

Preserve & Increase Funding for Regional Health Care Systems

Historic population growth and growing demands on the system have solidified an ever-increasing demand for trauma, emergency, and disaster-related health care services. Rural communities already are experiencing a lack of access to timely emergency health care. Urban areas have more resources but still struggle to maintain services. The health care system has been stretched to the limit with Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Regional Advisory Councils (RACs), the Emergency Medical Task Force, and hospitals serving as frontline responders during disasters.

TETAF supports increased funding for the state's trauma system. Each aspect of the trauma and emergency health care system – trauma hospitals, EMS providers, and RACs – must be adequately funded to support all Texans when unplanned needs arise.

TETAF supports increased funding to strengthen regional health care systems through the following priorities:

Increase Funding for Regional Advisory Councils

RACs are regularly engaged in coordinating regional trauma and emergency preparedness, improving cardiac, stroke, and perinatal systems of care, and educating communities on injury prevention. While the state's expectations of these entities has increased significantly since creation in 1989, funding has not kept up with demand. Increasing funding for the system is critical.

Improve and Fund Statewide Health Data Collection Efforts

While the State of Texas has historically provided funds for a statewide trauma registry, the data collected and shared has lacked robust, timely value to truly impact responses and improve patient outcomes. RACs have initiated regional data collection efforts to improve trauma, cardiac and stroke outcomes; however, a coordinated statewide initiative for trauma, cardiac, and stroke data is needed.

Establish a Statewide Perinatal Database

While it is believed that levels of care designations for neonatal and maternal care have improved care for mothers and babies, Texas lacks the patient-level data to verify. Texas should fund the establishment of a statewide perinatal database to gather consistent data, through an established and reliable process.

Improve Efforts Focused on the Health Care Workforce Shortage

The health care workforce has faced unprecedented demands during the COVID-19 pandemic which have now been followed by higher costs for wages and fewer qualified individuals. Additional efforts and funding are needed to provide more recruiting and training within the hospital and pre-hospital settings.