

ISSUE 13

JANUARY | 2023

JUST THE FACTS

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM YOUR
METRO HEALTH CLINICIAN AMBASSADORS

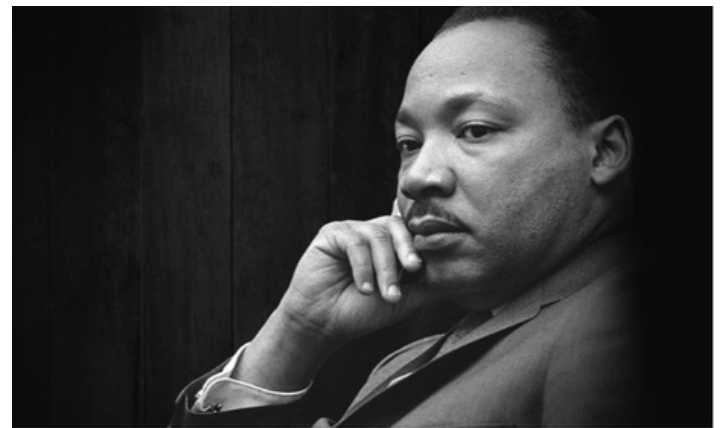


**METROPOLITAN
HEALTH DISTRICT**

Welcome back from the holidays! Here we are in the new year, a time for fresh starts and new beginnings and... the January 2023 edition of Just the Facts!

MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

On Monday, Jan. 16, we will celebrate the life and works of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., social and civil rights activist, Nobel Peace Prize winner and minister of the Ebenezer Baptist Church of Atlanta, GA. Dr. King was born on Jan. 15, 1929, in Atlanta. He graduated high school at age 15 and attended Morehouse College, where he earned a BA in Sociology in 1948. He earned a bachelor's in divinity from Crozer Theological Seminary, then a doctoral degree at Boston University in 1955, at the age of 25.



It was not long after that King began his rise as a prominent civil rights leader. The young Dr. King and other civil rights leaders formed the Montgomery Improvement Association, which led the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955, one of the seminal moments of America's civil rights movement. This boycott eventually led to the desegregation of city buses in Montgomery, AL. He would later join over 60 other ministers and civil rights leaders to create the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), which would help lead civil rights marches and non-violent protests to fight injustices and promote civil rights (Biography.com).

Together with groups of university students who formed the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the SCLC worked to end segregation at lunch counters in the South. Dr. King's work with other civil rights leaders of the time were essential to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which legally ended discrimination in public facilities.

Dr. King spoke out against the war in Vietnam and advanced the notion that there was a strong link between discrimination and poverty. He was also a fierce proponent of ending discrimination in health care, including addressing the higher maternal mortality rates among black women. He helped lead the charge to force hospitals and medical organizations to comply with the Civil Rights Act, bringing health disparities to the forefront of the conversation on race and social justice.

*“OF ALL THE FORMS OF INEQUALITY,
INJUSTICE IN HEALTH CARE IS THE MOST
SHOCKING AND INHUMANE.”*

– MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



The City of San Antonio declared racism a public health crisis in 2020, and Metro Health is working to eliminate racism in healthcare as part of its SA Forward Plan. This year, as we celebrate Dr. King, let us also carry on his fight to combat racism and stigma in healthcare. Interested in learning more? Check out these resources:

UT Health San Antonio Office for Inclusion and [Diversity Anti-Racism Resources Page](#)

American Medical Association Journal of Ethics viewpoint, Sept. 2014: [Structural Competency Meets Structural Racism: Race, Politics, and the Structure of Medical Knowledge](#)

Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) opinion article, May 2015: [A Silent Curriculum](#)

Ready to take action?

Participate in [DreamWeek](#) San Antonio, a 16-day summit of events fostering the exchange of ideas on universal issues. This event takes place January 13 - 29, 2023 in and around downtown San Antonio.

Jan. 17 marks the 7th annual National Day of Racial Healing, part of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation efforts. Their [web page](#) has links to primetime town halls, a conversation guide and other ways to participate.

Check out the [Upstanders Action Guide](#) from UT Health San Antonio Office for Inclusion and Diversity.

