

# PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS UPDATE


**November 2018**

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 Ganesh Shivaramaiyer, Interim Director

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## Flu Updates and Lessons Learned from 2017 Hurricane Season at PHAC

During the last Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC) meeting, DCHHS delivered updates on Influenza in Dallas County and the 2017 Hurricane Season. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention the 2017-18 flu season was associated with more than 48.8 million illnesses (more than the combined populations of Texas and Florida), more than 22.7 million medical visits, 959,000 hospitalizations and almost 80,000 deaths across the US. During the 2017-18 flu season Dallas County reported almost 2,956 influenza hospitalizations, 563 ICU admissions, 4 pediatric and 79 adult deaths. "Influenza activity peaked during January and February," said Dr. Wendy Chung, Chief Epidemiologist Acute Communicable Disease Epidemiology Division. She also stated that getting a flu shot by October is ideal.

The last topic of discussion covered during the meeting was the lessons learned after Hurricane Harvey. The 2017 hurricane season was one for the history books. With record breaking damage, catastrophic winds and flooding, displaced residents, Hurricane Harvey was one hurricane that Texas will never forget. Hurricane Harvey landed in south Texas but Dallas County felt the ripple effects of it. With six shelters that opened in Dallas County for displaced residents from south Texas, operations were not always seamless. DCHHS' Public Health Manager, Renee Owusu-Ansah discussed the lessons learned after Hurricane Harvey. From sustaining volunteers to health information management, DCHHS is working to enhance these processes and best practices. "Dallas County is working with our local and regional partners to re-evaluate our plans," said Renee Owusu-Ansah. "It is our goal to improve our system for medical volunteers during times of disasters."



From left to right - Assistant Director Rudy Phillips; Interim Assistant Director Masooma Hyder; Dallas County Commissioner John Wiley Price



Chief Epidemiologist of Acute Communicable Disease Epidemiology Division, Dr. Wendy Chung presents at PHAC meeting

## DCHHS Provides Free Flu Shots and STI Screenings at Binational Health Week

DCHHS participated again in the annual Binational Health Week (BHW), hosted by the Mexican Consular Network. BHW is one of the largest mobilization efforts of federal and state government agencies, community-



based organizations and volunteers in the Americas to improve the health and wellbeing of the underserved Latino population living in the United States. It encompasses an annual weeklong series of health-promotion and health-education activities, such as medical screenings and flu vaccines, workshops, insurance referrals and educational activities. Binational Health Week Coordinator, Edgar Carmona stated, "The Binational Health fair fosters community solidarity where local non-profit organizations and community health providers come together to touch the lives of thousands of families in North Texas." He continued to say, "The support is truly inspiring and attests to the positive impact it has with uninsured and underinsured families in our region." The services offered during last year's BHW program in North Texas benefitted 6,216 people.

## DCHHS participates in BAPS Charities Health Fair 2018

DCHHS participated in the BAPS event and offered free flu shots for adults and seniors.

With a focus on preventative care, BAPS Charities organizes Health Fairs throughout North America at over 54 centers as part of its global health and wellness initiatives. Dallas County Commissioner Dr. Elba Garcia issued a resolution honoring BAPS Charities work in the community. The resolution encompassed the vision of BAPS Charities in that every individual deserves the right to a peaceful, dignified and healthy way of life. BAPS Charities organized a health fair in Dallas in the month of October. All members of the community are welcome

to participate in this grand event. The health fair offers health screenings for diabetes, cholesterol, anemia, body fat, vision screening, dental issues and more.



From left to right: Blanca Torres from the office of Commissioner Dr. Elba Garcia's office; Dr. Christopher Perkins, Health Authority Medical Director



From L to R: Sr. Priest Bharat Dave, BAPS Dallas; Paresh Patel; Maidiki Patel; Sonal Patel; Jagdish Patel

Second Row From L to R: County Commissioner Dr. Theresa Daniel; Commissioner Mike Cantrell; Judge Clay Jenkins; Commissioner John Wiley Price; Commissioner Dr. Elba Garcia



## Al Dia Dallas Covers NHANES Efforts in Dallas County

As the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) is underway, Al Dia reporter Javier Giribet-



Vargas interviewed Interim Director Ganesh Shivaramaier about the study. "We want to support this project because it is aligned with our mission" Interim Director Shivaramaier said. "Without an understanding of the state of health of the nation, it is not possible to forge a strategy to improve the health of the population." The NHANES project is a program of studies designed to assess the health and nutritional status of adults and children in the United States. The survey is unique, it combines interviews and physical

Al Dia Dallas reporter, Javier Giribet-Vargas interviews Interim Director Ganesh Shivaramaier

examinations. "By visiting the communities in the country to obtain health information, NHANES is like a medical examination of the country," said Charles J. Rothwell, Director of the National Center for Health Statistics. "The survey is a unique resource for obtaining health information and without NHANES we would not have important knowledge about the main health problems." The NHANES project in Dallas County runs from October 15th through December 18th. To read the article please visit: <http://www.aldiadallas.com/2018/10/11/eligen-a-dallas-para-examenes-medicos-en-el-que-se-pagara-a-los-pacientes/>

