

## Texas Council on Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke (TCCVDS)

Monday, February 10, 2025

1:30p.m.

**FINAL**

Virtual: Teams Meeting Platform  
In Person Meeting Site: Robert D. Moreton Building  
Room M-100, First Floor  
1100 W. 49<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, Texas 78756

### Agenda Item 1: Call to order, introductions, roll call, and welcoming remarks

Suzanne Hildebrand, Chair, called the Texas Council on Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke (TCCVDS) meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. Ms. Suzanne Hildebrand, Chair, welcomed committee members, agency staff, and the public in attendance.

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.

**Table 1: The Texas Council on Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke member attendance at the Monday, February 10, 2025, meeting.**

Member name	Attended	Member name	Attended
Dr. Elie Balesh	N	Dr. Alberto Maud	N
Dr. Stanley Duchman	Y	Ms. Remmy Morris	Y
Ms. Janett Hall-Hewlett	N	vacant	
Ms. Suzanne Hildebrand, Chair	Y	<b>Non-Voting Members</b>	
Dr. Sherron Franks-Meeks	N	Ms. Karen Brajcki, TWC	N
Dr. E'Loria Simon-Campbell	N	Ms. Chelsea Couch, HHSC	N
Ms. Lourdes Cuellar	Y	Dr. Kelly Fegan-Bohm, DSHS	Y
Dr. Oscar Aguilar	Y		

## **Agenda Item 2: Consideration of November 4, 2024, draft meeting minutes**

- Ms. Suzanne Hildebrand, Chair, referred members to the draft minutes emailed by the program liaison and called for any edits. Hearing none, Ms. Hildebrand called for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2024, meeting.

**Motion:** Dr. Duchman made a motion to approve the August 5 minutes as presented. Dr. Aguilar seconded the motion. Following a roll call vote, the motion passed with 5 yeas (Aguilar, Cuellar, Duchman, Hildebrand, Morris), 0 nays, and 5 absent (Balesh, Franks-Meeks, Hall-Hewlett, Maud, Simon-Campbell).

## **Agenda Item 3: Presentation: Health and Human Services Ethics Officer-** David Reisman, Chief Ethics Officer, HHSC.

Highlights from the presentation:

- Council members may not claim or appear to represent HHSC or the committee in any legislative or advocacy activity without approval from the committee's presiding officer and the HHS Ethics Office in coordination with the HHSC Government and Stakeholder Relations Office.
- Council members are not prohibited from discussing a report that has been formally adopted by the specific committee they represent, or from representing themselves or other non-state agency entity in the legislative or advocacy process.
- Councils or council members may not expend state appropriations to advocate for or against any bill or measure.
- Council members may not accept payment for services that are requested because of the members' title or position on the council.

## **Agenda Item 4: Consideration of TCCVDS bylaws-** Ms. Rachel Wiseman, Chronic Disease Unit Director, DSHS

- During the August 5, 2024, council meeting, council members voted to approve the bylaws.
- Since then, DSHS made a few minor changes to align with the bylaws for other DSHS councils and committees.
- Julie sent a copy of the revised bylaws in advance of today's meeting.
- Changes were made to the Purpose and Role section on pg2 regarding council coordinating with DSHS staff if the council wishes to provide written advisement to the legislature.
- In the Definitions section on pg.3, cardiovascular disease was defined.
- The definition of a simple majority was moved from the Committee Operations and Meetings section to the Definition section.
- Ms. Hildebrand called for a motion to approve the bylaws as presented.

**Motion:** Dr. Aguilar made a motion to adopt the bylaws as presented. Dr. Aguilar seconded the motion. Following a roll call vote, the motion passed with 5 yeas (Aguilar, Cuellar, Duchman, Hildebrand, Morris), 0 nays, and 5 absent (Balesh, Franks-Meeks, Hall-Hewlett, Maud, Simon-Campbell).

