

Maternal Mortality Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC)

Friday, March 7, 2025

9:00 a.m.

FINAL APPROVED

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 West 49th Street

Austin, TX 78756

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

Dr. Carla Ortique, Chair, called the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC) meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Dr. Ortique, Chair, welcomed all committee members, staff, team members, and the public attending. She acknowledged the work done by the committee is a critical part in the efforts to address maternal deaths and disparities. Dr. Ortique stressed that the work of the committee honors the lives that have been lost of Texas women during pregnancy, childbirth, and the year after and requested a moment of silence in honor of the women as well as their families and communities that have been touched by the loss of a mother.

Dr. Ortique introduced Ms. Jessica Arevalo, HHSC, Advisory Committee Coordination Office (ACCO) to read logistical announcements and call roll and determined if a quorum was reached.

Ms. Arevalo then proceeded with the meeting logistics and stated the meeting was being conducted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and conducted the roll call. Ms. Arevalo announced that with members present, quorum was met.

Table 1: The Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC) member attendance at the March 7, 2024 meeting.

Member Name	In Attendance
Dr. Meenakshi Awasthi	No
Dr. Meitra Doty	Yes
Dr. Carey Eppes	Yes
Dr. Kelly Fegan-Bohm	Yes

Member Name	In Attendance
Dr. Morna Gonsoulin	Yes
Dr. Angeline Opina Gonzalez	Yes
Dr. Manda Hall	Yes
Dr. Sarah Hartman	Yes
Dr. James Hill	Yes
Dr. Amy Raines Milenkov	No
Dr. Christina Murphy	No
Dr. Sherri Onyiego	Yes
Dr. Barbara Orlando	Yes
Dr. Carla Ortique	Yes
Dr. Diaa Osman	No
Dr. Robin Page	Yes
Dr. Lavannya Pandit	No
Ms. Nancy Puig	No
Dr. Patrick Ramsey	Yes
Dr. Avi Ruderman	Yes
Dr. Ingrid Skop	Yes
Dr. Lindsey Vasquez	Yes

Agenda Item 2: Consideration of December 6, 2024, draft meeting minutes

Dr. Ortique asked members if there were any edits or changes needed in the draft. No edits or changes were requested.

Motion: Dr. Avi Ruderman motioned to approve the minutes as presented from the December 6, 2024 meeting. Dr. Patrick Ramsey seconded. Dr. Ortique turned the floor over to Ms. Arevalo to proceed with a roll call vote, and the motion passed with fourteen approve (Doty, Eppes, Fegan-Bohm, Gonsoulin, Gonzales, Hall, Hartman, Hill, Onyiego, Ortique, Ramsey, Ruderman, Skop, Vasquez), no disapprove, no abstain.

Agenda Item 3: Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee chair and subcommittee updates

- Dr. Carla Ortique acknowledged the contribution of the committee and provided updates on key maternal health issues. She emphasized the importance of evidence-based practices and collaboration efforts in addressing maternal mortality and morbidity.

Dr. Ortique turned the floor over to Dr. Sherri Onyiego, Chair of MMMRC Subcommittee on Maternal Health Disparities.

Dr. Sherri Onyiego – Maternal Health Disparities

Dr. Onyiego thanked Dr. Ortique and acknowledges the leadership team at DSHS for their continued support. Dr. Onyiego provided the following update:

- The Subcommittee on Maternal Health Disparities had two major updates:
 1. The subcommittee is reviewing the Discrimination Assessment and Social Determinants of Health (DASH) tool and reviewing opportunities to refine the language and content of the tool. Under the leadership of Dr. Amy Raines-Milenkov, the subcommittee is in the process of finalizing refinements and will present them to the full committee for approval.
 2. The subcommittee is also developing a Homicide Tool, a resource that will be able to assist in case review of homicides related to pregnancy. This work is being led by Dr. Marissa Gough and Dr. Kelly Fegan-Bohm.

Dr. Robin Page – Research and Publications

Dr. Robin Page thanked Dr. Ortique and provided the following update:

- The first meeting of the subcommittee was on January 16th, 2025. The purpose of the meeting was to review logistics and approach to determining potential data collection and publication topics.
- The purpose and goals of the subcommittee.

Agenda Item 4: Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee team updates

Dr. Ortique provided a brief overview of what members may share during the team updates agenda item and turned the floor over to Dr. Patrick Ramsey, MMMRC Co-Chair.

Dr. Patrick Ramsey discusses the Society for Maternal Fetal Medicine's (SMFM) position statement on maternal mortality review committees. Dr. Ramsey turns the floor back over to Dr. Ortique.

Dr. Ortique gave an opportunity to any of the team members to report to the members on information they might want to present including the successes and challenges in their team meetings.

- Dr. Carey Eppes, Team 2, discussed:
 - The importance of the SMFM position statement.
- Dr. Patrick Ramsey, Team 3, discussed:
 - The potential for the inclusion of informant interviews in the case review process.
- Dr. Carla Ortique, Team 4, discussed:
 - The importance of having a diverse committee.
- Dr. Sherri Onyiego, Team 5, discussed:
 - The recommendation from the SMFM position statement to adopt key informant interviews.

Agenda Item 5: Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee Operational and Maternal Health and Safety Initiatives

Dr. Ortique turned the floor to Dr. Shruthi Arismendez, Unit Director of the Maternal and Child Health Program at DSHS. Dr. Arismendez provided updates on the following:

- DSHS has continued work on the Maternal Mortality Review System (MMRS). User acceptance testing has begun to test the systems functionality and to identify areas that need modification. Training for MMMRC members will begin in the next few months.
- DSHS has provisionally identified 277 cases for 2021, and 85 cases for the first two quarters of 2024.
- DSHS is collaborating with Texas Collaboration for Healthy Mothers and Babies (TCHMB) to implement Texas AIM Safety Bundles. The newest Texas AIM bundle addresses Sepsis and the next bundle will address substance use.
- The Hear Her Texas campaign continues promoting awareness of urgent maternal warning signs using several strategies including an ongoing media campaign. In addition to this, they have partnered with Texas AIM to distribute cuff kits to fill service gaps for high-risk patients.

Agenda Item 6: Future Agenda Items

Dr. Carla Ortique opened discussion for new business and potential agenda items for the next meeting scheduled for March 7, 2025.

Agenda Item 7: Public comment

Ms. Arevalo, 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 –

- **The following commentors expressed concerns regarding the committee's decision to not review the 2022 and 2023 case cohort.**
 - Ms. Serita Fontanesi
 - Ms. Emma Wake.
 - Ms. Morgan Miles.

Agenda Item 8: Executive Session: to review cases under Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 34. Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee, Section 34.007. Selection and Review of Cases as authorized by Section 34.004.

Dr. Ortique read the legislation allowing the review committee to move into a closed executive session.

She announced the committee will go into closed session at 10:30 am.

The committee will return later in the afternoon to reopen the meeting from closed to open session before adjourning for the day, as statutorily required. There will be a break to allow for room turnover and the committee will resume their meeting, in closed session.

Ms. Arevalo announced to members of the public that this concluded the open meeting for the morning and the public was informed that the review committee would return later in the afternoon to open the closed session and then adjourn.

Agenda Item 9: Adjournment and Thank You

Dr. Ortique reopened the meeting at 11:48 am, and stated with no further business or discussion she would adjourn the meeting at 11:49 am.

Below is the link to the archived video of the March 7, 2025, Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC) that will be available for viewing approximately two years from date meeting was posted on website and based on the DSHS records retention schedule.

[Mar 07, 2025 Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee - Texas Health and Human Services Commission](#)