United States-México Border Health Commission
Goals, Actions, and Accomplishments
Updated April 2013

Mission
To provide international leadership to optimize health and quality of life along the United States-México border.

Strategic Principles
Leadership-Focus-Venue

Strategic Priorities
The priority areas for 2013 include the following:
• Access to care
• Research, data collection, and academic alliances
• Strategic planning
• Tuberculosis
• Obesity/diabetes
• Infectious disease and public health emergencies

Strategic Actions for 2013
The following action items include various activities and product-oriented, measurable outputs planned for 2013:
• Convene the U.S.-México Border Obesity Prevention Summit to develop a border binational obesity prevention strategy that can address critical obesity prevention and treatment issues affecting the U.S.-México border region.
• Conduct the U.S.-México Tuberculosis (TB) Consortium and Legal Forum scheduled to support and advance the work of the U.S.-México Border TB Continuity of Care and TB Legal Issues Work Groups and the MDR-TB Expert Consultation Network by promoting continuity of care of all TB patients along the U.S.-México border; facilitating coordination of TB patient management across multi-level legal frameworks; and establishing uniform meet and greet standards and guidelines applicable to all TB patients facing deportation.
• Sponsor the third iteration of Leaders across Borders to advance binational leadership development for public health and health care professionals working to improve community health across and along the border region.
• Conduct the Binational Border Health Research Work Group Meeting to identify processes for collaborative cross-border research that can be replicated and to promote resource sharing and collaborative partnerships.
• Implement Phase IV of the Healthy Border 2010/2020 Strategic Plan to improve quality of life and to eliminate health disparities along the U.S.-México border.
• Sponsor the 9th Annual Border Binational Health Week to promote borderwide sustainable partnerships that can address border health problems.
• Establish the Prevention and Health Promotion among Vulnerable Populations Initiative to improve health outcomes among vulnerable populations living along the U.S.-México border by increasing health-seeking behavior and strengthening the delivery of health referral services and primary health care.
The following list identifies the primary achievements of the United States-México Border Health Commission (BHC) from 2000 to the present (most recent on top):

**Initiatives and Activities**

- Sponsored *Vulnerable Populations Initiative Stakeholders Meetings* in 2013 (in Calexico and San Diego, California; Nogales and Yuma, Arizona; and Eagle Pass and El Paso, Texas) to convene stakeholders from various local and state agencies, organizations, universities, and education centers in each respective sub-regional outreach area on the U.S. side of the border that serve vulnerable populations who can 1) define population cohorts with limited or no access to health and human services and the barriers to access within each outreach sub-region; 2) prioritize types of health and human services that adversely affect these population cohorts; 3) identify/evaluate current health and human services referral systems and networks and document gaps in these systems; and 4) propose strategic and operational interventions.

- Sponsored *Obesity Mini Fora* in 2012 (in Laredo, Presidio, Eagle Pass, and McAllen, Texas) to identify interventions relevant to obesity-related issues affecting various border communities that can be used to inform the development of the 2013 *U.S.-México Border Obesity Prevention Summit*.

- Sponsored the annual *Border Binational Health Week* to promote sustainable partnerships that can address border health problems in the U.S.-México border region (2004 to present).

- Sponsored the annual border *National Infant Immunization Week/Vaccination Week in the Americas* to promote vaccination in the U.S.-México border region (2004 to 2012).

- Sponsored the *Border Models of Excellence Initiative* (2010-focus on childhood obesity and TB programs; 2003-focus on promotora programs) to recognize community-based health programs and initiatives along the U.S.-México border that have made great strides in improving community health.

- Established the *U.S.-México Border Binational Infectious Disease Initiative* in 2010 to document critical infectious disease issues impacting the border region (sponsored conferences to date: 2012-Austin, Texas; 2011-El Paso, Texas; 2010-San Antonio, Texas). The next conference is scheduled to take place in 2014.

- Established the *U.S.-México Border TB Consortium* in 2010 to enhance the integration of binational and borderwide efforts on mutual TB issues (sponsored meetings to date: 2012-Las Cruces, New Mexico; 2011 and 2010-San Diego, California).


- Established the *Leaders across Borders* binational leadership training program in 2009 with two graduations accomplished to date (2011-Tucson, Arizona; 2010 El Paso, Texas). The next cohort is scheduled to graduate in October 2013.