Schedule an academic detailing session with your Clinician Ambassador team to learn and discuss more about how we can eliminate racism and stigma in health care! Email

Lucinda.zeinelabdin2@sanantonio.gov



Are you a women's health or mental health clinician? Apply to join the Core Working Group for a new initiative to showcase providers who create a respectful, welcoming patient experience for all, from Metro Health's Access to Care Office. For more information or to request an application, email Sarah.Wagner@sanantonio.gov

HEALTH ADVISORIES

On Dec. 22, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a health alert to clinicians about a [recent increase in pediatric invasive group A streptococcal \(iGAS\) infections](#) among pediatric populations in several states. Group A strep infections

can cause a range of illnesses and symptoms from pharyngitis and cellulitis, to necrotizing fasciitis, sepsis and toxic shock syndrome. Although streptococcal infections are not typically reportable, clinicians are asked to report any cases of severe or invasive strep in persons under age 18 years, or clusters of iGAS infections occurring among persons of any age to the health department.

On Dec. 29, 2022, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) issued an advisory about an outbreak of measles in Ohio that began in November 2022. At publication, the outbreak was composed of 82 confirmed cases, of which 74 (90%) were unvaccinated, and 32 (39%) had been hospitalized. There have been no reported deaths. While no confirmed cases of measles have been reported in Texas since 2019, healthcare providers are encouraged to consider a patient's symptoms, vaccination status, and travel history when including measles in their differential diagnosis. Click [here](#) for the full advisory, with information on PPE, testing, post-exposure prophylaxis and isolation.

For these and all other notifiable conditions in Bexar County, contact the **San Antonio Metropolitan Health District Epidemiology Program** at **(210) 207-8876**, or fax (210) 207-2007. Providers and residents outside of Bexar County may contact the Texas Department of State Health Services, Public Health Region 8, at (210) 949-2121 or fax (512) 206-3995.



SA SPEAK UP!

The City of San Antonio Metropolitan Health District needs your help!

Metro Health's Violence Prevention Program has launched a survey seeking feedback from businesses and the community at large on a potential City ordinance that would require businesses to post signage about domestic violence in places of public accommodation.

The five-minute survey is designed to gauge how businesses and community members feel about the potential ordinance, as well as provide a space to share any concerns.

Please help by promoting and taking this survey: [Domestic Violence Signage in Public Places Survey - PublicInput.com \(saspeakup.com\)](https://www.saspeakup.com).



WIC AND BREASTFEEDING RESOURCES

[Pediatricians and Ob-Gyns:](#)

Did You Know that Women, Infants & Children (WIC) updates its maximum income guidelines annually? As of 2022, a household of four can make up to \$51,338 a year and get WIC benefits. Refer your patients to [TexasWIC.org](https://www.texaswic.org).

You can also find resources on common issues that your breastfeeding patients may encounter and ways to support them in their breastfeeding goals at [hcpbreastfeeding.com](https://www.hcpbreastfeeding.com). This site from the Texas Health & Human Services Commission provides clinician resources for breastfeeding as well as information, resources and training for prenatal, perinatal and postnatal providers. There is also a convenient Refer-A-Mom link to refer patients for WIC services, and a lactation support hotline for provider and patient consultations.

Additionally, Metro Health's WIC program offers the San Antonio Lactation Support Center, formerly known as Baby Café. Breastfeeding mothers and pregnant women can visit to learn, socialize, participate in a support group, or receive free individual counseling from a Registered Dietitian or International Board Certified Lactation Consultant in a non-clinical, café style environment. For more information, call 210-207-7138 or click [here](#).

SA KIDS B.R.E.A.T.H.E.



Serving children with asthma ages 3-17 years living in the City of San Antonio.

SA Kids B.R.E.A.T.H.E.
Building Relationships, Effective ASTHMA Teaching in Home Environments

IS YOUR PATIENT HAVING TROUBLE BREATHING?

SA Kids BREATHE is a NO-COST home asthma education program that supports your practice with active case management and feedback to you, the healthcare provider.

What will patients learn?

- How To Use Asthma Devices
- What Can Trigger Asthma
- About Your Child's Asthma Medicine

Anyone can refer to the program!

Who provides these services?

- Community Health Workers (CHWs)
- Guided by a Certified Asthma Educator
- Translation services available

Free home or virtual visits

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO METROPOLITAN HEALTH DISTRICT
For a version of this poster or patient handouts, call 210-207-7282 or email sakidsbreathe@sanantonio.gov

CLINICIAN AMBASSADOR CME CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Join your clinician ambassador team, in collaboration with UT Health San Antonio and the South Central AIDS Education Training Center, for an educational series on Sexual Health in Primary Care. Each month from February through July 2023, you can earn free CME while learning to address sexual health in the primary care setting. Each session will be held from 12pm to 1pm CST.

