

Strategies for Health

Metro Health • San Antonio's Public Health Team • Annual Report: April 2015

Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response

One expert in the late twentieth century predicted the "virtual elimination of infectious disease as a significant factor in social life." This has not happened. In fact, previously unknown diseases have emerged: HIV, SARS, MERS, avian flu and Ebola. Well known diseases have

proven resilient: tuberculosis and malaria. And seemingly vanquished diseases have returned: whooping cough and measles. Metro Health attends daily to protecting the people of San Antonio and Bexar County from these continued threats.

Ebola:

Months before Ebola appeared in Dallas, Metro Health led local first responders and health care systems to educate the community and prepare for the arrival of the disease that killed over 10,000 people in West Africa and spread to Europe and the United States. Under Metro Health leadership, response was disciplined and measured. Many Ebola contacts were carefully monitored for the full 21 days while potentially panic-inducing false alarms were deftly handled. As yet, no actual cases of Ebola have occurred in Bexar County.



Measles:

Measles infected far more people in the United States in 2014 than in any other year this century. In 2015, measles exploded, with 176 cases reported from 17 states through the second week of March.

Most of the cases are among visitors to the Disneyland amusement park in Southern California or their contacts. San Antonio has so far been spared, in part because of a high 93% vaccination rate of school age children. The Metro Health immunization program, under

the capable leadership of Kenya Wilson, doubled its activity during the latter part of 2014. Special outreach to preschool and Head Start sites helped design legislation to strengthen immunization law statewide.

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Public Health by the Numbers

43,335 – WIC participants

1,600 – Individuals participated in diabetes prevention and self-management classes

10 – Babies born with congenital syphilis

14 – Cases of Chikungunya reported in Texas

160 – Pregnant women who received



prenatal case management to prevent syphilis in their unborn babies

20 – Healthcare providers trained on the adolescent medical home model, which promotes teen-friendly health services

754 – Moms who received breastfeeding support through Baby Café



2,558 – Teen births

10,785 – Preventive dental exams and treatment for school children

0 – Cases of Ebola

0 – Cases of measles

18% – Proportion of adults with diabetes

65% – Proportion of adults who drink soda every day

Program updates:

Diabetes – Metro Health, collaborating with YMCA of Greater San Antonio, offered evidence-based diabetes education and prevention classes to over 1,600 community residents using the Stanford Diabetes Self-Management Program, Y-Living and YMCA Diabetes Prevention programs.



Teen Pregnancy Prevention – More than 2,400 teens participated in evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention classes at their schools through Project WORTH. Also, more than 250 teens received pregnancy prevention health services and another 78 teen mothers enrolled in Metro Health's Teen HOPES case management program, administered through a contract with The Children's Shelter. HOPES provides teen parenting education and encourages parents to delay subsequent births.

Stand-Up SA – Metro Health, in collaboration with the San Antonio Police Department, received a Justice Department grant to administer a violence prevention program using the Cure Violence model in San Antonio. This program is one of three federally endorsed and funded programs shown to reduce murders and shootings by 41% to 73%, and retaliatory shootings by up to 100%. The program treats violence as a disease and employs a medical model used to control the spread of diseases. Metro Health staff engages those at risk of involvement in a shooting or killing by employing outreach workers known as "Violence Interrupters" who become familiar with their assigned neighborhoods and are trained to intervene with high-risk individuals. Interrupters are challenged to build trust within their assigned neighborhoods. At times, they work with residents who may have gang-related ties to redirect them to



more positive pursuits including jobs, job training, and returning to school.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness – Metro Health initiated the Healthy Travelers Program with Aviation Emergency Management staff to decrease infection risks during air travel. The campaign included 20 hand sanitizer stations strategically placed at San Antonio International Airport, and signage and audio/video messages promoting hand-washing and cough etiquette.



Healthy Start Program – Metro Health received a five-year \$10 million initiative to reduce health disparities in infant mortality and improve birth outcomes in Bexar County. San Antonio, the only community in Texas selected to be a Level 3 Leadership and Mentoring Healthy Start Program, focuses on three areas in the West (Council District 5), South (Council District 3) and East (Council District 2) of Bexar County. We will focus on reducing infant mortality, prematurity and low birth weight through a resident-centered neighborhood approach of education, case management, and

integrated health and social service navigation for 1,000 women.

