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

Strategic Principles
Leadership-Focus-Venue

Strategic Priorities
The priority areas for program year 2014–2015 include the following:

- Transversal Axis Priorities
  - Strategic planning
  - Access to care
  - Research
- Strategic Priorities
  - Infectious diseases
  - Degenerative chronic diseases
  - Maternal and child health
  - Accidents (injuries/road traffic accidents)
  - Mental health (addiction, depression, violence)

Strategic Actions
The following action items include activities and product-oriented, measurable outputs planned for 2014–2015:

- Sponsor the annual Border Binational Health Week to promote borderwide sustainable partnerships that can address border health problems.
- Convene the Border Reproductive Health Technical Work Group to develop a strategic plan inclusive of long-term goals and objectives that facilitate binational coordination and collaboration on reproductive health issues.
- Coordinate train-the-trainer events for community health workers, known as promotores along the U.S.-México border, in U.S. border cities that focus on community mental health and substance use disorders in non-specialized health settings.
- Sponsor the fifth iteration of Leaders across Borders to advance binational leadership development for public health and health care professionals working to improve community health along the U.S.-México border region.
- Convene the Border Health Research Work Group to improve processes for collaborative cross-border research that can be replicated and to promote resource sharing and collaborative partnerships.
- Conduct the 6th Annual U.S.-México Tuberculosis (TB) Consortium Meeting to support and advance the work of the TB Continuity of Care and TB Legal Issues Work Groups as well as the Multi-drug Resistant 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 repatriation.
- Conduct the Border Health Research Forum to identify processes for collaborative cross-border research that can be replicated and promote resource sharing and collaborative partnerships.
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• Convene the U.S.-México Border Obesity Prevention Summit and Technical Work Group Meeting to develop a border obesity prevention strategy that can address critical obesity prevention and treatment issues affecting the U.S.-México border region.

• Launch the Healthy Border 2020 Initiative to improve quality of life and to eliminate health disparities along the U.S.-México border.

• Continue support for the Prevention and Health Promotion among Vulnerable Populations Initiative activities identified by local and regional stakeholders that can improve access to healthcare services for vulnerable populations living along the U.S.-México border, including establishing a 2-1-1 health referral services and primary health care in rural areas of California and New Mexico.

• Continue promotion of the Community-Based Healthy Border Initiative in support of year-round regional activities and events that focus on BHC priorities.

Initiatives and Activities

The following list identifies the primary achievements of the U.S.-México Border Health Commission (BHC) from 2000 to present (most recent on top):

• 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).

• Developed the Border Promotores de Salud Initiative in 2014 to establish a regional network of promotores that supports BHC strategic objectives as well as those of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Foster a 21st Century Health Workforce. The BHC aims to establish a communication and information platform for promotores along the U.S.-México border and initiate training opportunities in support of developing a regional workforce to better serve the needs of border communities.

• Established a partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2014 to identify mutual areas of interest and collaborative efforts in support of the EPA’s Border 2020 Program goals and the BHC’s Healthy Border 2020 Initiative and other priorities.

• Established the U.S.-México Border Reproductive Health Initiative in 2013 to address reproductive health inequities and related issues impacting U.S.-México border populations and increase the region’s visibility within global reproductive health. In 2014, the BHC held the first U.S.-México Border Reproductive Health Summit in San Diego, California, bringing together more than 190 researchers, practitioners, and policy leaders to advance evidence-based reproductive health practices, policies, and programs that support the safety and choices of women and girls on regional, national, and global levels.

• Established the Border Obesity Prevention (BOP) Initiative in 2013 to address rising trends in the prevalence of obesity along and across the binational border. The BHC convened the first BOP Summit in McAllen, Texas, bringing together subject matter experts in obesity, physical activity, and nutrition representing local, state, and federal government and nongovernmental organizations and binational academic institutions to develop a strategic action plan that prioritizes obesity as a regional health concern. In 2014, the BOP Technical Work Group met to initiate the development of a five-year binational strategic plan. The next summit and technical work group meeting will take place on August 4–6, 2015, in Laredo, Texas.

