

# PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS UPDATE


**February 2019**

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 Philip Huang, MD, MPH, Director

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## DCHHS Welcomes New Director

Dallas County Health and Human Services is pleased to announce Dr. Philip Huang as Director. Dr. Huang served as the Medical Director/Health Authority for Austin Public Health from April 2008 to February 2019. Prior to this appointment in 2008, Dr. Huang worked for the Center for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta and the Texas Department of State Health Services in Austin. During his tenure with Austin Public Health, Dr. Huang was responsible for the Disease Prevention/Health Promotion Division, which included Epidemiology, Disease Surveillance, Vital Records, Chronic Disease, Communicable Disease, and Immunizations.

He formerly served as Medical Director for Chronic Disease Prevention at the Texas Department of State Health Services and Chief of the Bureau of Chronic Disease and Tobacco Prevention at the former Texas Department of Health (TDH) for more than 15 years where his responsibilities included oversight of state activities related to cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, Alzheimer's disease, asthma, and tobacco use prevention.

Dr. Huang received his undergraduate degree in Civil Engineering from Rice University, his MD from the

University of Texas Southwestern Medical School, and his Master's in Public Health from Harvard with a concentration in Health Policy and Management. While at Harvard, Dr. Huang led the successful movement to have Harvard divest of its tobacco stocks. Dr. Huang completed his residency

training in Family Medicine at Brackenridge Hospital in Austin, and he was Chief Resident during his final year. He served two years as an Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) officer with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention assigned to the Illinois Department of Public Health where he conducted infectious disease outbreak investigations and epidemiologic studies in chronic disease. He is an author or co-author of numerous publications related to public health, chronic disease, and tobacco use prevention. Dr. Huang is Board Certified in Family Medicine.

Dr. Philip Huang visited DCHHS to meet staff members and to discuss his role and vision for DCHHS. "I see an opportunity to really make a difference in the community in improving public health", said Dr. Huang. "You have a passion for making a difference and I look forward to the opportunity to work with all of you". DCHHS is looking forward to working with Dr. Huang.



*Dr. Philip Huang, Director of DCHHS*



*Dr. Philip Huang speaks to DCHHS leadership*

## RyanWhite Grants Special Committee Accomplishments and Flu Vaccination Mobile Clinics Presented at PHAC

The first PHAC meeting of 2019 Sonya Hughes, Assistant Director Ryan White Grants, shared with the committee the Ryan White achievements, challenges, responses and current status of the program. A special committee was formed in July 2018 by Judge Clay Jenkins to address deficiencies noted in the Health Resources and Services Administrations (HRSA) Site Visit Report, Part A and Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) program review. The purpose of the committee was to accomplish the following goals: 1. restructure/reorganize the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Grant Management Division, 2. Overhaul Grants Management processes to ensure efficiency and effectiveness and 3. Create a framework for the resolution of the findings. This special committee is assigned to help Dallas County to resolve the findings by the grantors, HRSA and DSHS. "This program has been remodeled and is unmatched. This program is above lives", said County Commissioner John Wiley Price. "Because of you, these lives have been impacted. This is a better community

and a more appreciative community because of you".

The 2017-2018 flu season was one of the worst flu seasons in Dallas County since 2009. Dr. Julie Martellini, Epidemiology Program Planner, presented to the committee her poster which was presented at the National

was a call to action. An Influenza Task Force was created which consisted of Dallas County HHS, Commissioners, Administration, Hospital District, Medical Society and other community partners. The task force action plan was to simplify messaging, disseminating messaging and mobilizing of flu vaccines (a pilot project). With the help of community partners, DCHHS hosted 28 free adult flu vaccination clinics which targeted zip codes with low immunization rates. With the initiation of the mobile clinics, DCHHS observed a significant increase in accessibility to care, by providing free adult-flu vaccinations to under/uninsured individuals in neighborhoods exhibiting high flu activity. Through this pilot project, adult-flu vaccinations provided by DCHHS were increased by 17% in one-third of the flu season! "Making access to vaccinations as convenient as possible for our high risk populations will assist in saving lives", said Dr. Martellini. She continued to say, "as well as improve the overall protection rates within communities that are historically plagued by low socioeconomic status and the resulting decrease in health and well-being."



Commissioner John Wiley Price addresses PHAC



Assistant Director, Ryan White Grants Compliance-Sonya Hughes presents at PHAC



Epidemiology Planner, Dr. Julie Martellini presents at PHAC



## Dallas County Housing Agency Opens Voucher Program



The Dallas County Housing Agency announces the opening of its Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly known as Section 8) waitlist for individuals and families to apply for tenant-based housing assistance.

