits to the webpage. There were none stated.

Agenda Item 6: Update from the Department of State Health Services (DSHS)

Dr. Drew Bird, Chair, recognized Ms. Raiza Ruiz to provide an update from the Texas Department of State Health Services. Highlights of the update and member discussion included:

- Ms. Ruiz welcomed new members, Dr. Maria Buheis and Dr. Mandie Svatek to the committee.
- Ms. Ruiz shared DSHS has a full staffed School Health Team and shared team members and member responsibilities. Ms. Ruiz stated that starting at the next committee meeting, Ms. Dianna Pierson will serve as the DSHS representative.
- Ms. Ruiz shared both the unassigned asthma and epinephrine reporting forms were updated for the 2023-2024 school year and are posted on the School Health Program website. She stated that the School Health Program is currently working on the required reporting of unassigned administered opioid antagonist medication to DSHS. The reporting form will be posted on November 1st when the new rules become effective.
- Ms. Ruiz shared the new CDC grant the School Health Program was awarded and are currently in the early implementation stages of the work plan.
- Ms. Ruiz introduced Ms. Calandra Jones, Chronic Disease Epidemiology Branch. Ms. Jones provided an overview of the 2022-2023 Epinephrine Auto-Injector Use in Texas Schools Report and Asthma Medication Use in Texas School Report. Data was collected from August 1, 2022 to July 31, 2023.
- Dr. Bird thanked Ms. Jones for presenting the data. He asked for a summary comparing this data to the data from previous years regarding epinephrine auto injectors. Ms. Jones answered she will go back and look at the trend data and then provide an update.
- Dr. Bird shared the asthma reporting data is being reported by 20 schools and asked if there is a reason why we aren't having better reporting by more schools. Ms. Jones answered most of the schools that reported this data were from Region 11 but couldn't say why more schools aren't reporting.
- Dr. Bird asked if there is a trigger for those entering the data to remind them to report the data to all the individuals listed in the policy.
 - Ms. Jones answered she will follow up with the team to see if that information is available in the form. Ms. Raiza Ruiz shared that schools are only required to report if they have a policy and the policy is not required. There is also no requirement to notify DSHS if they have a policy.

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- Dr. Carla Davis shared she recently contacted DSHS and received longitudinal information on epinephrine auto-injectors. She stated that during the pandemic there was a dip in the administration of stock epinephrine and then it came up in the last year similar to pre-pandemic levels.
 - Regarding the asthma reporting forms, Dr. Mandie Svatek asked if the primary care physician and prescribing physician are mutually exclusive of each other. She further asked what percentage of the prescribing physicians are the primary care physicians. Ms. Jones answered that information is not available.
 - Dr. Pooja Varshey stated over 90% unassigned epinephrine auto-injectors stood out to her and she feels like it's increasing. She was thinking about healthcare utilization, where is all the epinephrine prescribed is going, is it getting to the schools, action plans, reporting, and how to improve communication between prescribers, medical homes, and specialists in the schools.
 - Dr. Theodore Freeman asks if there have been any changes in unassigned epinephrine reporting in Texas schools and where are they at. He further asks if there hasn't been much change, how can we improve participation. Ms. Jones shared there is a detailed report with a breakdown of information of Education Service Center reported data.
 - Ms. Natalie Bostic asked about the ages of the students who the medication was administered to. Ms. Jones answered for the epinephrine data, the age range was from 1-64, the average age was 15 years old. For asthma data, the range was students from K-12.
 - Dr. Louise Bethea shared that many high schoolers are allowed to carry their auto injectors but do not do so. That may explain the increase in unassigned epinephrine in the teenage group. She also shared reporting data trends from the past few years. She stated she understands the frustrations with Education Service Center regions not reporting. She then stated there are fewer commercial programs available to help pay for medication, which is affecting the unassigned epinephrine use in schools. She emphasized that physicians need to be more proactive in talking to parents. Nurses have been calling her organization asking for asthma action plans for students.
 - Dr. Varshey stated she is interested in breakdown of symptoms and how hives and swelling weren't listed in the top symptoms, but respiratory symptoms are. She wondered with more widespread uptake of unassigned albuterol, if it would help improve awareness and recognition of symptom.

