



# United States-Mexico Border Health Commission

Vol. 3, Issue 4  
January 2006

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Secretary of Health for  
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## 2005 Border Binational Health Week “Families in Action for Health”

The Second Border Binational Health Week 2005 celebrated the theme “Families in Action for Health.” The ten U.S.-Mexico border States participated in the week’s festivities from October 10 to October 17, 2005. Residents from 80 Mexican municipalities and 44 United States border counties located along the 2,000-mile stretch of the United States-Mexico border were involved. Many community-based organizations cooperated to provide health education, health awareness, health promotion, and disease prevention activities to local communities in an effort to promote health and, as a result, increase quality of life.

Mexico combined its National Health Week with the Border Binational Health Week (BBHW) and, with funding and technical support from the Mexican Section of the U.S.-Mexico Border Health Commission (USMBHC), provided at least

16,000 health screenings, 5,000 breast and cervical cancer screenings, 600 prostate cancer screenings, and 200 tuberculosis screenings in Mexico.

The border cities of Nogales, Arizona and Nogales, Sonora held an inaugural ceremony followed by a health fair. Activities included administering immunizations and flu shots; providing health screenings and referrals; and disseminating health education materials on injury prevention and nutrition; among other services. On October 15, U.S. Section alternate member Robert Guerrero participated in a health walk and the inaugural ceremony for the *Semana del Anciano*

(Elderly Week) in Agua Prieta, Sonora. He also participated in a health fair that took place in Naco, AZ. Emma Torres attended the inaugural ceremony in Mexicali, Baja California on October 11. She also attended a health fair in Yuma, Arizona and San Luis, Sonora. On October 12, Dr. Carlos Gonzales attended the inaugural ceremony followed by a health fair in Nogales, Sonora.

*Clinicas de Salud del Pueblo, Inc.* hosted a “Farm Worker Breakfast” for over 600 community

residents and an asthma conference at the Calexico Employment Development Department. These residents received health information and were offered various health screenings. Dr. Rosemarie M. Johnson, Dr. Lawrence Kline, and delegates from the California Department of Health Services, Director Sandra Shewry and Richard Rodriguez attended the Border Binational

Health Week inaugural ceremony and health fair in Mexicali, Baja California on October 11. Director Shewry spoke on California’s collaboration with Mexico.

Dr. Catherine Torres attended a health fair in Las Cruces, New Mexico. *La Clinica de Familia, Inc.* held the “Grand Rounds Luncheon” to raise awareness on the effects of low rate influenza vaccination among healthcare providers. The Colonias Development Council held a health fair, workshops on home safety, and a teen dance targeting youth on HIV/AIDS prevention. On October 15, Dr. Tom Lindsey attended a health fair

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Commission members actively participating in BBHW events.

## ■ *Border Binational Health Week*

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*Health services being provided at a BBHW event.*

at the Columbus Child Development Center in Columbus, New Mexico. He was the impetus to the joint U.S. federal and state discussions on the issue of lead in candy.

Dr. Jose Manuel de la Rosa joined Dr. Elizabeth Duke, Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in a reception at the Hotel Camino Real in El Paso, Texas. In addition, he spoke at the closing ceremony in the El Paso Museum of Art. The El Paso Diabetes Association held a conference titled "Faces of Diabetes: Body and Mind" which offered information on diabetes prevention and standardized care to approximately 235 healthcare professionals.

On October 14, Lic. Héctor Xavier Martínez participated in a health fair organized by the *Hospital de la Familia* in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua.

Approximately 200 people participated in a closing event on October 17 in Zacatecas, Mexico. Respected guests included Jorge Torres Mercado, Secretary General of the State of

Zacatecas; Esperanza Avalos, Director General of the Zacatecas Department of Health Services; Carlos Esponda, Director of the *Vete Sano, Regresa Sano* Program; Mauricio Bailón, Director of International Relations in the Mexico Secretariat of Health; and Héctor Xavier Martínez, Executive Director of the USMBHC Mexico Section.

Special recognition is given to the U.S. Section contract staff in El Paso for

the technical support in coordinating meetings and preparing documents for the various activities.

Thanks go to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Global Health Affairs and the Health Resources and Services Administration for providing technical and financial resources for this year's Border Binational Health Week. Most importantly a "thank you" to the countless individuals and organizations on both sides of the border, whose the following organizations, whose Border Binational Health Week activities were supported by the HHS/HRSA through the U.S.-Mexico Border Health Association:

- Arizona/Sonora Border Health Offices
- Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now
- Blacks in Government, Inc.
- Centro de Salud Familiar La Fe
- City of Laredo Health Department
- Clinicas de Salud del Pueblo, Inc.
- Colonias Development Council
- County of Starr
- Diocese of Brownsville

- El Paso City-County Health and Environmental District
- El Paso Diabetes Association
- Far West Texas & Southern New Mexico Regional Advisory Council
- HOPE-K Tri-National Health Council
- La Clinica de Familia, Inc.
- Otero P.A.T.H., Inc.
- Presbyterian Medical Services
- Salud y Desarrollo Comunitario de Ciudad Juárez, A.C.
- San Diego County Task Force
- San Diego Immunization Partnership-County of San Diego
- Texas Department of State Health Services-Presidio Field Office
- West Texas Regional Poison Center



*Lic. Héctor Martínez, Executive Secretary, USMBHC Mexico Section, talks to press at the BBHW closing event in Zacatecas, Mexico.*

## **U.S. Border States Pandemic Flu Planning Activities**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and its Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a State and local Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist identifying important, specific activities that pertain to a possible health emergency.