Neighborhood Health – Metro Health planned and developed San Antonio's first Health Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Wheatley Choice Neighborhood. In addition, 10 neighborhood-based community health workers began work in 10 target neighborhoods with significant health disparities as part of the 1115 Medicaid Waiver Neighborhood-Based Health Promotion and Physical Activity Project. Through this project, Metro Health engaged more than 185 residents to plan health promotion activities in their own neighborhoods, based on the community's own priorities.

Baby Café – Metro Health opened its first Baby Café breastfeeding drop-in center. Lactation consultants, dietitians and other mothers provide breastfeeding support in a friendly, non-clinical environment. We promote the physical and psychological health of mothers and children through education and training, and advance the general public's knowledge of the immediate and long-term benefits of breastfeeding.

Oral Health – Metro Health provided free limited oral health evaluations and fluoride applications to 10,785 children as well as dental sealants to children who had primary and secondary molars. Services were conducted at Edgewood, Harlandale, San Antonio, Northside, Northeast and Southwest ISDs, removing barriers for parents who may want access to care.

Message from the Director



Thomas Schlenker,
MD, MPH

2014 was a year of unprecedented growth for Metro Health.

Seven new or greatly expanded programs, funded by the Medicaid

1115 waiver, were inaugurated and millions of dollars spent on diabetes and obesity prevention, teen pregnancy prevention, improved oral health in children and to stop transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. Also during the year, the Governor's Office funded a San Antonio Police Department grant that allowed us to hire, train and deploy 12 community outreach "violence interrupters" in three high-violence neighborhoods. National foundations like Kresge, Robert Wood Johnson and de Beaumont took notice and contributed additional support to our innovative work, while the prestigious Institute of Medicine published and widely distributed "Paying for Population Health: A Texas Innovation" <http://www.iom.edu/global/perspectives/2014/texasinnovation.aspx>.

Taking advantage of new technology, we used YouTube and a Rackspace forum to discuss "Diabetes in San Antonio" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1huxkpgkac>.

Of special note are the 10, soon to be 12, targeted neighborhood-based programs to promote health and prevent violence (Stand-Up SA). The dynamic team of Judit Vega, Martha Banda, Gabriel Aguilar, Marcus Primm and Rachel Saldivar are creating a grassroots model for how to repair and rebuild San Antonio. To deal with the increasing size and complexity of the department, we were very lucky to be joined midyear by Director of Operations Paul Fenstermacher, and his talented and hard working operations staff.

The Metro Health Environmental Safety division, under the leadership of Dr. Vincent Nathan, staged another highly successful "Public Health and the Built Environment" conference at UTSA in April and completed the city's first ever "Environmental Impact Assessment" for rapidly changing East Point. And although few people knew it, the food safety section and Metro Health laboratory prevented the imminent closure of San Antonio International Airport when they responded to a Federal Aviation Administration report of an illness cluster by quickly processing samples from all airport restaurants and water sources over a weekend.

Responding to the 2014 City of San Antonio Community Survey in which 67% of respondents rated obesity as a major problem, Jennifer

Herriott and Kathy Shields of the Metro Health Division of Chronic Disease led the charge on reducing sugary beverage consumption. In the 2014 survey, obesity was rated as the second most important problem for the city to address over the next 2 years. Because it's never too early to start good nutrition, WIC manager Norma Sifuentes brought to San Antonio the hugely successful "Baby Café" where new moms learn ins and outs of breastfeeding.

Finally, experience shows us that the best way to be prepared for terrifying diseases like Ebola is to be expert in managing more common infections like tuberculosis, whooping cough, syphilis and influenza. The skills of case identification, contact investigation, isolation and quarantine, individual and mass response and timely, coherent, and scientifically accurate communication with the public are the same. Dr. Anil Mangla, director of communicable disease, Donnie Diaz, lead epidemiologist, and Roger Pollok, emergency preparedness manager, ensure that Metro Health is always prepared for the exotic by practicing these skills daily. As an example, months before Ebola struck Dallas, Metro Health set up—in collaboration with SAPD, SAFD, Southwest Regional Advisory Council (STRAC), local hospitals and first responders—the local network and protocols needed should Ebola strike here.

