

NUECES COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT
90th Texas Legislative Session Agenda
February 24, 2026

Summary

The Nueces County Hospital District supports targeted legislative action to strengthen medical education, expand healthcare workforce capacity, and improve access to behavioral health services in South Texas.

Countywide Benefits

- Increased physician retention.
 - Improved behavioral health access.
 - Complemented medical infrastructure.
 - Strengthened medical education pipelines.
 - Enhanced healthcare resilience.
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I. Graduate Medical Education (GME)

Support increased investment in GME to expand physician training and retention.

- Increase Medicaid GME supplemental payments
- Fund existing and new residency slots
- Incentivize expansion of training slots
- Support teaching hospitals
- Expand funding through General Revenue and budget riders

Data Point:

Nueces County faces persistent physician shortages in primary care and specialty fields, limiting access to care.

Impact on Nueces County:

- Expanded local residency and fellowship opportunities.
 - Improved long-term physician retention.
 - Reduced reliance on temporary providers.
 - Enhanced capacity at local teaching hospitals.
 - Greater continuity of care.
 - Stabilized medical workforce pipeline.
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II. Medical Workforce Development

Authorize NCHD to address shortages in essential specialties.

- Allow local designation based on community health needs assessments
- Financial incentives: loan repayment, housing support, income guarantees

- Professional protections: malpractice limits and liability protections
- Recruitment supports: relocation and startup assistance
- Require minimum service commitments

Data Point:

Several high-need specialties remain underrepresented in coastal South Texas.

Impact on Nueces County:

- Improved recruitment in shortage specialties.
 - Increased access to essential services.
 - Greater competitiveness for healthcare talent.
 - Reduced patient outmigration.
 - Strengthened provider networks.
 - Enhanced sustainability of service lines.
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III. Regional Behavioral Health Infrastructure

Expand access to mental health services.

- Establish state-supported regional facilities
- Serve adults, children, and justice-involved populations
- Partner with LMHAs and community providers
- Integrate inpatient, crisis, and outpatient services

Data Point:

Behavioral health wait times in South Texas frequently exceed recommended standards.

Impact on Nueces County:

- Expanded access to behavioral health services.
- Reduced emergency department boarding.
- Shorter wait times for treatment.
- Improved system coordination.
- Better outcomes for high-risk populations.
- Reduced strain on hospitals and first responders.