

TEXAS WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE COALITION

2023

LEGISLATIVE TOOLKIT



DECEMBER 2022

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– INTRODUCTION –

TEXAS WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE COALITION [TWHC]

TWHC MISSION

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TWHC is working toward the vision of a state where every woman has access to the preventive and preconception care that will help her stay healthy and prepare for healthy, planned pregnancies.

TWHC OBJECTIVES

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Increasing funding for women's preventive healthcare, including contraception, to fully meet the growing need among low-income uninsured women

Ensuring Texas has a robust provider network with the capacity to serve all women in need of preventive health services

Supporting innovative new healthcare policies that benefit the health of Texas' women and families.

TOOLKIT PURPOSES

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This toolkit serves as an advocacy tool resource for state legislators as they explore ways to support women's health.

– TWCH LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM –

The Texas Women’s Healthcare Coalition (TWHC) sets legislative priorities for each legislative session and actively works with members and public health partners to support strong women’s health policies for the state of Texas. TWHC has two priority areas for the 2023 session. These priorities are summarized below and are available on the TWHC website.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

1. Increase access to women’s preventive healthcare services by prioritizing funding of cost-effective, life-saving programs.

Why? Adequate funding and program consistency are essential to maintaining the women’s health network and additional funding will be necessary to reach the nearly 1.8 million uninsured women in need.^{1 2} Unpaid claims from the Family Planning Program providers (funds-gone) have accumulated to *over \$25 million* over the past 4 fiscal years, illustrating a problem that only continues to compound and put providers at risk of closing their doors.

Why? Improving health outcomes includes empowering women to plan if, and when, to become pregnant. Promoting access to all FDA approved birth control methods and medically accurate counseling for Texas women will help women plan for a future that is right for them.

¹ Texas Health and Human Services. Women’s Health Programs Saving and Performance Report Fiscal Year 2019. May 2020.

² Frost et al., “Contraceptive Needs and Services, 2014 Update,” New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2016.

³ Hamel, L., Wu, B., Brodie, M. Sim, S., & Marks, E. (2018). Views and Experiences Related to Women’s Health in Texas, Selected findings from the Kaiser Family Foundation/Episcopal Health Foundation 2018 Texas Health Policy Survey.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES CONTINUED

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2. Support innovative new healthcare policies that benefit the health of Texas' women and family.

Why? Texas' family planning programs provide vital, but very limited health services. These programs are *not a substitute* for comprehensive healthcare coverage. In Texas, three out of ten women are low income and one in five are uninsured³. Updated census data from 2019 shows that Texas remains the state with the highest number of uninsured residents with 5.2 million or 18.4% of Texans without insurance,⁴ and we know the pandemic is exasperating these rates. The numbers highlight the extent to which Texas women face challenges with inconsistent or unavailable healthcare coverage to have healthy pregnancies and babies, to manage postpartum issues, and everything in-between.

WHY SUPPORT WOMEN'S HEALTH ACCESS?

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Women's preventive care saves lives and money. Screening detects health problems early before they cause complications and become more expensive to treat. For breast and cervical cancer, early treatment means a greater likelihood of cure; for diabetes and high blood pressure, early detection and management can prevent hospital admissions.

Contraception, or birth control, is a vital part of preventive care, allowing women and couples to plan and space their pregnancies and ensuring their babies have a lower risk of prematurity and low birth weight. Women's preventive healthcare is a sound investment. Medicaid pays for 53% of the state's births; in 2015, Medicaid paid over \$402 million for newborns with prematurity and low birth weight.⁵ A healthy, full-term newborn birth costs the state about \$572, while a newborn born premature or with low birth-weight complications costs \$109,220 *Unplanned Texas births cost \$1.34 billion annually.*⁶ Every dollar spent on contraceptive care leads to savings of over \$7.⁷

⁴ Katherine Keisler-Starkey and Lisa N. Bunch U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Reports, P60-271, Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2019, U.S. Government Publishing Office, Washington, DC, 2020

⁵ Sonfield, A., & Kost, K. "Public Costs from Unintended Pregnancies and the Role of Public Insurance Programs in Paying for Pregnancy and Infant Care: Estimates for 2008." New York, NY: Guttmacher Institute, 2013. Retrieved from <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/public-costs-of-UP.pdf>.