## Dallas County Elections Registers People for Mid-Term Elections

With the mid-term elections quickly approaching, the Dallas County Elections Department has been working tirelessly to register people to vote before the October 9, 2018 deadline. September was Voter Registration Awareness Month. Voter registration initiatives took place throughout the community with over 4,000 newly registered voters just in the month of September! "It is important to vote in order to take part in the decisions that your community



has to make", said Voter Registration Coordinator Esmeralda Garcia. "Voting does not affect you immediately but it affects the future of our families and children. If you want to make a change for the future vote now." As of November, Dallas County has

over 1.3 million registered voters. The Dallas County Elections Department would like to extend a sincere appreciation to all of their volunteers and community members who participated in the voter registration events. Without the Volunteer Deputy Registrars many people would not be registered. For more information about voter registration visit <https://www.dallascountyvotes.org/voter-information/voter-registration-department/>



## National Weatherization Day

Each year, communities across the country mark October 30th as National Weatherization Day. Weatherization Day is an opportunity to highlight the impact of the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) which saves energy, improves the health and safety of homes, and supports jobs and small businesses. DCHHS WAP conducted outreach and education about their program to the community on this day. “A key significance of the WAP has been its consistency in helping our clients save money

on their home energy costs. Statistically, WAP clients have saved an average of \$283 annually through the program. These savings help to put money back into the pockets of our clients for other important needs such as food and medicine.” said Daniel Araiza, Program Monitor for WAP. The Weatherization staff provided information about energy conservation and the program. Contact information was collected from individuals who were interested in the Weatherization Assistance Program.



*Weatherization Team from L to R: Paul Cronquist, Yancey Turner; Mario Garcia; Sean Gray; Sammy Alcorta; Austin Guthrie; Bianca DiMurro; Valsala Gopinadhan; Byron Jones; Nathan Carroll; Daniel Araiza; Masooma Hyder*

## DCHHS Recognized by DPD for Community Health Efforts

On October 6th, DCHHS was recognized by the Dallas Police Department (DPD) Office of Community Affairs for their countless hours of service and dedication to the community. “Our partnership with Dallas County Health & Human Services has been pivotal in helping us reach many of the residents we both serve each day. Whether at one of our “Chief on the Beat” Health & Safety Fairs, offering flu immunizations at Back to School events, or at our annual Asian Safety & Health Fair, the partnership with DCHHS allows us to bring much needed resources and information to the members of our community”, said Joli Robinson, DPD Community Affairs Manager. “The Dallas Police Department values the work of DCHHS and is appreciative of the relationship we’ve built over many

years to reach our residents.” Utilizing the collective community approach to policing, the Office of Community Affairs partners with multiple stakeholders throughout the city. These stakeholders include non-profit and corporate partners, members of various social and faith based communities as well as other parts of the criminal justice system. With these events they bring together many different units of the Dallas Police Department and various citizen groups in unique engagement opportunities. “We have an outstanding relationship with the Dallas Police Department. The synergy between DCHHS and DPD has allowed us to serve the community on a greater scale.” said Public Health Educator Marisa Gonzales. The Department’s “Chief on the Beat” events have been extremely successful in

providing services, education, entertainment, and food to thousands of attendees and are free of charge.



*From left to right - DCHHS Public Health Educator Marisa Gonzales; DPD Community Affairs Manager Joli Robinson*

## DCHHS Participates in Fall Policy Summit

Dr. Modesta Onyia attended this year’s African American Leadership Institute Fall Summit.

The African American Leadership Institute Fall Summit, in its third year, is a collaboration of several elected officials who strive to establish a new standard of African American Leadership in research, public policy, business and education. Dr.



*(L to R): Marsha Jones, The Afya Center; Toni Rose, State Representative; Dr. Modesta Onyia, STD Nurse Supervisor; Deneen Robinson, The Afya Center*

Onyia participated on the panel titled, “The State of Black Women’s health in Texas: Dallas Edition”. Texas House of Representatives District 110, Toni Rose was the Panel Moderator. The topic of discussions included: What is the state of Black women’s health and what should Black women be advocating ensuring they are getting the best healthcare possible.

## DCHHS Honors Employees at Service Pin Award Ceremony

On October 19, 2018, DCHHS employees were recognized for their years of service. Congratulations to the DCHHS employees who achieved their milestone tenure.



*(Continued on page 4)*



## DCHHS announces new Performance Improvement Manager

Dallas County Health and Human Services is pleased to announce that La Shonda Worthey has recently accepted the position as Performance Improvement Manager for DCHHS. Ms. Worthey has a Bachelor's of Science degree in Community Health and Education with more than 22 years of service with Dallas County and 5 years as a Public Health Advisor with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Ms. Worthey has an extensive background in public health, training, management, health education/ community outreach and quality improvement. She has worked in the capacity of Public Health Educator/Accreditation Coordinator, serves

on various committees such as Dallas Healthy Start, Community Health Needs Assessment Workgroup, BaylorScott & White Health and Wellness as well as District 3 Public Health Advisory Council.

Ms. Worthey's primary efforts will focus working with Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) to ensure that DCHHS's PHAB accreditation remains in good standing. In addition, Ms. Worthey will dedicate her time working with Dallas County staff, community partners and stakeholders to provide services that lead to better healthcare outcomes and implementing improvements within the

organization's processes and practices. Please join us in congratulating Ms. Worthey.



## Pin Award Ceremony *(Continued from page 3)*



**DCHHS**  
Safe families, healthy lives.

Dallas County Health and Human Services



Public Health Preparedness Division

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