

Texas Health Care Policy Council
Teacher Retirement System of Texas, 5th Floor Boardroom
1000 Red River Street, Austin, Texas 78701

WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE
THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2006
9:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Rick Danko, Alexia Green, Larry Jones, Maureen Milligan, John Monk, Ken Shine, Stacey Silverman, Theresa Cruz and Larry Phillips

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Tony Gilman, Executive Officer of the Texas Health Care Policy Council, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

Mr. Gilman welcomed all members and asked that each member introduce themselves and the agencies that they represent.

REPORTS, UPDATES AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS

Consideration of Chair and Vice Chair of the Texas Health Workforce Planning Partnership Subcommittee (Action)

Mr. Gilman then moved on to the first item of business which is the nomination of Chair for the Subcommittee. Larry Jones nominated Stacey Silverman for this position and she accepted. There were no other nominations. Mr. Gilman took a roll call vote which was unanimous in its' acceptance of Ms. Silverman as the Chair.

Ayes: Theresa Cruz, Rick Danko, Larry Jones, Maureen Milligan, John Monk, Larry Phillips, and Ken Shine (7)

Nayes: None (0)

Present, Not Voting: Stacy Silverman (1)

Absent: Alexia Green (1)

Mr. Gilman called for nominations for the Vice-Chair. Mr. Jones nominated Alexia Green. Alexia Green accepted in absentia via pre-meeting verbal confirmation with

Executive Officer Tony Gilman. There was a unanimous acceptance of Dean Green's Vice Chair position.

Ayes: Theresa Cruz, Rick Danko, Larry Jones, Maureen Milligan, John Monk, Larry Phillips, Stacey Silverman, and Ken Shine (8)

Nayes: None (0)

Present, Not Voting: None (0)

Absent: Alexia Green (1)

Mr. Gilman turned the meeting over to the Chair Silverman.

Briefing on HB 916, 79th Legislature and Workforce Charges (Briefing)

Mr. Gilman informed members about the provisions of House Bill 916. Mr. Gilman advised the Subcommittee members that Section 113.003 of House Bill 916 specifies that the Texas Health Workforce Planning Partnership is a standing subcommittee of the Texas Health Care Policy Council. The legislation charges the Subcommittee with: (1) monitoring the healthcare workforce needs of the state; (2) undertaking and implementing appropriate healthcare workforce planning activities; and (3) researching and identifying ways to increase funding for healthcare workforce, including obtaining money from federal, state, private, or public sources.

Presentation on the State Health Coordinating Council

Chair Silverman invited Dr. Ben Raimer, Chair of the State Health Coordinating Council (SHCC), to present to the subcommittee. Dr. Raimer provided the Subcommittee with an overview of the SHCC, including its composition and charge. He also described the challenges the state must address as it prepares a plan to address health workforce issues. He reviewed the key findings of the 1999 – 2004 Texas State Health Plan and highlighted factors impacting workforce supply and demand. He also provided information on Health Profession Shortage Areas and overall health profession trends. Dr. Raimer then turned the presentation over to Dr. David Valdez who serves as Second Vice Chair of the SHCC. Dr. Valdez summarized the key findings of the 2005 – 2010 State Health Plan, including general, nurse, and primary care workforce recommendations. Dr. Valdez also discussed provider data and general characteristics of health professionals in Texas.

Dr. Raimer indicated that the SHCC will be updating the State Health Plan and will be focusing on technology in the health workforce. He outlined several policy recommendations to address the physician workforce shortage, as well as other actions the state must take to address the increased needs of the health professions workforce.

Theresa Cruz discussed the Texas Health Services Corps Program for rural Texas and noted that it is underfunded. She also raised that workforce challenges facing rural Texas and indicated that those issues should also be reviewed.

Vice Chair Green inquired about how many nursing programs received special item funding. She also discussed increasing the number of Federal Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) Look-Alikes.