- Sponsored the *Binational Health Councils’ Strategic Planning Workshops* to enhance the organizational capacity of binational health councils, analyze and discuss border health strategic priorities proposed in respective sister-city sub-regions, and provide a forum to present local public health recommendations to borderwide organizations that have a mandate to improve border health (2011, 2010-El Paso, Texas; 2008-San Antonio, Texas).

- Sponsored *Binational Border Health Research Work Group & Expert Panel Meetings* (2012-San Diego, California; 2011-Las Cruces, New Mexico; 2010-El Paso, Texas; 2009-La Jolla, California, 2008-McAllen, Texas, 2007-El Paso, Texas) to guide the plans and actions of the BHC in its efforts to develop a comprehensive borderwide agenda for the U.S.-México border.
Primary Achievement Products of the United States-México Border Health Commission
2000-2013

- Established the Binational Border Health Research Expert Panel in 2007 to bring together selected border research partners who serve in key leadership positions within their respective institutions to advise the BHC on border health issues.

- Established the U.S.-México Binational Border Health Research Forum in 2006 to provide U.S. and Mexican academic and research institutions collaborative opportunities to initiate cross-border research that governments can use to establish policy (sponsored fora to date: 2012-San Diego, California; 2011-Las Cruces, New Mexico; 2009-La Jolla, California; 2006-Monterrey, Nuevo León).

- Supported the New Mexico-Chihuahua TB Pilot Project (2009-2012), an innovative binational project designed to improve surveillance, contact investigations, and directly-observed therapy of TB patients in the New Mexico-Chihuahua border region, focusing especially on small urban and rural areas within the Nuevo Casas Grandes Health Jurisdiction.


- Supported the Border Influenza Surveillance Network (2007) that operated sentinel sites and weekly reporting of influenza activity (including the H1N1 Pandemic) in the binational tri-state region of Southwestern New Mexico-Northern Chihuahua and West Texas. The network serves as a model for expansion throughout the border region.

- Sponsored the Binational Pandemic Avian Flu Forum (2006-Hermosillo, Sonora) to promote coordinated actions related to binational pandemic influenza planning which set the state for the Binational Pandemic Avian Flu Table Top Exercise (2007-San Diego, California), the final installment of a two-phase binational influenza initiative.


- Proposed establishment of the U.S.-border states and México Early Warning Infectious Disease Surveillance in 2003, a project designed to improve the ability to rapidly detect, identify, and report infectious disease outbreaks.

- Sponsored the Ventanillas de Salud (VDS) Pilot Project in 2003 by establishing VDS centers in three Mexican consulates along the border that focused on providing information and referral services. To date, the Mexican Secretariats of Health and Foreign Relations have expanded the VDS program to 50 Mexican consulates in the United States.


- Established state outreach offices in each of the ten U.S.-México border states (2000).

Publications

Proceedings Reports

- U.S.-México Border Child and Adolescent Health Forum (2009)
Primary Achievement Products of the United States-México Border Health Commission
2000-2013


Topic Briefs
• The U.S.-México Border Health Commission and Promotores (2012)
• Healthy Border 2010/2020 Initiative (2011)
• United States-México Binational Coordination in Epidemiological Surveillance, Reporting and Response (2009)
• United States-México Cross-Border Pilot Project (2009)
• Health Care Reform: Border Challenges and Opportunities (2009)

White Papers
• Binational Collaboration and Infectious Disease Surveillance along the U.S.-México Border (2011)
• Health Disparities and the U.S.-México Border: Challenges and Opportunities (2010)
• Childhood Obesity and the U.S.-México Border (2009)
• Tuberculosis along the U.S.-México Border (2009)
• U.S. Border States Early Warning Infectious Disease Surveillance Project (2009)

Other Publications
• Newsletters (2003-2012)
• Annual Reports (2001-2011)
• Annual Accomplishments (2006-2009; 2011-2012)
• Annual Meeting Summary Reports (2008, 2010-2011)
• BHC 10-Year Anniversary Report (2010)
• Frontera Saludable: Reporte de Medio Plazo (2010)
• Situación de la Tuberculosis en la Frontera México-Estados Unidos (2010)
• Healthy Border 2010 Midterm Review U.S. Border Area (2009)
• U.S. Border Lead Outreach Project: Lead in Traditional Pottery (2008)
• Border Models of Excellence Compendium: Community Health Worker (Promotora) Programs (2003)