February 2023 - HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP).

This discussion will cover both oral and injectable PrEP regimens, PrEP indications, initial and follow up labs, and answer questions about recent changes to CDC PrEP guidelines.

March 2023 - CDC's Updates to the STI Treatment Guidelines

April 2023 - Syphilis Diagnosis and Treatment in Primary Care

May 2023 - Reducing Stigma in Primary Care Settings

June 2023 - LGBTQIA+ Health & Taking a Sexual History

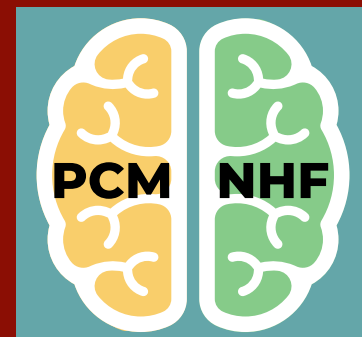
July 2023 - Hepatitis C for Primary Care

Scan the QR code for our [Provider Interest Form](#)



OTHER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- disABILITYsa is offering a free 2.5-hour workshop on disability-friendly healthcare environments. Pharmacists, physicians, nurses and other clinicians can better understand the types of disabilities and associated access issues, participate in problem-finding exercises, explore the clinical perspective, and learn strategies, tools, and resources for creating more disability-friendly environments. The next sessions will take place Friday, Jan. 27, from 3:30 PM-6:30 PM, and Saturday, Feb. 25, from 9 AM-noon. To see all dates and to register, visit disabilitysa.org.
- The National Headache Foundation (NHF) has launched **Primary Care Migraine**®, a new educational training program available at no cost to health practitioners who treat headaches. The training offers up to 2 CME/CE credits and a complimentary membership to the National Headache Foundation. The course also offers a diagnosis tool, medication guide and infographics for easier communication with patients. You can access the training at PCMigraine.com or download the mobile app [here](#) for Android devices or [here](#) for Apple devices.
- If your pediatric, family medicine or primary care clinic/practice is interested in free genetics education for 1 hour a month, Mountain States Regional Genetics Network (MSRGN) is recruiting for Cohort No. 3 of the **Time 4 Genetics initiative**, to begin in March 2023. **MSRGN** is a regional network that includes Texas and is funded by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration. MSRGN ensures that individuals with heritable disorders and their families have access to quality care and appropriate genetic expertise by facilitating a network of genetics clinics, primary care practices, consumer advocates and state health department resources. Applications close Jan. 15; you can watch a short video about the initiative and [apply here](#).
- The Texas Pediatric Brain Health Initiative presents “Rethinking Mandatory Reporting: Options for Supporting,” a free webinar on Jan. 25. To register and learn more, visit <https://www.txsafebabies.org/webinar-series/>. On the same page, you can also view a related webinar, “Neglect or Needing Help? A Discussion of Case Studies With Possible Neglect.”



Substance Use Disorder Symposium - January 27, 2023, San Antonio, TX:

Medications for Substance Use Disorder Symposium

The Houston Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is pleased to present three 3.5-hour symposiums entitled “Medications for Substance Use Disorder” from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on the following dates and locations:

January 27, 2023

UT Health San Antonio Long School of Medicine

8300 Floyd Curl Drive, Lecture Hall 3.102B

San Antonio, Texas 78229

Link to register: <https://apps.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/pdac2/spring/autoEventSelect?execution=e1s1>

Click the link below for a full calendar of trainings and events on trauma-informed care

<https://www.universityhealthsystem.com/-/media/Files/TIC/January-Calendar-Binder-2.ashx>

MPOX UPDATE

Patients wishing to receive mpox treatment can readily access it through the STOMP trial at UT Health San Antonio. STOMP is a NIAID-funded clinical trial to evaluate the effectiveness of the antiviral tecovirimat, also known as TPOXX, for the treatment of human mpox infection. Adults and children with mpox can self-enroll by visiting stomptpoxx.org. For more information, providers can visit clinicaltrials.gov.

