

**Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Friday, December 11, 2020  
9:00 a.m.**

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was conducted virtually using Microsoft Teams only. There was not a physical location for this meeting.

Table 1: Texas Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee attendance Friday, December 11, 2020 meeting.

MEMBER NAME	IN ATTENDANCE
Ms. Nancy Sheppard- Alderman	No
Dr. Eumenia Castro	Yes
Dr. Meitra Doty	Yes
Dr. Pamala Gessling	Yes
Dr. Manda Hall	Yes
Dr. Lisa Hollier	Yes
Dr. James Maher	No
Dr. K. Kimberley Molina	Yes
Dr. Sherri Onyiego	Yes
Dr. Carla Ortique	Yes
Dr. Lavannya Pandit	Yes
Dr. Amy Raines-Milenkov	Yes
Dr. Christina Murphey	Yes
Dr. Patrick Ramsey	Yes
Ms. Nancy Jo Reedy	Yes
Dr. Kelly Fegan-Bohm	Yes

**Agenda Item 1: Call to Order and Determination of Quorum**

Dr. Lisa Hollier, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and announced that agenda item #5 regarding approval of bylaws would be tabled to the March 5, 2021 meeting. Dr. Hollier turned the floor over to Mr. John Chacón, HHSC, Advisory Committee Coordination Office. Mr. Chacón read logistical announcements, called roll, and asked the members to provide a brief introduction, providing their name, profession/organization and location, and determined a quorum was present.

**Agenda Item 2: Welcome and Introductions**

Dr. Hollier thanked all members of the review committee for their dedication and time. Dr. Hollier turned the floor over to Mr. John Chacón.

### **Agenda Item 3: Approval of September 18, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Chacón noted members received a copy of the September 18, 2020 meeting minutes in their electronic packet. Mr. Chacón requested a motion.

#### **MOTION:**

Dr. Patrick Ramsey made the motion to approve the September 18, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Dr. Lisa Hollier seconded the motion. Mr. Chacón conducted a roll call vote, and the motion passed unanimously with no objections or abstentions.

### **Agenda Item 4: Subcommittee on Maternal Health Disparities Update**

Dr. Hollier introduced and turned the floor over to Dr. Carla Ortique to provide the subcommittee update. Dr. Ortique presented on behalf of the Maternal Health Disparities Subcommittee.

Highlights included:

- Findings from the Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee and Department of State Health Services Joint Biennial Report, 2018
- Maternal Health Disparities Subcommittee's activities
- Shared thoughts for consideration on COVID-19 pandemic disparities and impact

Dr. Hollier thanked Dr. Ortique for her presentation.

### **Agenda Item 5: Approval of Bylaws**

As stated previously, approval of the Bylaws is tabled to March 5, 2021 meeting.

### **Agenda Item 6: Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee Operational Updates**

Dr. Hollier introduced and turned the floor over to Mr. Jeremy Triplett, DSHS, Maternal and Child Health Section Director, and Ms. Julie Stagg MSN, RN, IBCLC, RLC, DSHS, Healthy Texas Mothers and Babies Branch Manager, to provide updates to the committee.

Mr. Triplett providing the following highlights:

The committee is required to report findings and recommendations to the Texas Legislature by September 1<sup>st</sup> of every even numbered year. DSHS asked for an extension, which was granted, changed the submission date to December 1, 2020. The 2020 Texas MMMRC/DSHS Joint Biennial Report has been posted to the DSHS Legislative Reports Website and the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Website.

- The Maternal Health and Safety Report finalized the report and it is posted at DSHS Legislative Reports Website and the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Website as of December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Triplett turned the floor over to Ms. Stagg.

Ms. Stagg provided members with information on Texas AIM and the Maternal Health and Safety Biennial Report including initiatives implemented under the DSHS Texas Healthy Mothers and Babies framework which is comprised of:

- Informative evaluation activities from piloting the Obstetric Care for Women with Opioid Use Disorder Bundle
- Development of a high-risk maternal care coordination pilot
- Development of a maternal health and safety awareness education and communication campaign
- Closing activities of the successful Obstetric Hemorrhage Bundle.

Ms. Stagg turned the floor over to Mr. Triplett and he provided members with additional highlights:

- Enhancing Reviews and Surveillance to Eliminate Maternal Mortality (ERASE MM) grant
- Standardizing data using the CDC's Maternal Mortality Review Information Application (MMRIA) data system
- Cases from the 2019 Case Cohort will be reviewed at the March MMMRC Meeting.
- Solicitation for MMMRC positions are due by 11:59 p.m. January 15, 2021. Additional information is provided on the website.
- Sixteen (16) cases are prepared to be reviewed today from the 2013 Cohort.
- Ashley Steenberger was promoted to Maternal Health and Safety Manager.
- Mr. Triplett thanked the Review Committee, abstractors, redactors, and DSHS staff.