Dr. Shine brought up the Code Red Report released by the Task Force on Access to Health Care in Texas and the major health care professional shortages in Texas. Dr. Shine talked about the training of the health workforce and how it is interrelated with addressing the uninsured. He expressed concern about reports that the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) would not be funding new FQHCs, despite the fact that President Bush's current budget proposal calls for an increase in funding for FQHCs. He also discussed management issues impacting FQHCs. Dr. Shine discussed formula funding, its dependence on the number of enrolled students, and the catch-22 that prevents institutions from getting the funding necessary to hire additional faculty. He suggested a review of this issue and how the funding is distributed. Dr. Shine also inquired about how to resolve the primary care physician shortage and mal-distribution.

Dr. Valdez discussed pay for performance and incentives to reward physicians for locating in rural areas. Dr. Raimor talked about the need to reconnect medical students that come from rural areas back to their communities. He also stressed the significance of recruiting a group of people, including Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants, to serve rural communities.

Larry Phillips noted Higher Education Commissioner Raymond Paredes will be recommending full formula funding for the community colleges in Texas. If this recommendation goes through, community colleges will use this funding to address health profession shortages.

Maureen Milligan noted the importance of finding innovative ways to educate young kids about careers in healthcare.

Presentation from the Texas Nurses Association

Chair Silverman invited Ms. Clair Jordan, Executive Director of the Texas Nurses Association to present to the Subcommittee. Ms. Jordan explained the role of the Registered Nurse (RN), the important role they play in patient education and monitoring, and the positive image of a RN according to Gallup polls. She also provided the Subcommittee with data on registered nurses, including information on the registered nurse shortage, practicing RNs in Texas for 2000-2004, RNs by place of employment and type of position, RNs by sex and race, RN graduates by race, and RNs by age. She also provided information on RN education data and legislative initiatives to address the shortages. She noted factors contributing to the RN shortage in Texas and stated that efforts to address the RN shortage have had mixed results. She concluded her remarks by providing the Subcommittee with several policy options to address the shortage, including a greater investment in nursing faculty, increasing diversity, and a continuing focus on improving the workplace environment.

Vice Chair Green discussed the fact that Texas is ranked first in the number of Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs) for the country. She also discussed the difficulties in addressing the nursing faculty shortage and noted the challenges in providing a competitive salary for those positions.

Dr. Shine commented on the need for better data so that we know where investments are being made and how effective those investments are in improving workforce productivity and positive outcomes for patients. He noted that he was encouraged by some of the experiments with preceptor programs and highlighted funding the University of Texas System has put in place to recruit nurses and to fund three simulation labs.

Subcommittee members also discussed the requirements for nursing instruction.

Presentation from the School of Allied Health Sciences, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

Chair Silverman invited Marilyn Harrington, Dean, School of Allied Health Sciences, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio to present to the Subcommittee. Dean Harrington opened her remarks by stating that she believes we need to change how we educate, practice, deliver and provide access to our healthcare system. She provided the subcommittee with information on allied health professionals, including who and what they are, practice settings, and statistics on workforce shortages. She discussed the consequences of workforce shortages and noted several issues, such as the shortage of qualified faculty, mal-distribution of providers, and scope of practice, for the Subcommittee to consider.

Presentation from the Texas Medical Association

Chair Silverman invited Dr. Lawrence Hanrahan, chair of the Texas Medical Association's Physician Distribution and Healthcare Access Committee, to present to the Subcommittee. Dr. Hanrahan provided a presentation on the recent trends in physician supply and physician demand. He also discussed indicators of future physician supply and demand and reviewed trends in medical education at both medical school and residency levels. Dr. Hanrahan concluded his remarks by discussing some recommendations for the Subcommittee to consider.

Dr. Shine noted that the medical schools in Texas will be increasing the number medical student slots but that additional funding is needed for Graduate Medical Education, particularly for programs in high-demand areas.

Vice Chair Green asked why we cannot determine how many Texas medical school graduates do their residency in Texas. Dr. Hanrahan explained that information was not readily available.

Subcommittee members discussed the number of medical students coming to Texas to complete their residency and noted the need to ensure that researchers have access to data collected by state licensure boards.