## **Agenda Item 5. Agency Representative Reports**

**A. Department of State Health Services-** Dr. Kelly Fegan-Bohm, Medical Director and Ms. Rachel Wiseman, Chronic Disease Unit Director

### **Texas Department of State Health Services Heart Disease & Stroke Program (DSHS HDSP) Updates**

- February is American Heart Month to raise awareness about heart disease and cardiovascular health. On February 7, 2025, we encouraged everyone to wear red on National Wear Red Day to raise awareness about the prevalence of cardiovascular disease in women.
- The Diabetes and CVD Branch Manager position was re-posted and closed 1/22/25. DSHS HDSP is currently reviewing applications and hope to select a candidate soon.
- The HDSP will publish their next newsletter edition in February. If you would like for us to add your resources in our newsletter or be added to the distribution list, please email [cardio@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:cardio@dshs.texas.gov).

### **CDC Grants**

- HDSP is in the process of finalizing its continuation application for Year 3 of the CVD grant from the CDC. The application will be submitted at the beginning of March.
- HDSP is in the process of writing its continuation application for Year 3 of the CVD innovative grant from the CDC. The application will be submitted in April.
- University of Texas.
- Health Science Center at Tyler (UTHealth East Texas) installed and implemented six community and clinical based blood pressure monitor lending libraries in Smith, Angelina and Henderson Counties. Blood pressure monitor lending libraries allow patients and participants to borrow monitors up to 30 days and educates on how to accurately measure their blood pressure. UTHealth East Texas continues to recruit in high need communities or clinics within high burden areas for participation in the blood pressure monitor lending library.
- The University Texas College of Pharmacy (UTCoP) is coordinating kick-off meetings to launch the Pharmacy-based Hypertension remote patient monitoring program in three counties: Houston County, El Paso County, and Henderson County.
- The City of Port Arthur completed their Community Health Assessment questionnaire among 295 individuals. Thirty individuals were identified by the questionnaire as high risk and were selected to participate in the self-monitoring blood pressure (SMBP) program. The participants were provided with education and instructions on how to monitor blood pressure at home. Due to participating in the SMBP program, a few participants have reported that they have identified issues with their blood pressure measurements, talked to their healthcare provider, and were given an updated treatment plan.

### **Cardiovascular Disease & Stroke Learning Collaborative (LC)**

- The next Texas Cardiovascular Disease Learning Collaborative (LC) quarterly meeting was held on February 7, 2025. The meeting highlighted University of Texas Medical Branch's Community Health Integrated Response Portal to advance cardiovascular health outcomes, UTHealth Houston's work on the implementation of the Healthy Heart Ambassador Program, and United Way's Pathways Community HUB model. The LC's Chair, Roy Champion, also presented on recent research regarding team-based care

applied to cardiovascular disease treatment. If you would like to be part of the LC please e-mail HDSP at [cardio@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:cardio@dshs.texas.gov)

- The LC held its' first Census Tract Workgroup session on 12/13/24 and provided feedback on the Team-Based Care Guidance Document created by the UTHealth East Texas team. UTHealth East Texas found the feedback very helpful and are working on revising the document based on the LC's edits
- The Learning Collaborative is seeking to recruit co-chairs for the Membership and Census Tract Work Groups. The Steering Committee hopes to secure co-chairs in Summer 2025. If interested to be a co-chair or member in either workgroup, please e-mail the HDSP at [cardio@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:cardio@dshs.texas.gov)

### **DSHS Worksite Wellness CPR trainings and AED initiative**

- The Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention section organized bystander CPR/AED training for DSHS staff in collaboration with the American Heart Association. Participants learned two steps to performing hands-only CPR. They also became familiar with an automated external defibrillator (AED) and learned the steps to using this equipment. HPCDP has hosted two trainings (May and October 2024) and has trained over 90 employees.

### **B. HHSC- Ms. Chelsea Couch, Aging Texas Well Coordinator**

- No updates.

### **C. Texas Workforce Commission- Ms. Karen Brajcki, Program Specialist – Physical Disabilities**

- No updates.

