



Advancing Health Equity in Nueces County

Proposal Submitted by Texas Health Institute

October 14, 2021

Overview

Building upon our recently completed report, ***Advancing Health Equity in Nueces County – Amid and Beyond the COVID-19 Pandemic***, Texas Health Institute (THI) is pleased to submit this proposed scope of work. Through this proposal we seek to achieve the following objectives:

1. Ensure a community-focused, actionable report release and dissemination effort,
2. Integrate reports findings and recommendations in ongoing response and recovery efforts,
3. Expand behavioral health and substance use data available on the dashboard, to enable a community informed response to a worsening crisis in this area.

Our Approach

Our approach is guided by the following considerations:

- Our Phase 1 study report findings and recommendations address a long-standing need and provide a unique opportunity to develop and pursue a community-wide approach in achieving health equity for all Nueces county residents. However, achieving the same will require a tailored and strategic report dissemination strategy within and outside Nueces county.
- It is important to integrate report findings into existing pandemic response efforts, including but not limited to continued vaccine distribution planning and access, and strategically leveraging opportunities available through the American Rescue Plan Act.
- Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Nueces County community was experiencing a mental health and substance abuse crisis. Community stakeholders confirmed the increased needs related to mental health and substance abuse that have emerged during the pandemic. However, an effective community-based response requires community-based, granular data.

Scope of Work

THI will undertake three primary areas of work over the 14-month project to meet the stated objectives. Our approach and methods take into consideration the ongoing implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and response efforts. Lastly, as pursued in our most recent project, where applicable, our efforts will be coordinated with Accenture LLP as they continue to refine and update the existing community dashboard with new data and insights.

Through this scope of work, we offer to commit to the following deliverables:

I. Report Release and Dissemination

- Implement Report Dissemination and Community Engagement strategy. Our team will work in consultation with County Judge Canales and the Nueces County Hospital District to develop and implement the same. This builds upon our continued efforts to disseminate report findings with key community partners this a coordinate press-release announcing the report. The release events include the following:

- A community session to engage key stakeholders to build consensus on implementing report recommendations.
- One event to engage key statewide leaders and stakeholders including elected state officials.
- Abstract submission to present at state and national venues.

Additionally, the THI team will also prepare and submit manuscripts for scientific presentations and publications at key state and national venues including but not limited to Health Affairs, Healthier Texas Summit.

II. Informing and Guiding Pandemic Response and Recovery Efforts

- Per feedback and direction from Nueces county leadership, THI team will participate on the County’s COVID-19 taskforce focused on vaccine distribution planning and delivery as well as recovery efforts. This will include, but is not limited to, review of monthly reports and updates to state and federal agencies, providing guidance on current and upcoming vaccine delivery sites.

III. Advancing a Systemic and Equitable Response to Behavioral Health and Substance Use Crisis

- The THI team will provide expert input for the ongoing updates and refinements to the community dashboard developed by Accenture LLP. Specifically, this includes a review of new data indicators, and visualization from a health equity lens.
- The THI team will design and implement an authentic, community-based survey focused on mental health and substance abuse. Again, this work addresses one of the key limitations and concerns identified in the Phase 1 report. However, this will require a unique, community-up, systemic approach. THI has experience implementing similar efforts across the country; a recent example is the community-based survey and community engagement effort we led in [Southwest Houston](#). THI will work in coordination and collaboration with trusted community-based organizations and stakeholders. This approach will not only help bridge data gaps, but will weave an important and often ignored perspective of lived experiences and community voice in response planning and implementation.

Timeline

Following is a high-level timeline of key activities and deliverables that will inform and carry out the work over the 14-month project (November 01, 2021-December 31, 2022)

Deliverable 1 – Report Dissemination & Community Engagement	November 2021 to February 2022
Deliverable 2 – Pandemic Response & Planning	November 2021 to March 2021
Deliverable 3(a) – Health Equity SME for Community Dashboard	Contingent upon contract with Accenture
Deliverable 3(b) – A community engagement strategy for addressing behavioral health and substance use	December 2021 to December 2022

Budget

We are requesting a **total budget of \$298,000** to complete work described in this proposal over the 15 months' period.

Description	Costs
Deliverable 1	\$29,000
Deliverable 2	\$22,000
Deliverable 3 a	\$27,000
Deliverable 3 b	\$220,000
Total costs	\$298,000