The checklist can be found at:

<http://pandemicflu.gov/plan/statelocalchecklist.html>

U.S. border States are undertaking the following planning efforts:

- The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), Division of Public Health Services, is updating the ADHS Pandemic Influenza Response. It will feature supplements covering a wide

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## Quarterly Highlights

• **Border Binational Health Week organizers** were asked to submit an assessment form to capture all activities held throughout the week. Seventeen of twenty-three forms were returned to indicate that at least 164 events took place, including 110 lectures, 38 health fairs, seven conferences and nine vaccination clinics. A total of 1049 vaccinations were administered.

• **United States Section members held a retreat** in El Paso, TX on November 13-14, 2005 for an interactive strategic meeting to create a vision and strategy for the U.S. Section to be presented to the full Commission.

• **State Officials Talk Influenza Preparedness** – U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt convened a Pandemic Influenza Symposium with senior state and local officials December 5 in Washington, DC. “By their nature, pandemics happen across the globe — but their effects are excruciatingly local,” Secretary Leavitt said. “Pandemic planning needs to go beyond public health. Discussion at the state and local level needs to address how schools, businesses, public agencies, and others participate in pandemic preparedness.”

HHS advised states to establish a Pandemic Influenza Coordinating Committee to draft and adopt a plan that will:

- Delineate the roles and responsibilities of state and local agencies and offices;
- Build on existing preparedness and response plans for bioterrorism events, SARS, and other infectious disease emergencies;
- Address legal issues, including those that affect hospital staffing, patient care, and quarantine; and
- Be periodically reviewed and updated.

In conjunction with the day’s event, Secretary Leavitt issued a “State and Local Health Department Planning Checklist for Public Health Roles and Responsibilities.” It summarizes key planning activities to be undertaken by the public health system of each state in collaboration with partners.

“Pandemic readiness is a fundamental obligation of state and local governments, as well as the national government,” Secretary Leavitt added. “In starting this national conversation and providing useful tools, the Bush Administration is supporting work on the local level that will enhance preparedness both within and beyond our borders.” (Source: HHS December, 5, 2005 News Release located at <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2005pres/20051205.html>)

• **Ten Against Tuberculosis (TATB) Update** Since the 2005-2010 Ten Against TB Strategic Plan was presented to the full U.S.-Mexico Border Health Commission in August 2004, the technical committee held various sub-regional meetings to elaborate specific action plans for each sub region of the border. These action plans include: epidemiological surveillance, laboratory capacity building, health promotion, trainings and communication, and binational tuberculosis case management. The TATB Steering Committee is planning a meeting in February 2006 to discuss funding possibilities to implement the action plan and to identify next steps. (Source: Jose Moreira, Texas Department of State Health Services)

### • **TB Cross-border Issues**

Ms. Mary Lou Valdez, U.S. Section Commissioner designee, led a conference call with key stakeholders from U.S. and Mexico to discuss the long-standing issue of cross-border TB medications. It was decided on the conference call that Texas will donate the TB medications to PAHO, and Dr. Melanie DeBoer from PAHO will

work with the Mexico National TB Program and the Mexico Ministry of Health to transport TB medications across the border to the patients in Mexico.

### • **Lead Issues Along the U.S.-Mexico Border**

Ms. Mary Lou Valdez led a conference call with key federal and state stakeholders to discuss the issue of lead in candy. Since the initial call, the group of stakeholders expanded to include not only State representation, but also federal representation from the HHS Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Consumer Product Safety Commission, and Customs. This group will convene in El Paso, Texas on January 26-27, 2006 to discuss next steps, including steps towards engaging the Mexican government and other key stakeholders.

### • **Yuma, Arizona celebrated *Dia del Campesino Health (Farm-worker’s Health Day)***

*Campesinos Sin Fronteras* organized a farm-worker’s health day to provide cholesterol and glucose screenings, as well as approximately 800 flu shots. A breakfast was held and a raffle was conducted for a chance to win different prizes. Emma Torres, U.S. Section member and Executive Director for *Campesinos Sin Fronteras*, was among the more than 55 organizations and 200 volunteers that came together and offered services to an estimated 4,000 farm-workers.

• **The U.S. Section Support Office staff in El Paso is operating under new management, Tessada & Associates, Inc.** The Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Global Health Affairs (OGHA) awarded Tessada & Associates, Inc. a contract to oversee the administrative aspects of the U.S. Section support staff in El Paso, TX.

## ■ **State Pandemic Flu Planning Activities**

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variety of factors associated with pandemic influenza and will detail the department’s response. Arizona held the “Arizona Prepares” conference with HHS Secretary Michael Leavitt in Phoenix on January 6, 2006.

