



T E X A S
Women's Healthcare
COALITION

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Health and Human Services Commission Report Shows Sharp Decrease in Women Served by Texas Women's Health Program: 2011 – 2013

The number of women served by the state-funded Texas Women's Health Program dropped precipitously between fiscal years (FY) 2011 and 2013, according to a recently released [report](#) from the state Health and Human Services Commission. The report shows that nearly 26 percent fewer women received services – including cancer screenings, preventive care, and contraception – through the program in FY 2013 than did in FY 2011.

Decreases in the number of women served were particularly significant in West Texas (64 percent), the High Plains (53 percent), and Central Texas (42 percent). The number of payment claims for contraceptives dropped by more than half, from 191,159 in FY 2011 to FY 88,281 in 2013.

The report also calculates substantial fiscal savings from the program, even with the reduced number of women served in FY 2013. By preventing an estimated 8,359 unplanned births in FY 2014, the 2013 program saved \$93.6 million in Medicaid costs, with a net state savings of \$6.42 million.

“This report demonstrates the devastating effects on Texas' women's health safety net of both the 2011 Family Planning budget cuts and the 2013 transition to state funding,” said Dr. Janet Realini, Chair of the Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition. “Nearly all areas of the state saw dramatic reductions in service, and the provision of contraception was hit especially hard.

“Our coalition is alarmed by the loss of contraceptive services because unplanned pregnancy too often means derailed education; babies born prematurely or with low birth weight; single-parent families; and difficulty escaping poverty,” continued Dr. Realini. “Unplanned births also have important costs to taxpayers to the tune of \$1.3 billion each year.

“Fortunately, the 83rd Legislature in 2013 made significant investments in women's healthcare, essentially restoring the funding that had been cut in 2011. The Texas Women's Healthcare

Coalition is grateful for the impressive leadership of Senator Jane Nelson and Representatives Donna Howard and Sarah Davis, as well as others. This funding has the potential to reverse the disturbing declines highlighted by the new report.”

However, the Texas Women’s Healthcare Coalition [estimates](#) that, even with restored funding levels, only three in ten of the over 1.3 million Texas women in need of publicly subsidized contraception can be served.ⁱ

In the current Texas Legislative Session, there are increases for women’s preventive healthcare in the Senate’s [budget draft](#) and in [that of the House](#).

“To reach all Texas women in need of services, to reduce unplanned pregnancies to the lowest possible level, and to maximize the health of Texan women, babies, and families, the state must increase funding for preventive care and birth control for low-income and uninsured Texas women,” said Dr. Realini. “Whether your concern is the human cost, the tax cost, or both, more access to preventive care makes sense.”

For more information, contact Anna Chatillon, Policy Coordinator: AChatillon@TexasWHC.org.

The Texas Women’s Healthcare Coalition is a coalition of 60 organizations dedicated to achieving access to preventive healthcare for all Texas women.

ⁱ Number of women served in 2014 (per FY16-17 DSHS and HHSC Legislative Appropriation Requests), plus clients served by federally funded Title X June 2013 through May 2014, divided by number of women in need (per Frost et al).