

Syndromic Surveillance Consortium of Southeast Texas (SSCSeT) Charter and Bylaws

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ARTICLE I: NAME

Section 1.1 Name. The name of the organization shall be “Syndromic Surveillance Consortium of Southeast Texas” and shall be referred to within this document as “the Consortium”.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Section 2.1 Purpose. The purpose of the Consortium is to bring together jurisdictional public health agencies, health data providers and other relevant stakeholders primarily in Public Health Region 6/5S to collaborate and coordinate on matters of science, policy, and utilization of technological advances in syndromic surveillance as it pertains to the syndromic surveillance system installed and operated by the Houston Health Department which shall be referred to as “the Network”.

Section 2.2 Scope. The scope of the consortium shall be limited to the following items:

- 1) Communication and collaboration with other syndromic surveillance initiatives be they statewide, national, or international
- 2) Jurisdictional etiquette regarding data collection, sharing and use
- 3) Provider outreach
- 4) Building regional expertise in the areas of Meaningful Use and HL7 messaging standards
- 5) Research and public health practice
- 6) Training and utilization of system features
- 7) Education regarding acceptable uses of the technology which will include best practices
- 8) Communication regarding system issues affecting usability, service level agreements and costs
- 9) Assuring transparency of technology and operations to all members

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Section 3.1 Definitions

3.1.1 “Members” are the participating Jurisdictions, Providers, and Stakeholders that form the Consortium

3.1.1.2 “Jurisdictions” are public health departments that provide epidemiological and disease control services for a given geographical region that choose to participate in the Consortium.

3.1.1.3 “Providers” are health care institutions providing patient treatment that submit syndromic data to the Network and may be further classified by size or type.

3.1.1.4 “Stakeholders” are groups, organizations or institutions with an interest in syndromic surveillance in southeast Texas who may affect or be affected by policies and activities of the Consortium.

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3.1.2 “Representatives” are individuals who attend Consortium meetings and conduct Consortium business at the behest of their Member agency. Members are not limited in the number of Representatives who may attend meetings or conduct business.

3.1.3 “Participation”

3.1.3.1 Participating Jurisdictions are those cooperating jurisdictions having one or more providers submit syndromic data to the Network.

3.1.3.2 Participating Providers are health care institutions that submit data to the Network.

3.1.3.3 Participating Stakeholders are those invited groups, organizations or institutions that attend Consortium meetings regularly.

3.1.4 “Seats” for voting are the allotted to Members of the Consortium and shall be filled by any Member’s Representative. Seated Representatives shall vote on Consortium business including motions and the election of officers.

Section 3.2 Apportionment of Seats

3.2.1 One (1) Seat shall be allotted to each Jurisdictional Member. The founding Jurisdictional Members in the Consortium are the Texas counties of Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Hardin, Harris, Jefferson, Montgomery, and Orange and the City of Beaumont, the City of Houston and the City of Port Arthur. Additionally a seat is allotted to DSHS Region 6/5S covering the Texas counties of Austin, Colorado, Liberty, Matagorda, Walker, Waller, and Wharton.

3.2.2 One (1) Seat shall be allotted to each type of participating Provider:

3.2.2.1 Emergency Centers whether stand alone or attached to a hospital

3.2.2.2 Inpatient Hospitals

3.2.2.3 Outpatient Clinics including Urgent Care Centers

3.2.2.4 Eligible Professionals as defined by the Medicare EHR Incentive Program

3.2.3 One (1) Seat shall be allotted to each of the following Stakeholders:

3.2.3.1 Gulf Coast Regional Extension Center (GCREC)

3.2.3.2 SouthEast Texas Regional Advisory Council (SETRAC)

3.2.3.3 University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School for Biomedical Informatics

3.2.3.4 Greater Houston Healthconnect Health Information Exchange (GHHIE)

Section 3.3 Addition and Removal of Seats

Seats shall be added by 2/3ds vote of the Consortium. Seats are eligible for removal in the event that a Member ceases participating in the Network and shall be dissolved by 2/3ds vote.

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ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS

Section 4.1 Service: Officers shall serve as conveners, organizers and communicators, but without different or greater authority than each general member and shall be elected from the body of Jurisdictional Representatives.

Section 4.2 Nominations: Any Seated member may nominate any attending Representative.

Section 4.3 Terms: Each Officer shall serve one (1) term and each term shall last no longer than twenty four (24) consecutive months. No officer shall be eligible for reelection to the same position within six (6) years of election.

Section 4.4 Positions

4.4.1 Chair convenes and leads meetings, prepares meeting agenda items with assistance from the Secretary and calls special meetings

4.4.2 Vice Chair assists the Chair, and leads meetings in the absence of the Chair

4.4.3 Secretary maintains FTP/website/email/communications, coordinates the meeting agenda with the Chair, takes minutes during meetings and distributes agendas and minutes to Member Representatives

Section 4.5 Elections. Election of officers may be held by anonymous Doodle or other similar type poll. (This sentence needs clarification) redacted

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS

Section 5.1 Regular Meetings. Regular meeting will be held quarterly.

Section 5.2 Special Meetings. Special meetings can be called as needed by any Consortium member after approval from the Chair and coordinated through the Secretary

ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

Section 6.1 Committees. Committees shall be formed for achieving the goals of the group and guided by the purpose and scope outlined in ARTICLE II.

6.1.1 Committees may be standing or temporary and serve at the pleasure of the Consortium.

6.1.2 Committees develop policies for approval as well as implement approved policies and generally carry out the work of the Consortium.

6.1.3 Persons serving on Committees are assigned by Consortium Members. These persons may not necessarily represent their Member agencies at Consortium meetings but are assigned according to the needs of their Member agency.

ARTICLE VII: GOVERNANCE

Meetings shall be governed by general guidelines established in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

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ARTICLE VIII: POWERS

Section 8.1 In relation to Network-wide affairs:

8.1.1 The Consortium shall have the authority to set policy for the fair use of the Network by Consortium Members and for the resolution of issues as set forth in ARTICLE I of this charter.

Section 8.2 In relation to statewide affairs:

8.2.1 The Consortium shall have the authority to represent the Network to the DSHS Syndromic Surveillance Governance Council via communication through the PHR 6/5S Regional Advisory Committee.

Section 8.3 In relation to affairs outside the state:

8.3.1 The Consortium shall have the authority to represent the Network on issues of syndromic surveillance to appropriate entities outside the State of Texas.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Section 9.1 Amendments. These bylaws can be amended at any regular or special meeting providing that previous notice was given at the prior meeting in writing and sent to all members of the consortium by the secretary. Previous notice can be sent by email. Amendments can be passed by 2/3s vote.

ARTICLE X: Quorum

Section 10.1 Quorum. A Quorum is established when fifty one per cent of seats are filled at Consortium meetings.