



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 2

Agenda Date: January 19, 2023

In Control: Community Health, Environment and Culture Committee

DEPARTMENT: Health Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Claude Jacob

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

A briefing on Metro Health's COVID-19 Community Response and Equity Coalition's (CREC) reports to be released and lessons learned from the pandemic.

SUMMARY:

The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District will provide a short presentation on the COVID-19 Community Response and Equity Coalition's (CREC) Reports which were constructed to capture the history of the coalition, from its inception to present day activities, and highlight each of the processes that occurred during the response period that shaped an unprecedented, cross-collaborative effort. Such events were captured in two separate reports: 1) technical report created for distribution among CREC members and professional networks, and 2) an abbreviated, bilingual report designed for distribution to the wider San Antonio/Bexar County community.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In response to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the *Testing Task Force* was assembled within Bexar County to address the urgencies born of the pandemic. As such, a diverse group of hospitals, healthcare systems, laboratories, emergency responders, and community-based clinics collaborated to assess COVID-19 testing capacity at the city and county levels and gauge testing availability relative to demand. Milestone accomplishments of this group included developing and launching the COVID-19 self-screening tool, fostering partnerships with laboratories to increase free testing, and establishing guidance for COVID-19 specimen collection and laboratory testing.

Following the release of the May 2020 Health Transition Team's report, which stressed the need for community-informed action as part of the larger response, the coalition transitioned to become the *COVID-19 Community Response Coalition*. This iteration expanded the work of the Testing Task Force by creating community-centered workgroups to support the most pressing aspects of the response. Each respective workgroup produced milestone accomplishments that reflected a deep commitment to unifying response efforts and demonstrated the power of cross-sector collaboration.

In response to national events highlighting racial inequities and the inherent health inequities amplified by the pandemic, the coalition underwent a third transition to become the *COVID-19 Community Response and Equity Coalition (CREC)*. By centering equity as a fundamental component, all future coalition pursuits would elevate equitable practices as part of the Coalition's collective decision-making processes. The CREC is proud to serve as the advisory body for the *Health Confianza* Health Literacy project, focused on empowering providers and community members to better identify misleading health information as it relates to COVID-19.

The coalition effort embodies core functions of public health through education, outreach, enhanced data visualization, quality improvement measures, policy development, mobilizing partnerships, and improving access to resources among the citizens of Bexar County.

The technical and community reports outline the history and memorialize the emergency response as well as demonstrating an alignment with national frameworks that amplify asset-based approaches in demonstrating the power of a trusted source.

ISSUE:

Metro Health would like to ensure that the elected body has been briefed on the work completed in the various iterations of the Coalition and receive a preview to the reports created.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item. This memo is for briefing purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing purposes only.