



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:21-1839

Agenda Item Number: 1

Agenda Date: 2/25/2021

In Control: Community Health and Equity Committee

DEPARTMENT: Health

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Anita K Kurian, MBBS, MPH, DrPH, Assistant Director Communicable Disease Division

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT: A briefing providing updates on the COVID-19 Community Response and Equity Coalition (CREC) including the new structure of the Coalition and the emphasis on health equity

SUMMARY:

The CREC Co-Chair, Dr. Barbara Taylor and Kathy Shields (Public Health Administrator, Metro Health) will provide a briefing on the new structure of the CREC and the emphasis on a newly developed equity action plan. The briefing will also include a report on the recent work of the Education Workgroup and the Policy and Advocacy Workgroup.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The COVID-19 Testing Task Force was first convened by Metro Health on March 18, 2020 to bring together laboratories, hospital systems, health care providers, community-based clinics, and representatives from the Emergency Operations Center to assess the testing capacity for COVID-19 in San Antonio and Bexar County. The COVID-19 Testing Task Force was comprised of 16 healthcare sector organizations conducting COVID-19 specimen collection within Bexar County, and 16 laboratories conducting COVID-19 testing.

On June 1, the COVID-19 Testing Task Force broadened its role and changed its name to the COVID-19 Community Response Coalition (CRC). The CRC was charged with providing oversight and coordination of all healthcare sector partners involved in the monitoring of progress and warning indicators, specimen collection and laboratory testing for COVID-19, ensuring adequate case investigations for all positive cases to identify their contacts, developing local policy and health alerts, as well as coordinating education and enforcement activities.

The COVID-19 Community Response Coalition (CRC) served as an advisory body to Metro Health and the Government and Public Affairs Department, where all stakeholders and agencies involved in the COVID-19 response communicated regularly and discussed the myriad issues associated with responding to and communicating about a Pandemic caused by a novel virus.

In order to adjust to the changing needs of the pandemic, the CRC was restructured and renamed the COVID-

19 Community Response and Equity Coalition (CREC) in January 2021. The CREC will focus on advancing equity within the COVID-19 response and includes workgroups focused on Education and Policy and Advocacy related to the pandemic. The CREC has also transitioned the following four workgroups to advisory committees that meet as needed: Indicator Monitoring, Testing and Lab Reporting, Contact Tracing, and the PreK-12 Consultation Group. As the profile of the pandemic changes, the CREC will continue to re-evaluate its role and evolve as needed. Plans are under way to assess what aspects of the CREC will need to continue beyond June 2021 and how the work can be sustained.

ISSUE:

Metro Health would like the opportunity to brief the Community Health and Equity Committee on the new structure of the COVID-19 Community Response and Equity Coalition (CREC) and the emphasis on health equity as outlined in the Health Transition Team Report.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact at this time.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing purposes only.