• Sponsored the Prevention and Health Promotion among Vulnerable Populations Initiative Regional Stakeholder Meetings in 2013 (in Calexico and San Diego, California; Nogales and Yuma, Arizona; and Eagle Pass and El Paso, Texas), convening 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 define population cohorts with limited or no access to health and human services and the barriers to access; identify/evaluate current health and human services referral systems/networks and document system gaps; and propose strategic/operational interventions.
Established the Leaders across Borders binational leadership training program in 2009, with four graduations accomplished to date (2010–El Paso, Texas; 2011–Tucson, Arizona; 2013–San Diego, California; 2014–San Diego, California). The 2015 cohort graduation ceremony will be held on October 7–9 in Phoenix, Arizona. To date, more than 70 binational public health leaders have graduated from the LaB program.

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 include those held in 2010 and 2011 in San Diego, California, and 2012, 2013, and 2014 in Las Cruces, New Mexico. The next consortium meeting is scheduled to take place in June 2, 2015, in El Paso, Texas.

Technical work groups established as part of the TB Consortium have completed or are working toward the following:

- U.S.-México Legal Manual for TB Patient Continuity of Care
  In 2015, the U.S. Section of the TB Legal Issues Work Group drafted its portion of the manual, currently under review, that identifies and describes U.S. laws and procedures for TB case management and transfer.

- Project Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) Site Visit
  The MDR-TB Consultative Network of Experts participated in a live Project ECHO demonstration in 2015 to identify the feasibility of establishing a TB Project ECHO to coordinate complex binational MDR-TB cases between U.S. and Mexican clinicians and public health experts. The BHC is currently reviewing a TB Project ECHO proposal that identifies a timeline and budget considerations to determine its feasibility.

- U.S.-México Border Environmental Scan
  In 2014, the Continuity of Care work Group conducted a regional environmental scan to identify binational TB projects that serve border communities toward establishing an effective communication protocol. The work group cochairs are currently working to determine the feasibility of evaluating projects.

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: 2010-San Antonio, Texas; 2011-El Paso, Texas; 2012-Austin, Texas; 2014-El Paso, Texas).

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


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.


Sponsored the Binational Border Health Research Work Group & Expert Panel Meetings (2014, 2012-San Diego, California; 2011-Las Cruces, New Mexico; 2010-El Paso, Texas; 2009-La Jolla, California, 2008-McAllen, Texas, 2007-El Paso, Texas; 2006-Monterrey, Nuevo León) to guide the BHC’s plans and actions in its efforts to develop a comprehensive borderwide agenda. The next meetings will take place on September 24–25, 2015, in Monterrey, Nuevo León.

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.
• 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 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.

• Sponsored youth focus groups in 2010 in support of developing an obesity and diabetes prevention multi-media campaign. Outcomes included fotonovelas and movies.

• Sponsored the U.S.-México Border Child and Adolescent Forum in 2009 in El Paso, Texas to address critical issues affecting children and adolescents in the border region.

• 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 research.

• Supported the Border Influenza Surveillance Network (2007) that operated sentinel sites and weekly influenza activity reporting (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.

• Sponsored the Binational TB Card Pilot Project in 2003, a critical step in responding to the TB health crisis in the U.S.-México border region.

• 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 10 U.S.-México border states (2000).

Publications

Proceedings Reports
• Border Reproductive Health Summit (2014)
• U.S.-México Border Child and Adolescent Health Forum (2009)
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**Topic Briefs**
- **Healthy Border 2010/2020 Initiative** (2011)
- **United States-México Binational Coordination in Epidemiological Surveillance, Reporting, and Response** (2009)
- **Health Care Reform: Border Challenges and Opportunities** (2009)

**White Papers**
- **Access to Health Care in the U.S.-México Border Region: Challenges and Opportunities** (2014)
- **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 United States-México Border** (2009)
- **U.S. Border States Early Warning Infectious Disease Surveillance Project** (2009)

**Other Publications**
- **Newsletters** (2003–2014)
- **Annual Reports** (2001–2012)
- **BHC 10-Year Anniversary Report** (2010)
- **Frontera Saludable 2010 Reporte de Medio Plazo: Frontera Norte de México** (2010)
- **Situación de la Tuberculosis en la Frontera México-Estados Unidos** (2010)
- **Border Models of Excellence Compendium: Community Health Worker (Promotora) Programs** (2003)