Tuberculosis – Metro Health moved its operations from downtown to the Texas Center for Infectious Diseases (TCID) Campus in April 2014. The relocation enhanced TB operations for Bexar County and the region with closer collaboration between the Heartland National TB Training Center and TCID. In addition, Metro Health received 1115 Medicaid Waiver funding through the

Texas Department of State Health Services to identify and treat latent TB in high-risk populations.

Our Built Environment – More than 250 people attended the second annual Public Health and the Built Environment Conference. The one-day event convened local policy makers,

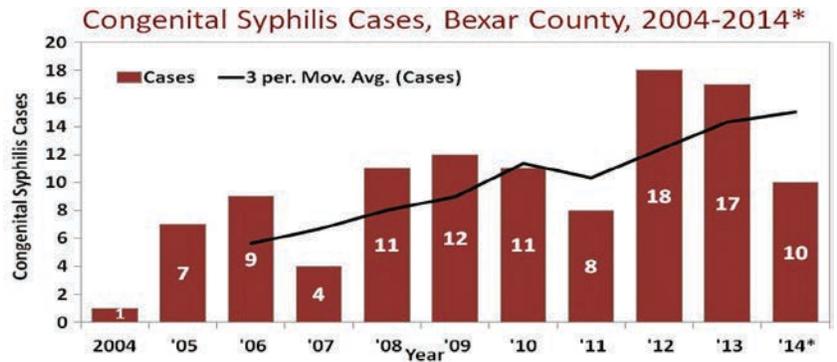
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Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response (cont.)

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Syphilis:

After many years of increase, adult syphilis infections in 2014 declined by 15%, while congenital syphilis went down to 10 cases, from 17 the prior year. During 2014, the Metro Health sexually transmitted disease (STD) clinic relocated to the East Side of the city. Leadership was upgraded with the addition of Dr. Junda Woo, obstetrician-gynecologist, as Medical Director and Sian Hill as STD Program Manager. We are increasing our community outreach to include field testing and treatment of syphilis. This will be aided by the arrival in the next few months of a fully equipped mobile clinic that will allow us to work days, evenings and weekends at locations of highest risk. We also will offer prophylactic syphilis treatment to high-risk patients who test negative but may be at an undetectable early stage.



Source: Local and central STD*MIS data * Preliminary data for 2014

Chikungunya and Chagas:

Chikungunya is a mosquito-borne "tropical" disease, introduced through the Caribbean islands and rapidly spread to coastal states including Texas. Four separate cases were reported in Bexar County but, as yet, there has been no local spread. Chagas disease, spread by the triatomine "kissing" bug that causes congestive heart failure, is highly

prevalent in Latin America and is now well established locally among insects and dogs, although human cases are still rare. Metro Health is in discussion with the University of Texas School of Public Health and Lackland Airforce Base on how to monitor and investigate this potential problem. The small Metro Health vector control unit remains essential to this effort.

Program updates (cont.)

elected officials, architects, planners, students and health professionals to delve into the latest information about the impact of the built environment on public health and physical activity.

WIC – Our WIC program maintained an average of 43,335 participants a month. In addition, through its hospital-grade breast pump loan program, WIC supplied multi-user electric breast pumps to over 400 mothers of premature or high-risk infants.

WIC also supplied electric or manual pumps to 900 breastfeeding women who are working or attending school and continue to breastfeed without formula supplementation.

Food & Environmental – Metro Health's Food and Environmental Division conducted over 5,000 food inspections during the extended 2014 Fiesta festivities. The group also moved to a newly renovated portion of the Claude Black Community Center, with ample space to conduct inspections.



Leadership

Thomas L. Schlenker, MD, MPH
Director Of Public Health
(210) 207-8731

C. Junda Woo, MD, MPH
Medical Director
(210) 207-8896

Theresa Medina, Executive Assistant (210) 207-2156

Vincent Nathan, PhD, MPH
Assistant Director Environmental Health
(210) 207-8757

Anil Mangla, MS, PhD, MPH, FRIPH
Assistant Director Communicable Diseases
(210) 207-8805

Jennifer Herriott, MPH
Assistant Director Community Health
(210) 207-3117

Paul Fenstermacher, MBA, MIS, PMP
Assistant to the Director for Operations
(210) 207-5538

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San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (Metro Health)

332 W. Commerce, San Antonio, TX 78205

(210) 207-8780 • www.sanantonio.gov/health