Contact information:

University of Texas San Antonio Clinical Research Site
7703 Floyd Curl, Dr, San Antonio, TX 78229
210-567-4823

MEDICAID COVERAGE CHANGES

“Unwinding”: Under Congress’ end-of-year funding agreement, states could start disenrolling ineligible people from Medicaid and CHIP as early as April 1, 2023. The Texas Health & Human Services Commission (HHSC) has not yet announced a date when it will begin this process. Currently, states receive federal funding to offer continuous coverage to Medicaid and CHIP recipients during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. During the “unwinding” process, states will be rewarded for extra efforts to contact beneficiaries, and they must report monthly on the number of renewals and terminations, or face financial penalties. The omnibus bill also specifies that beginning in 2024, all states must cover children continuously for 12 months in Medicaid and CHIP. HHSC has tools for providers to help their patients prevent unforeseen loss of coverage [here](#). You can access a Provider Information Sheet, as well as flyers in English and Spanish that can be posted in your clinic to alert patients to the changes.

Hepatitis C: As of Jan. 1, Medicaid now covers one preferred direct-acting antiviral (DAA) drug option for Hepatitis C infection. All Medicaid clients are eligible for DAA treatment with the primary preferred agent regardless of the client’s METAVIR fibrosis score, and no prior authorization or drug screening are required. Additionally, any enrolled Medicaid provider can prescribe the preferred drug. For details, [Click here](#).

COVID CORNER

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES URGE PROVIDERS TO RECOMMEND UPDATED COVID VACCINES

As of late December 2022, fewer than 1 in 3 people ages 65 and up in Bexar County had received the bivalent booster. With the expected spike in COVID cases in January, and the increase in flu, RSV and other respiratory illnesses, healthcare specialty organizations are reminding providers that one of the best ways to encourage patients to stay up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines is the recommendation from their healthcare provider. The organizations include the American Academy of Family Physicians, American Association of Nurse Practitioners, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American Geriatrics Society, American Medical Association and others. These organizations are reminding providers to urgently advise patients to get updated COVID booster and flu shots. You can read the article [here](#).

COVID CORNER

FREE SERVICES DWINDLING

Federal subsidies for COVID vaccines, testing and treatments will continue to taper. This is expected to affect free COVID-19 vaccine pop-ups by Metro Health and partners sometime in 2023. People with health insurance will still be able to obtain vaccines, including COVID vaccines, without cost-sharing at pharmacies and medical offices. People on Medicaid and CHIP will receive free rapid tests and treatments (without cost-sharing) through 2024, according to a rundown here by the Kaiser Family Foundation.

ASK YOUR CLINICIAN AMBASSADOR – QUESTIONS FROM THE FIELD

I have a patient who had a nonreactive syphilis titer when I saw him last on Oct. 3, 2021. Today he had a reactive titer, but today is Oct. 4, 2022. I know the cutoff for early latent and late latent syphilis diagnosis is 12 months, but he is only 1 day past the 1-year mark. Can't I just give this patient 2.4M IU of benzathine penicillin G instead of the 7.2M IU?

This is one of those scenarios in which we may feel tempted to give the lower dose of medication – it's easier for us and the patient, and it will make your patient happier – who doesn't love fewer shots?

However, it is imperative that we follow the guideline recommendations to ensure adequate treatment of syphilis and prevent potential complications. Although it is true that the patient is only 1 day past the 12-month cutoff for single-dose treatment, the clinical guidelines recommend additional treatment for patients who have had syphilis for greater than 12 months, or with unknown duration of infection without unequivocal proof of infection within the last year. Per the 2021 CDC STI Treatment Guidelines, "In the absence of these conditions associated with latent syphilis, an asymptomatic person should be considered to have latent syphilis of unknown duration or late latent syphilis (>1 year's duration)."

Have a burning public health question? Ask a clinician ambassador!
Email lucinda.zeinelabdin2@sanantonio.gov or sign up for an [academic detailing session!](#)

YOUR CLINICIAN AMBASSADOR

Schedule an appointment
with us today!



**LUCINDA LUNDY ZEINELABDIN,
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210-207-2407



For health alerts from
Metro Health text
"DOCALERT" to
1-844-824-COSA
(1-844-824-2672)

Message and data rates
apply.

You can now self-
schedule your virtual
academic detailing
sessions with the Clinician
Ambassador team!

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