The Subcommittee recessed at 11:46 for a ten minute break.

Presentation from the Texas Hospital Association

Chair Silverman invited Elizabeth Sjoberg to present on behalf of the Texas Hospital Association. Ms. Sjoberg shared the actions taken by hospitals to address the health workforce shortage, including scholarship and tuition reimbursement, loan reimbursement, supporting “Grow Your Own” education programs for children, job shadowing, and preceptor programs, among others. She highlighted the April issue of THA’s publication magazine, *Texas Hospitals*, which is dedicated to overcoming workforce shortages. She discussed the importance of working with the Texas Nurses Association. Ms. Sjoberg discussed where hospitals are in adopting health information technology (HIT). She noted concerns about resources to support HIT and the need for greater education on the use of information technology. Ms. Sjoberg concluded her remarks by noting the increased nursing union activity within Texas.

Vice Chair Green voiced the challenge of not having the technology necessary to teach students how to use it and noted the need for partnerships between schools and hospitals for technology training.

Dr. Shine noted that a significant challenge is connectivity between hospitals and discussed the importance of restoring GME funding for hospitals.

Mr. Phillips noted that the hospitals in his area are asking for in-house training on technology and transition programs that provide a pathway from LVN to Associate Degree Nursing (ADN). Mr. Phillips asked if there was any technology training curriculum included in the Workforce Education Course Manual, and if not then it was something that should be developed. Chair Silverman noted that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is in the process of updating the Manual.

Presentation from the East Texas Area Health Education Center

Chair Silverman invited Steve Shelton, executive director of the East Texas Area Health Education Center (AHEC) to present to the Subcommittee. Mr. Shelton provided the Subcommittee with information on AHEC’s in Texas and the role they play in health workforce development and community health support. He discussed AHEC activities to promote health careers and support community-based training, and provided information on AHEC program outcomes.

Vice Chair Green recognized the success of the nurse-building program and Hot Jobs book.

Dr. Shine asked what factors make someone want to continue to practice in the underserved areas. Mr. Shelton highlighted a few factors that he thought were the most influential: personality, community involvement in the recruitment, and lifestyle choice.

Larry Jones noted that problems begin before advanced training. The Texas Workforce Commission looks at high school, middle school and what track each person is on. He expressed a concern that the focus needs to be on children's education to ensure we have a foundation of qualified students that can pursue the advanced degrees required for highly-skilled positions in healthcare. He also addressed Dr. Raimer's presentation and how expensive it is to expand schools and build new schools. He offered his view that expanding the current capacity would carry us so far and noted that at some point we may need to build new facilities.

Ms. Cruz suggested inviting the Office of Rural and Community Health, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center to provide a presentation to the Subcommittee on rural issues. She also noted that the University of North Texas has a rural track.

Subcommittee members discussed future meetings of the Subcommittee and Mr. Phillips asked about whether or not the August 24 meeting could be moved to another date. Chair Silverman told Subcommittee members that she would work with staff on meeting dates.

Dr. Shine brought up the pipeline programs and noted that it might be interesting to collect a compendium of information on these programs to determine the leverage points that will make a difference.

Vice Chair Green brought up long-term services and noted that it is an area we need to focus on.

Rick Danko suggested it might be helpful to have a public health workforce presentation at the next meeting. Mr. Gilman noted that he had discussed this issue with Dr. Nancy Dickey, chair of the Texas Health Care Policy Council, and intended to invite someone on public health to the next meeting.

Dr. Shine suggested that perhaps a presentation by Department of State Health Services Commissioner Sanchez would be good since he has a good understanding of the problems faced by the public health workforce.

Vice Chair Green asked about future meeting locations. Mr. Gilman told Subcommittee members that he planned to have all future Subcommittee and Council meetings in the 5th floor boardroom of the Teacher Retirement System building.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN

Chair Silverman asked if there was a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Dr. Shine and seconded by Mr. Jones. The meeting adjourned at 12:57 p.m.