Pre-applications will be accepted on-line only at [www.waitlistcheck.com/TX1027](http://www.waitlistcheck.com/TX1027) from Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 12:00 P.M. CST through Friday, March 8, 2019 at 11:59 P.M. CST. Applications will be received by DCHHSHA electronically (on-line) only, during this time and accepted for screening and eligibility. You must submit the pre-application before the application period closes.

Anyone who does not have access to a computer is advised

to visit their local library, community center, college campus or anywhere computers or devices with internet access are available. Individuals who have a disability and require assistance to complete the online pre-application, may visit the office at 2377 N. Stemmons Freeway, Ste. 700, LB-16, Dallas, TX 75207 during these timeframes: Thursday, March 7, 2019 from 12 PM to 5 PM or Friday, March 8, 2019 from 8 AM to 5 PM. Staff will be on site to assist upon request. Applicants will be contacted at a later date to determine eligibility and are placed on the waiting list based on the date and time of receipt of a completed application in accordance with the DCHHSHA Administrative Plan. Contact the Dallas County Housing Agency Office at 214-819-1871 for more information.

## DCHHS Recognizes National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

In recognition of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD) Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) offered free and confidential HIV/STD testing to Dallas County residents at Paul Quinn College. This year's NBHAAD theme, "Together for Love: Stop HIV Stigma". It raises awareness that we all have a role to play in stopping HIV stigma. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 1 in 2 people with HIV have had the virus at least 3 years before

diagnosis and about 40% of new HIV infections come from people who don't know they have HIV. "Let's empower our community to seek HIV testing, prevention, and treatment options", said Interim Director Ganesh Shivaramaiyer. "Let's stop HIV stigma, together."



L-R Shelley Cabrera - STD Manager, Nurse Davis - Paul Quinn College; Lawrence Jones - STD Program, Ganesh Shivaramaiyer - Interim Director

## Flu Vaccination Mobilization Efforts Continue

As flu season peaks in Dallas County, flu vaccination mobilization efforts continue. So far a total of 10 flu-related deaths have been reported in Dallas County, including a child. Utilizing community partners such as homeless shelters, the Mexican Consulate, South Garland Library and Fair Park have all been sites where free mobile flu vaccine clinics have been offered. "We're proud of our partnership with Dallas County Health and Human Services", said Francisco De La Torre, Consulate General of Mexico Dallas. "People trust the Mexican Consulate and it allows us to offer the community this great service."



Mobile Immunization Team with Commissioner Theresa Daniel at Garland South Branch Library

## Cold Weather Warning

The Texas Automobile Burglary and Theft Prevention Authority and the Dallas County North Texas Auto Theft Task Force are reminding motorists to avoid leaving their running vehicles unattended.

As the temperatures around the state drop, many motorists may leave their vehicles unattended as they try to warm-up the car. This provides an opportunity for thieves to steal vehicles. Many law enforcement agencies have referred to the phenomena as “Puffing.”

The term puffing deals with the time of year it is done. Almost no one bothers to start their car before getting into it during our hot Texas summers. But that changes during the winter when the urge to warm your car up before you get into it is tempting. In the cold air, your tail pipe “puffs” as it releases exhaust, which is where the term comes from. It may sound funny, but it’s serious business.

Puffing is serious for two reasons; 1. The environment: If your engine is left running for 10-15 minutes, there

a lot of emissions released into the air and a significant amount of gas is wasted. 2. Crime: If you are inside while your car engine is running outside, you’ve done a lot of work for the local car thief. How serious is this? Authorities in Amarillo reported 939 stolen automobiles in 2018: 819 of those cars had the keys in the vehicle and or the car was left running. Auto theft could have been reduced by 87% if everyone had taken their keys out of the vehicle or not left their vehicles “puffing.”

Leaving a vehicle unattended in some circumstances can be a ticketable offense. In Texas, the offense is a Class C misdemeanor.



## Laboratory Director’s Merit Award

The Laboratory Director’s Merit Award was developed to recognize employees who embody a culture of excellence in their laboratory service. Mrs. Sandra Battles was awarded this honor for her excellent administrative and organizational skills. She is exemplary of the leadership that continues to make the Dallas County Laboratory a vital pillar in the public health infrastructure of Texas.



*Sandra Battles - Laboratory Administrative Assistant*



**DCHHS**  
Safe families, healthy lives  
Dallas County Health and Human Services



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