## **Agenda Item 6: Liaison Reports**

### **a. American Heart/American Stroke Association coverage update-** Mr. Alec Puente, Director of Governmental Relations

#### **AED & CPR Policy**

- Passage of HEARTS Act at the Federal Level - Health, Education, Awareness, Research, and Training in Schools.
  - Deployment of AEDs in Schools
  - Training for staff, students, and volunteers
  - Public awareness through CDC about cardiomyopathy and sudden cardiac arrest risks
  - Funding in 2026-2027 at the earlier
- State legislation: Cardiac Emergency Response Plans in Schools
  - Sets core elements of a school action plan
  - Positions state/schools to pull down HEARTS Act funding

#### **New Initiative to Advance AI in Health Care**

- Urgent Need:
  - Cardiovascular disease (CVD) projected to affect 184M+ U.S. adults by 2050.
  - Financial burden estimated to exceed \$1.85 trillion.
- AI's Potential:

- Enhances data analysis, accelerates drug discovery, and improves diagnostic accuracy.
  - Bridges gaps between biomedical research and clinical practice.
- Funding Initiative
  - \$12M from the American Heart Association for AI-driven solutions in cardiovascular/cerebrovascular health and healthcare delivery.
  - 3 research teams to be selected.
- Research Focus
  - Novel AI Approaches to Advance Cardiovascular and Cerebrovascular/Brain Health.
- Key Dates
  - Letters of Intent: Due Feb. 27, 2025
  - Full Proposals (by invitation): Due May 1, 2025

### **Food is Medicine (FIM) Progress**

- Accepting applications for planning grant to develop trial protocols to test Food Is Medicine (FIM) interventions.
- Aiming to address food access/cost barriers.
- Builds evidence for covered medical benefits to prevent/treat chronic diseases (e.g., CVD).
- Funding & Goals
  - \$100k planning grant, including up to \$25k for initial data collection.
  - Aim to develop a competitive proposal for \$3M+ in future funding for FIM grants and clinical trials.

### **FDA Proposed Tobacco and Nutrition Rules**

- Proposal 1: Limit Nicotine in Cigarettes
  - Mandate minimally/non-addictive nicotine levels;
  - Projected to spur 12.9M adults to quit smoking in Year 1 (19.5M by Year 5), prevent 48M youth from smoking and save 4.3M lives by 2100.
- Rule 2: Front-of-Pack Nutrition Labels
  - Simplify food/beverage nutrition info to make impacts clearer to consumers;
  - <1/3 of consumers currently read labels. Those who do, buy healthier foods mirroring trends seen globally.

### **New Guidelines re: Stroke and Lifestyle**

- Aim is to close gender gaps in CVD diagnosis and treatment.
- Each year in the United States, over half a million people have a stroke for the first time.
- Included in 2024 Guideline for the Primary Prevention of Stroke, replacing the 2024 Guidelines.
  - Urges health professionals to screen for risk factors like high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol, high blood sugar, and obesity.
  - Highlights Life's Essential 8 health metrics for optimal cardiovascular and brain health, medications for risk factor management, risks specific to women and ways to address social determinants of health.

### **HeartCorps**

- Major goal is workforce development: several service members have "graduated" into public health roles or into roles at their host sites.
- Three-year; \$8.6M grant from AmeriCorps through the joint Public Health AmeriCorps initiative with the CDC.

- 100 HeartCorps members in 26 states for three years.
- Focus
  - Improve blood pressure within Rural Health Clinics, FQHCs, health departments, community orgs, etc.
  - Address nutrition security
  - Reduce tobacco use among youth
- In final year in Texas, with final cohort starting in February.
  - Decision on re-funding will occur in April.