Dr. Hollier thanked Mr. Triplett and Ms. Stagg for their updates.

### **Agenda Item 7: Consultation for Senate Bill 748: Program evaluations and Maternal Teleservices Update Future Agenda Items**

Dr. Hollier introduced and turned the floor over to Ms. Sarah Gonzaga, DNP, RN, HHSC, Manager, Medical Benefits Policy, Medicaid and CHIP Services Department, and Ms. Meghan Young, MPAff, HHSC, Manager, Policy and Program Development, Medicaid and CHIP Services Department. A powerpoint entitled, "Update on SB748 – Medicaid and CHIP Services", was provided as a handout and presented to the members.

Ms. Gonzaga and Ms. Young provided the following highlights:

- Shared the findings of three program evaluations required by SB 748 including medical benefits, care coordination, and eligibility and enrollment.
- For the Maternal Teleservices Pilot Program:
  - SB 748 requires a study on the costs and benefits of permitting Medicaid reimbursement for prenatal and postpartum services delivered via teleservices
  - An evaluation of the use of teleservices, and
  - Consultation with the Review Committee in the development of a Maternal Teleservices Pilot Program.

Members stated:

- More visits should be conducted during the postpartum period with at least one to two of those visits should be in person with a combination of remote visits.
- 70 days postpartum seems to be a dangerous time for women. Suggested increasing in-person visits with at least three or four tele-visits provided through 12 weeks postpartum.
- Telehealth is not available for several geographic populations due to lack of bandwidth or internet connection.
- Opportunity for variability on type of visit (in-person vs telehealth) based on required laboratory tests.

Dr. Hollier thanked Ms. Gonzaga and Ms. Young for their presentation.

### **Agenda Item 8: Consultation for House Bill 25: Medical Transportation Program Services**

Dr. Hollier introduced and turned the floor over to Ms. Kate Layman, MSSW, HHSC, Manager, Policy and Program Development, Medicaid and CHIP Services Department. Ms. Layman referenced a PowerPoint entitled "Medical Transportation Program Services for Pregnant Women and New Mothers".

Ms. Layman stated that House Bill 25 directs the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to collaborate with the MMMRC on the development and implementation of a pilot program that provides non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) services to pregnant women and new mothers enrolled in the STAR Medicaid managed care program and their children.

Members stated:

- Medicaid clients have expressed issues with transportation due to lack of childcare.
- COVID restrictions might influence utilization of transportation.

Dr. Hollier thanked Ms. Layman for her presentation.

### **Agenda Item 9: Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee and Department of State Health Services Joint Biennial Report, 2020, Findings and Recommendations**

Dr. Hollier introduced herself, Dr. Carla Ortique, MD, Vice-Chair, and Gloria Mutombo, MSHI, MPH, DSHS, Maternal and Child Health Epidemiologist.

Dr. Hollier, Dr. Ortique and Ms. Mutombo presented on the Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee and Department of State Health Services Joint Biennial Report, 2020, including:

- Pregnancy-related death case review findings;
- Findings from statewide rates, trends and committees;
- Best practices and programs from other states; and
- Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee recommendations.

Members stated:

- The Texas Collaborative of Healthy Mothers and Babies can take ownership of certain recommendations.
- Opportunity for the Texas Collaborative of Healthy Mothers and Babies to collaborate with the MMMRC on urgent maternal messaging.

Dr. Hollier thanked the MMMRC members and DSHS staff for all their hard work.

### **Agenda Item 10: Future Agenda Items**

Dr. Hollier opened discussion for potential agenda items for the next meeting on March 5, 2021.

Members discussed:

- Moving forward with the MMMRC collaborating with the Texas Collaborative for Healthy Mothers and Babies regarding urgent maternal mortality messaging.
- Inclusion of birth centers in the AIM project and data collection. There are nine new birth centers coming online in the next few weeks.
- Discuss opportunities for implicit bias or bias training for the MMMRC members.

Dr. Hollier thanked the committee for their suggestions and the staff for presentations, updates, and their work related to the MMMRC. She reminded the committee that the next meeting is scheduled for March 5, 2021.

Dr. Hollier turned the floor over to Mr. Chacon.

### **Agenda Item 11: Public Comment**

No written public comment was received.

Oral comment was received from Mr. William West who spoke on behalf of the Texas Council on Family Violence.

### **Agenda Item 12: Executive Session**

Dr. Hollier read the legislation allowing the Review Committee to move into a closed executive session at 11:23 a.m. Mr. Chacón announced to members of the public that this concluded the open meeting Live Event and the public was informed that the review committee would return later in the afternoon to open the closed session.

### **Agenda Item 13: Open Session & Adjournment**

Dr. Hollier opened the MMMRC meeting and hearing no new business, adjourned at 5:02 pm.

*To view or listen to the archived recording of the December 11, 2020 meeting please click on this link:*

[Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee \(MMMRC\) Agenda](#)