

April 2021

From the CEO: The Light at the End of the Tunnel



This time last year, TETAF and Texas Perinatal Services was incredibly busy rescheduling surveys due to the COVID-19 pandemic. No surveys were conducted during the month of April as we regrouped to determine the best approach to safely surveying. Our team developed a COVID-19 Safety Plan, strategic communications, and a virtual survey process for surveys to continue during an uncertain time. Here we are one year later and our team is back in hospitals still strictly following our Safety Plan, and that is progress. While there is still more progress to be made during this pandemic, all steps toward returning to the world we once knew help us see that light at the end of the tunnel.

Our survey service lines are busy and it is a significantly better April than last year. As we approach the end of the maternal designation cycle, TETAF and Texas Perinatal Services will have surveyed 80% of the maternal hospitals designated in Texas. This takes a tremendous amount of work and I am proud of our team.

Speaking of progress, we are making significant strides at the Capitol to level funding for the Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) and EMS. Those efforts continue with additional committee meetings and visits with legislators. You can read more about those details in the article below. Also, TETAF hosted its Legislative Focus Week last week that included a virtual kickoff. It included a Q&A with Rep. Donna Howard (D-Austin) and she addressed trauma funding. We would like to thank Rep. Howard for taking a few minutes of her busy schedule to answer our questions.

We know that with the ongoing pandemic and the historic winter storm, many of you continue to address challenges in your area. I hope there is a light at the end of the tunnel for everyone soon. Thank you for all you do.

Stay well,

Dinah

87th Legislative Session

TETAF has been working diligently during this legislative session to level funding for the Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) and EMS. The initial proposed budget submitted by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) required a 5% cut to all programs. TETAF developed a rider to level funding for EMS and RACs. Last week, Article II in the Texas Senate restored the cut in funding for the RACs and EMS. This amounts to approximately \$315,000 in funding for the RACs and approximately \$91,000 for EMS.

Additionally, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Article II has advanced the rider that TETAF submitted to "pend plus" level, which means it is at a high priority for funding and keeps it in discussion.

TETAF would like to thank Rep. John Raney (R-Bryan) for his support of this rider as well as Senators Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham), Dawn Buckingham (R-Lakeway), Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville), and Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown).

Additionally, there is an EMTF rider (Rider 20 of Article II) seeking \$2 million in federal funds for each fiscal year of the biennium that would go to the eight EMTF regions to fund programs. Of that funding, \$500,000 would go to Southwest Texas Regional Advisory Council (STRAC) as the state coordinating office. An additional \$2.5 million would go to STRAC to replace critical emergency response equipment.

The executive director of STRAC and former TETAF board member, Eric Epley, testified on SB 984 Wednesday, March 31 during the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services regarding the RACs' data collection efforts during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. You can [watch the testimony here](#).



The TETAF Advocacy team continues to monitor bills moving forward that focus on pandemic response, disaster response, and data collection.

We are continuing our Legislative Workgroup Meetings via Zoom every Friday from 10:00 to 10:30 a.m. except for next week due to the Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC) meeting. **Next week's meeting will be Thursday, April 8 at 10:00 a.m. CST.** If you are active in the trauma, emergency care, or perinatal areas you are invited to participate.

[Register for the TETAF Legislative Workgroup Meetings](#)

TETAF Legislative Focus Week

TETAF would like to thank everyone for your involvement during the TETAF Legislative Focus Week. It was a successful week of engaging activity and progress. We appreciate everyone who reached out to their legislators. Legislative contacts are encouraged at all times, not just during a designated week. If you have any questions about contacting a legislator, please contact Dinah Welsh at dwelsh@tetaf.org.

If you did not have the opportunity to join the virtual kickoff and hear from Rep. Donna Howard (D-Austin), the video can be viewed on the [TETAF Advocacy webpage](#) or you can watch it below.



GETAC Meeting Rescheduled for April 9

Due to technical difficulties during the Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC) meeting on February 26, the first quarter meeting is rescheduled for Friday, April 9 at 9:00 a.m. CST. You can [register for the meeting on the GETAC webpage](#).

The second quarter meeting will be virtual on June 25, 2021.



Aaron Rogers Joins TETAF Team

TETAF is pleased to introduce Aaron Rogers as the newest member to the TETAF survey team. Aaron has health care experience and has worked as a program manager and member solutions manager.

Welcome to the TETAF team Aaron!



Virtual Run will Support Trauma Survivors

The American Trauma Society (ATS) and Trauma Survivors Network (TSN) will host "Race to Rebuild: A Virtual Walk/Run/Cycle/Roll to Support Trauma Survivors." The virtual 10K/5K/1 mile run/walk/cycle/roll event can be completed anytime between May 1 and May 31. The event benefits the programs and services provided by the ATS and TSN. For more information and to register, please [click here](#).

Year of the Nurse Extended

The American Nurses Association (ANA) Enterprise joins with the World Health Organization (WHO) in extending the [Year of the Nurse and Midwife](#) into 2021 because of the impact of the pandemic.



The recognition will build on the increased visibility of nurses' contributions from 2020 and ANA's expansion of National Nurses Week to Nurses Month during the month of May.



In the Spotlight

Whether it is the Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) or our hospital partners, we are proud to see these organizations and individuals in the spotlight for their efforts in the trauma care:

[Memorial Hermann receives Level III designation for trauma center at Cypress hospital](#)

[Antibody treatment for Covid patients becoming more popular in El Paso](#)



Mark Your Calendar

[GETAC meeting - April 9](#)

[National Minority Health Month](#)

[National Distracted Driving Awareness Month](#)

[Month](#)

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