Agenda Item 7: Future SEAC agenda topics and priorities

Dr. Drew Bird, Chair led the discussion regarding future SEAC agenda topics and priorities. Highlights of member discussion included:

- Dr. Douglas Jeffrey asked about the formation of the future subcommittee for the name change. Dr. Bird answered this will be formed at a future meeting.
- Dr. Carla Davis requested updated information and resources about medication on the website.
- Dr. Drew Bird, Chair, announced the next SEAC meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 8, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. in Moreton-Room 100.
- Dr. Bird asked committee members if there are any other agenda items committee members would like to add to the next meeting.
 - Dr. Douglas Jeffrey requested an action item on data collection regarding what has been done trying to get prescription authority and who is doing the majority of prescribing for stock epinephrine for now so we can start on solutions for it. He also requests a list of the school participating in reporting.
 - Based on the discussion Ms. Ruiz confirmed that the other current agenda topics are:
 - Subcommittee appointment
 - Committee name change

Agenda Item 8: Public comment

Mr. John Chacón, ACCO Facilitator, read the public comment announcement and coordinated with the ACCO production team requests from stakeholders who registered or were on-site to provide public comment.

Oral public comment –

- **Ms. Eleanor Ewing, High School Student at Austin High School**

Ms. Ewing shared her efforts to assist school districts in stocking epinephrine auto-injectors. She recommended the committee begin keeping a list of school districts that stock and don't stock epinephrine and to consider providing resources for an epinephrine prescription for school districts that want to take advantage of the free epi pens 4 schools program.

 - Dr. Bird asked DSHS Staff about the response when schools ask for guidance on obtaining epinephrine for their school districts. Ms. Ruiz answered there is a free resource online, but generally questions are

regarding standing orders, and we do not have an answer right now but typically we refer to local health departments.

- Dr. Bird asked about the possibility of a statewide standing order. Mr. Brent Spencer, Unit Director stated there is nothing in statute that allows DSHS to do a statewide standing order.
- Dr. Bethea asked if most counties have a health officer who could write a prescription. Mr. Spencer answered there are if they have a local health department, but there are a lot of counties who don't. In that case, DSHS serves as their local health department. He further states this is something we are aware of and working on.
- Dr. Jose Rivera stated there was a standing order for Naloxone at the state level and for a list of schools that carry these medications.
 - Mr. Spencer stated the Naloxone standing order was administered through HHSC, not DSHS and we were not involved in that discussion.
 - Ms. Ruiz stated that because schools are not required to report if they have a voluntary policy, collecting that information is challenging for DSHS. DSHS will consult with its legal department to see if we can disclose the list of schools. It would be limited to who voluntarily reported to DSHS.

- **Mr. Charlie Gagen, Advocacy Director for the American Lung Association**

Mr. Gagen shared that the American Lung Association celebrates the passing of the new laws to allow schools in Texas to provide more immediate access to medications for students with asthma or suffering from respiratory distress. Mr. Gagen gave background information about the laws and asthma's effect on student health. He shared the American Lung Association has free online resources available and offered support to the committee and schools.

- Dr. Mandie Svatek states Mr. Gagen would be a great addition to the subcommittee once it's started.

- **Dr. Daniel Deane, Retired Pediatric Pulmonologist**

Dr. Deane stated that there is no mention of asthma in a substantive way in the Texas Education Code. He discussed addressing some form of communication that would outline the responsibilities of the physician, the family, and the schools in managing asthma emergencies. He shared the lack of asthma action plans and the barriers. He requests to collaborate with community organizations.

Agenda Item 9: Adjournment and Thank You

- Dr. Drew Bird thanked committee members and members of the public for their attendance, and adjourned the meeting at 12:09 p.m.

Below is the link to the archived video recording of the October 16, 2023, Stock Epinephrine Advisory Committee meeting to view and listen for approximately, two years from date meeting is posted in accordance with the HHSC records retention schedule.

[Stock Epinephrine Advisory Committee](#)