

**Texas women's health programs provide access to essential services, including:**

- Annual well-woman exams
- Pap tests
- Breast cancer screening
- Screenings/treatment for sexually transmitted infections
- Diabetes screenings
- High blood pressure screenings
- Cholesterol screenings
- Contraceptive methods
- Diagnostic services for abnormal breast or cervical cancer test results
- Health education and counseling

**Why are these services important?**

These essential services are important because they save the state money and:

- Ensure newborns are healthy;
- Reduce the number of births paid for by Medicaid;
- Detect diseases early, when complications can be prevented.

Women's preventive services and contraception help women avoid unplanned pregnancies, which can lead to higher risks of prematurity and low birth weight, educational and economic disadvantage, and poor child mental and physical health.



Women's Healthcare  
COALITION

**Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition**

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**Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition Steering Committee Members**

- Texas Medical Association
- District XI (Texas) American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
- Texas Academy of Family Physicians
- Texas Association of Community Health Centers
- Methodist Healthcare Ministries
- Teaching Hospitals of Texas
- Women's Health and Family Planning Association of Texas
- Texans Care for Children
- Center for Public Policy Priorities
- 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 Nurse Practitioner Association
- Cardea
- Center for Community Health, UNTHSC
- Central Texas Nurse Practitioners
- Children's Hospital Association of Texas
- Coalition for Nurses in Advanced Practice
- Coastal Bend Advanced Practice Nurses
- Coastal Bend Wellness Foundation
- Consortium of Texas Certified Nurse Midwives
- Department of Ob/Gyn of UNTHSC and the ForHER Institute
- El Paso Area Advanced Practice Nurse Association
- Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley
- Fort Worth Region Nurse Practitioners Gateway to Care
- Good Neighbor Health Center
- Hill Country Advanced Practice Nurses & Physicians Assistants Association
- Houston Area Chapter of NAPNAP
- Houston Area Nurse Practitioners
- League of Women Voters of Texas
- Legacy Community Health Services
- March of Dimes - Texas
- Mental Health America of Greater Houston
- National Council of Jewish Women – Texas State Policy Advocacy Network
- National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
- North Harris Montgomery Advanced Practice Nurse Society
- North Texas Alliance to Reduce Teen Pregnancy
- North Texas Nurse Practitioners
- Panhandle Nurse Practitioner Association
- People's Community Clinic
- Port Arthur Housing Authority
- SALVERE (Striving to Achieve Literacy via Education, Research, and Engagement)
- 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
- St. David's Foundation
- Texas Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
- Texas Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
- Texas Council on Family Violence
- Texas Health Institute
- Texas Hospital Association
- Texas Medical Association Alliance
- Texas Nurse Practitioners
- Texas Nurses Association
- Texas Pediatric Society
- Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry
- The Contraceptive Initiative
- University Health System
- Women's & Men's Health Services of the Coastal Bend, Inc



**Texas Women Need Preventive Healthcare**

**The Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition** is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of Texas women, babies, and families by ensuring access to preventive healthcare – including contraception – for all Texas women.

TWHC brings together healthcare, faith, and community-based organizations committed to increasing access to women's healthcare.

**The TWHC Legislative Agenda**

- 1 Ensure funding for women's preventive healthcare, including contraception, meets the needs of Texas women**
- 2 Increase provider capacity**
- 3 Ensure women have access to effective contraception**
- 4 Increase continuity of care for women**
- 5 Maximize taxpayer savings**



Women's Healthcare  
COALITION

# The Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition Legislative Agenda

## 1 Ensure funding for women's preventive healthcare, including contraception, can fully meet the growing need among low-income, uninsured women.

**WHY:** Roughly 1.8 million Texas women are in need of publicly funded preventive services, yet less than a quarter of these women currently receive the services they need.<sup>1</sup> Access to preventive and preconception care – including health screenings and contraception – means healthy, planned pregnancies and early detection of cancers and other treatable conditions.

### HOW:

- Provide funding to serve, at a minimum, as many women with family planning care as were served in State Fiscal Year 2010, taking into account population growth.
- Ensure the distribution of funding between the state's women's health programs matches the need for services within each program.

## 2 Identify areas with a shortage of qualified family planning providers and develop strategies to increase provider participation in the state's women's health programs.

**WHY:** Texas needs more providers to deliver preventive care to women, especially in rural areas. The launch of the state's new women's health programs – Healthy Texas Women and the Family Planning Program – represents an opportunity to strengthen provider engagement throughout the state.

### HOW:

- Identify areas of greatest need by collecting and analyzing data that provides an accurate picture of unduplicated provider capacity in the state.
- Increase provider outreach and eliminate barriers to provider enrollment.
- Increase provider capacity, particularly in rural and underserved areas.
- Increase payment rates for providers.

## 3 Ensure women have access to the full range of FDA-approved contraceptives of their choice, including the most effective forms of contraception – implants and intrauterine devices (IUDs).

**WHY:** Ensuring women have access to the most effective form of contraception that works for them is key to enabling women to plan and space their pregnancies. All FDA-approved birth control methods should be accessible, including implants and IUDs, which are twenty times more effective than other methods and considered a first-line choice for women by medical organizations.<sup>2</sup>

### HOW:

- Increase access to long-acting reversible contraceptives (implants and IUDs).
- Regularly adjust payments and ensure adequate reimbursement for long-acting reversible contraceptives.
- Ensure adequate provider training that aligns with Quality Family Planning (QFP) best practices recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## 4 Increase continuity of care for women by eliminating barriers to preventive healthcare access.

**WHY:** When women experience gaps in their healthcare coverage, it increases their risk for negative health outcomes and unintended pregnancy. Enabling eligible women to access and maintain continuous healthcare coverage improves health outcomes and reduces costs to the state.

### HOW:

- Address the technological glitch that prevents eligible clients who are enrolled in CHIP from receiving services through the Healthy Texas Women program.
- Address the technological glitch that prevents eligible clients who have private insurance with high deductibles and/or copays from receiving services through the Healthy Texas Women program.
- Ensure that women receive effective referral services into women's healthcare programs.

- Enable women in the state to receive a 12-month supply of birth control at a single pharmacy visit, if prescribed.
- Automatically enroll eligible 19-year-olds into the Healthy Texas Women program when their CHIP or Children's Medicaid certification period ends.

## 5 Maximize the ability of the women's healthcare safety net to reach more women and save Texas taxpayer dollars.

**WHY:** 74% of the state's unplanned births are publicly funded, and the most recent research shows that unintended pregnancies in Texas cost taxpayers \$2.9 billion (\$842.6 million of it paid for by the state).<sup>3</sup> For every dollar invested in contraception, taxpayers see a return of \$7.09.<sup>4</sup>

### HOW:

- Ensure adequate funding for the women's healthcare safety net to save Texas taxpayer money.
- Increase health insurance coverage in a way that will maximize federal funding and substantially increase the number of women able to access a medical home where they can receive critical preventive care and family planning services.

<sup>1</sup> Frost et al., "Contraceptive Needs and Services, 2014 Update," New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, "Increasing Access to Contraceptive Implants and Intrauterine Devices to Reduce Unintended Pregnancy," Committee Opinion No. 642, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Sonfield & Kost, "Public Costs from Unintended Pregnancies and the Role of Public Insurance Programs in Paying for Pregnancy-Related Care: National and State Estimates for 2010," New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Frost et al., "Return on Investment: A Fuller Assessment of the Benefits and Cost Savings of the US Publicly Funded Family Planning Program," *The Milbank Quarterly*, Vol. 92.4, 2014.