**b. Office of Acquired Brain Injury-**Ms. Cassandra Saucedo, Office of Acquired Brain Injury Manager

- The Office of Acquired Brain Injury (OABI) is the center for awareness and education on brain injuries in Texas. Our goal is help connect people to resources and services, raise awareness and prevent brain injuries.
- Program activities include:
  - Education, outreach, and awareness
  - Training
  - Resource Facilitation
  - Collaboration and Networking
  - Texas Brain Injury Advisory Council
  - Connecting veterans to services
- Education, Outreach, and Awareness Events
  - Conferences and Health Fairs
  - March Brain Injury Awareness Month
  - Brain Injury Conference
  - Virtual opportunities
- Educational Materials
  - Brochure
  - Poster
  - Concussion cards
  - Stroke cards
  - Fall Prevention Card
  - Myths and Facts Card
  - More to be developed!
  - Individuals should click on the following link if they would like additional information regarding brain injuries and links for ordering resources:  
<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/acquired-brain-injury>
    - including the resource guide. All the materials are free and available to the public
- With the help of the Texas Brain Injury Advisory Council, OABI created the Texas Brain Injury Resource Guide, and it is available in English and Spanish. The guide provides basic information about brain injuries and the various resources that are available in Texas for those with brain injuries. The guide provides information and basic resources about life after a brain injury, the rehabilitation process and how to obtain a provider, navigating healthcare benefits, other funding options, long-term services and supports, and independent living.
- OABI provides logistical support the Texas Brain Injury Advisory Council. The Council is composed of different members of the brain injury community including survivors, family members, and a diverse group of professionals including acute hospitals, post-acute rehabilitation facilities, research, and stroke. The Council is working on various projects to help advocate for the brain injury community.

- There are several Veteran Service Organizations, with various areas of expertise.
- The designated state agency for veteran services, Texas Veterans Commission, is a great place to start when looking to identify VSOs in your area.: <https://tvc.texas.gov/>
- MossRehab Institute for Brain Health (MRIBH), a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) medical out-patient program for Veterans and First Responders.

### **c. Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC)**

#### **i. GETAC Cardiac Care Committee** Dr. David Wampler, Professor of Emergency Health Sciences, UT Health San Antonio

- Top initiatives include:
  - Identify specific data elements that are relevant to EMS out of the National EMS Information System.
  - CARES Update-EMS agencies can benchmark the results of their specific outcomes with state and national data sets.
  - RAC data collaborative that is looking to combine pre-hospital data with data from the PCI centers.
- The next GETAC meeting is in about a month The GETAC Care Committee will meet on March 6.

#### **ii. GETAC Stroke Committee** Dr. Novakovic-White, Professor of Radiology and Neurology, UT Southwestern

- Dr. Novakovic-White was called for clinical duties and was unable to provide an update.

### **Agenda Item 7: Letter to the Legislature-** Ms. Suzanne Hildebrand, TCCVDS Chair

- Ms. Hildebrand drafted a letter to the Legislature.
- A copy of the letter was sent to council members in advance of the meeting.

**Motion:** Dr. Duchman made a motion to approve the TCCVDS letter to the Legislature. Dr. Aguilar seconded the motion. Following a roll call vote, the motion passed with 5 yeas (Aguilar, Cuellar, Duchman, Hildebrand, Morris), 0 nays, and 5 absent (Balesh, Franks-Meeks, Hall-Hewlett, Maud, Simon-Campbell).

### **Agenda Item 8: 2025 Stroke Survivors and Caregivers Conference-** Ms. Suzanne Hildebrand, TCCVDS Chair

- No updates.

### **Agenda Item 9: Discussion of topics for future council meetings-** Ms. Suzanne Hildebrand, TCCVDS Chair

- Council members were provided an opportunity to make suggestions for topics/presenters for future council meetings.
- The day of the meeting and attending meetings in person was briefly discussed.

**Agenda Item 10: Review of action items and agenda items for May 12, 2025, meeting**

- There will be a presentation on SNAP-Ed.

**Agenda Item 11: Upcoming Meeting Dates**

- May 12, 2025
- August 11, 2025
- November 17, 2025

**Agenda Item 12: Public Comment**

No one registered for public comment.

**Agenda Item 13: Adjourn**

Ms. Hildebrand thanked members for attending, DSHS and HHSC staff, and members of the public who attended. Ms. Hildebrand adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m. CST.

Please click on the link to the archived HHSC webcast of the November 4, 2024, Texas Council on Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke meeting that will be available for viewing for approximately two years from the date of the meeting.

<https://texashhsc.v3.swagit.com/videos/334325>