



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**

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**Agenda Item Number:** 43

**Agenda Date:** December 15, 2022

**In Control:** City Council A Session

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**DEPARTMENT:** Health Department

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Claude Jacob

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** Citywide

**SUBJECT:**

Approving a Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston for patient referrals.

**SUMMARY:**

This ordinance approves a Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UT Health Houston) for the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District's (Metro Health) STD Prevention & Control Program to refer qualifying patients to UT Health Houston for possible participation in a clinical study on congenital syphilis diagnostics, at no cost for a term ending September 30, 2024 with the option to renew for three, one-year terms.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

There is an urgent need for improved diagnostics to identify congenital syphilis at birth and understand the long-term effects of congenital syphilis. To this end, the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UT Health Houston) is conducting a multicenter, clinical trial to directly compare performance of new diagnostic tests to current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for the diagnosis of congenital syphilis. The clinical trial is a prospective observational cohort of women and their newborns at risk for infection. Through this study, UT Health Houston will leverage the resulting cohort to more accurately define adverse

neurodevelopmental outcomes associated with congenital syphilis. This study will be one of the first large prospective studies evaluating a potential new diagnostic test that can bring equity to the underserved populations that often lack the resources to return to all recommended follow up for their newborns. Participation in this project will give Metro Health an opportunity to be part of the effort to identify a highly sensitive diagnostic test and more accurately define adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes associated with congenital syphilis.

Bexar County is considered a high incidence region for congenital syphilis. Failure to successfully execute an agreement to be a part of this National Institutes of Health (NIH) funded study will greatly impact our efforts to have access to a test with good diagnostic sensitivity and the appropriate neurodevelopmental testing and follow up for infected newborns.

#### **ISSUE:**

Metro Health requests City Council approve a Memorandum of Agreement for the referral of Metro Health's STD Prevention & Control Program patients to the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston for possible participation in a clinical study, at no cost and for a term ending September 30, 2024, with the option to renew for three, one-year terms.

Approval of the agreement will allow Metro Health an opportunity to be part of the effort to identify a highly sensitive diagnostic test and more accurately define adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes associated with congenital syphilis.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

If this agreement is not approved, Metro Health will be unable to refer patients to UT Health Houston to support the scientific research of congenital syphilis diagnostics.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

This ordinance authorizes a Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston for the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District's STD Prevention & Control Program at no cost for the term ending September 30, 2024, with the option to renew for three, one-year terms.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the Ordinance approving a Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston for possible participation in clinical studies for congenital syphilis diagnostics.