• The California Department of Health Services (CDHS) is updating the 2001 CDHS Influenza Pandemic Response Plan

to be released in early 2006. The CDHS California Office of Binational Border Health established an informal committee of public health officials to discuss preparedness for pandemic influenza on the California-Baja California border.

• New Mexico is participating in planning activities with a focus on medical response capacity with El Paso/Doña Ana

County joint Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS). A “Border Health Annex” to the New Mexico Department of Health Emergency Operations Plan is being developed to address how the New Mexico Department of Health will collaborate with partners to respond efficiently to events affecting the border.

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The USMBHC newsletter is  
also available on our  
website at:  
[www.borderhealth.org](http://www.borderhealth.org)  
or at  
[www.saludfronteriza.org](http://www.saludfronteriza.org)

### Mission Statement

To provide  
international  
leadership to  
optimize health  
and the quality  
of life along the  
United States-  
Mexico Border.

## ■ State Pandemic Flu Planning Activities

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The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) has revised its Pandemic Influenza Plan. The plan includes guidance to local health departments; considerations surrounding the allocation and distribution of vaccine and antivirals; updated designs for mass vaccination clinics; and the development of informational toolkits for healthcare

providers. The DSHS sponsored a one-day Pandemic Influenza conference in Austin, TX on December 12 in which clinical and epidemiological experts presented the most current information related to surveillance, vaccine production, and the role of State and local governments responding to influenza.

## Calendar of Upcoming Events January - March 2006

Check our website at [www.borderhealth.org](http://www.borderhealth.org) or [www.saludfronteriza.org](http://www.saludfronteriza.org) for updated event information.

### January 6

*"Arizona Prepares" Arizona's Pandemic Readiness Conference*

Organized by: Governor Janet Napolitano  
Location: Orpheum Theater, 203 W. Adams,  
Phoenix, AZ

Contact: Juanita Roberts  
Phone: (602) 364-0551  
Email: [robertju@azdhs.gov](mailto:robertju@azdhs.gov)

### January 26-27

*"Lead Issues Along the U.S.-Mexico Border Workshop"*

Location: 201 E. Main Dr., 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, El Paso, TX  
Contact: Hugo Vilchis, MD, MPH  
Phone: (505) 646-7966  
Email: [hvilchis@nmsu.edu](mailto:hvilchis@nmsu.edu)

### January 27-28

*Regional Teen Tobacco Summit*

Organized by: The Center for Safe Communities  
and Schools

Location: Circle Six Ranch, Stanton, TX  
Contact: Becky Zima  
Phone: (915) 834-7675  
<http://www.cscs.txstate.edu>

### January 27-29

*15<sup>th</sup> Annual Western Migrant Stream Forum*

Organized by: Northwest Regional Primary Care  
Association (NWRPCA)

Location: Portland Marriot Downtown Waterfront,  
Portland, Oregon  
Contact: NWRPCA  
Phone: (206) 783-3004  
<http://www.nwrpca.org/conf/forum.php>

### February 9, 16, 23, March 2

*Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine  
Preventable Diseases-4 Session Series*

Organized by: Centers for Disease Control and  
Prevention (CDC)  
Location: A National Immunization Program and  
Public Health Training Network Satellite Broadcast  
& Web cast  
Contact: CDC  
Phone: (800) 458-5231  
<http://www.phppo.cdc.gov/phtn/epv06/default.asp>

### February 27-March 1

*17<sup>th</sup> Annual National Rural Health Association  
(NRHA) Policy Institute Meeting*

(Registration Deadline 2/26/06; Hotel Registration  
Deadline 1/23/06)

Organized by: NRHA  
Location: Grand Hyatt Hotel, Washington, DC  
Contact: NRHA  
Phone: (703) 519-3865  
<http://www.nrharural.org/conferences/sub/PI.html>

### March 4

*Diabetes Expo*

Organized by: American Diabetes Association (ADA)  
Location: Georgia World Congress, Atlanta, GA  
Contact: Sybil Freeman  
Phone: (404) 320-7100 x-3113  
Email: [sfreeman@diabetes.org](mailto:sfreeman@diabetes.org)  
<http://www.diabetes.org/communityprograms-and-localevents/diabetesexpo.jsp>

### March 1-5

*26<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Families and Health: The  
Call for Leadership: Improving Health Through  
Partnerships*

Organized by: Society of Teachers of Family Medicine  
Location: Hyatt Regency Austin on Town Lake,  
Austin, TX  
Contact: Society of Teachers of Family Medicine  
Phone: 800-274-2237, ext. 5410  
Email: [pnoland@stfm.org](mailto:pnoland@stfm.org)  
<http://www.stfm.org/famhealthconf/fm06/>

### March 23-26

*"Somos Unidos: United to Eliminate Health  
Disparities for Hispanics"*

*National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA) 10<sup>th</sup>  
Annual Conference*  
Organized by: NHMA  
Location: Wardman Park Marriott Hotel, Washington,  
DC  
Contact: NHMA  
Phone: (800) 228-9290  
<http://www.nhmamd.org/events.htm>