⁶ Frost J, et al. Return on Investment: A Fuller Assessment of the Benefits and Cost Savings of the US Publicly Funded Family Planning Program. New York, Guttmacher Institute, 2014.

⁷ Frost J et al. "Contraceptive Needs and Services, 2013 Update." Guttmacher Institute. 2015.

WHAT IS CONTRACEPTION?

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Contraception allows women and couples to determine whether and when to have children. The ability to make these choices is fundamental to healthy families and communities worldwide. Family planning programs should offer a well-balanced mix of contraceptive methods, including those that are short- and long-acting, hormonal, and non-hormonal, provider-dependent and client-controlled, and natural and clinical. These methods include:

- Oral Contraceptive Pills
- Intrauterine Devices
- Injectable Contraceptives
- Barrier Methods (Condom-use)
- Hormonal Implants
- Emergency Contraception (Plan B)

These contraceptive methods are safe and suitable for nearly all women, yet medical barriers to contraception still exist. To ensure access to family planning for women and couples who wish to prevent pregnancy, health systems must employ up-to-date, evidence-based family planning guidelines.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

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By reducing unintended pregnancies and abortions, and facilitating family planning/spacing of births, effective contraception provides both health and social benefits to mothers and their children. Over 600,000 women die each year of pregnancy-related causes, and 75,000 die following unsafe abortions.⁸ Approximately 200,000 of these maternal deaths could be prevented annually if women who did not wish to become pregnant had access to and used effective contraception.⁹ In addition to preventing mortality, effective contraception improves maternal health. Effective contraception also improves the social and economic role of women and enables them to participate in society fully.^{10 11}

⁸ Grimes DA (ed): The Contraception Report. 10:1–30, 2000

⁹ Huezo CM: Current reversible contraceptive methods: A global perspective. Int J Gynecol Obstet 62 (Suppl 1): S3– S15, 1998

¹⁰ FUS Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Achievements in Public Health, 1900–1999: Family Planning. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 48:1073–1080, 1999

¹¹ Baird DT, Glasier AF: Hormonal contraception. N Engl J Med 328: 1543– 1544, 1993

– LEGISLATIVE ACTION ITEMS –

RECOMMENDED LEGISLATION

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Lawmakers can increase Texas women’s health access through targeted legislation. TWHC respectfully offers the following recommendations:

To prioritize and increase funding for Women’s health programs:

1. Request increased funding for the Family Planning Program (FPP) to allow Texas Women access to life-saving preventive care regardless of their income or employment status as the state continues to navigate the fiscal and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Support HHSC’s exceptional item request #5 for Healthy Texas Women caseload growth, mobile LARC unit, and ‘funds gone’ issues.

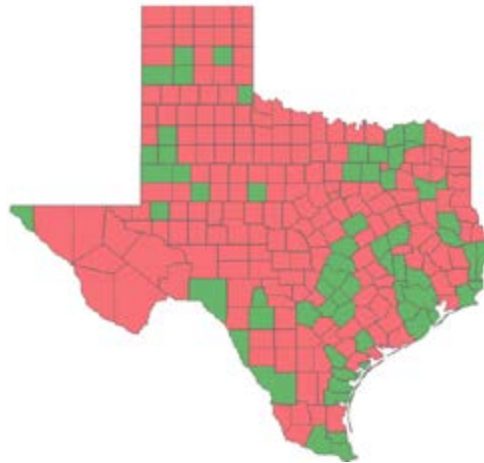
To support new healthcare policies:

1. Extend Medicaid coverage for eligible mothers from 60 days to 12 months postpartum, as recommended by the Texas Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee.
2. Ensure that women can receive a 12-month supply of birth control at a single pharmacy visit if prescribed.
3. Add FDA-approved contraceptive coverage to the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
4. Develop a workable solution for the coverage gap that will maximize federal funding and substantially increase the number of low-income women able to access a medical home where they can receive necessary preventive care and family planning services.

FAMILY PLANNING CLINICS IN TEXAS

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Of the 254 counties in Texas, 189 (74%) do not have a Family Planning Clinic. While clinics are strategically located in high population centers, there is a genuine need for additional clinics in rural, underserved counties. For example, at Haven Health in Amarillo, a large percent of patients drive *more than 100 miles* to access care.



Source: Healthy Futures analysis of HHSC data

The end of the Public Health Emergency will lead to enrollment increases in both Healthy Texas Women and the Family Planning Program

We anticipate that the PHE will wind down in April, resulting in huge churn among Medicaid programs and large-scale loss of coverage in Pregnant Women's Medicaid and Children's Medicaid.

Many of the women who are losing Medicaid coverage will be eligible for care through Healthy Texas Women. However, a large population of people losing Medicaid will not be eligible for HTW and instead will seek care through the Family Planning Program. These include the following groups:

- Men
- Women older than 45
- Women with an income between 204-250% FPL

– GET TO KNOW YOUR TWHC MEMBERSHIP –

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Texas Medical Association
- District XI (Texas) American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
- Texas Academy of Family Physicians
- Texas Association of Community Health Centers
- Methodist Healthcare Ministries
- Teaching Hospitals of Texas
- Every Body Texas
- Texans Care for Children
- Every Texan
- Chair - Healthy Futures of Texas

GENERAL MEMBERS

- Access Esperanza Clinics Inc.
- Amistad Community Health Center
- Austin Advanced Practice Nurses
- Austin Physicians for Social Responsibility
- AWHONN Texas
- Brazos Valley Community Action Agency, Inc.
- Brazos Valley Nurse Practitioner Association
- Cactus Health
- Cardea
- Center for Community Health, UNTHSC
- Centering Healthcare Institute
- Central Texas Nurse Practitioners
- Children's Hospital Association of Texas
- Circle Up United Methodist Women
- Coalition for Nurses in Advanced Practice
- Coastal Bend Advanced Practice Nurses
- Coastal Bend Wellness Foundation
- Community Healthcare Center
- Consortium of Texas Certified Nurse Midwives
- Department of Pediatrics and Women's Health, UNTHSC
- El Buen Samaritano
- El Centro de Corazón
- El Paso Area Advanced Practice Nurse Association
- Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley
- Fort Worth Region Nurse Practitioners
- Haven Health
- Hill Country Advanced Practice Nurses & Physicians Assistants Association
- Houston Area Chapter of NAPNAP
- Houston Area Nurse Practitioners
- Improving Maternal Health
- Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice Texas
- League of Women Voters of Texas
- Legacy Community Health Services
- Lone Star Family Health Center

- March of Dimes – Texas
- Mental Health America of Greater Houston
- National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women’s Health
- National Council of Jewish Women—Texas State Policy Advocacy Network
- North Harris Montgomery Advanced Practice Nurse Society
- North Texas Alliance to Reduce Teen Pregnancy
- North Texas Nurse Practitioners Nurse-Family Partnership
- Panhandle Nurse Practitioner Association
- Pasadena Health Center
- People’s Community Clinic
- Port Arthur Housing Authority
- Pregnancy and Postpartum Health Alliance of Texas
- SALVERE
- San Antonio Metropolitan Health District
- San Antonio Nurses in Advanced Practice
- Schneider Communications
- South Plains Nurse Practitioner Association
- South Texas Family Planning & Health Corp.
- Southeast Texas Nurse Practitioner Associates
- Special Health Resources
- St. David’s Foundation
- Susan Wolfe and Associates, LLC
- Texas Association of Community Health Plans
- Texas Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
- Texas Council on Family Violence
- Texas Health Institute
- Texas Hospital Association
- Texas Medical Association Alliance
- Texas Nurse Practitioners
- Texas Nurses Association
- Texas Oral Health Coalition
- Texas Pediatric Society
- Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry
- Texas Women’s Foundation
- The Contraceptive Initiative
- The SAFE Alliance
- The Women’s Fund for Health Education and Resiliency
- University Health System
- Valley AIDS Council
- Women’s & Men’s Health Services of the Coastal Bend, Inc.
- Young Invincibles



Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition

PROMOTING ACCESS TO PREVENTIVE
HEALTHCARE FOR ALL TEXAS WOMEN