

- SUBJECT:** Creating a *Streptococcus pneumoniae* state plan and prevention program
- COMMITTEE:** Public Health — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Price, Sheffield, Burkett, Cortez, Guerra, Oliverson, Zedler
0 nays
4 absent — Arévalo, Coleman, Collier, Klick
- WITNESSES:** For — Marilyn Doyle, Texas Medical Association (*Registered, but did not testify*); Bill Kelly, City of Houston Mayor's Office; Christine Yanas, Methodist Healthcare Ministries)
Against — None
On — (*Registered, but did not testify*): Janna Zumbrun, Department of State Health Services)
- BACKGROUND:** *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (pneumococcus) is a bacteria that can cause both invasive diseases such as meningitis and non-invasive diseases such as pneumonia.
- DIGEST:** HB 970 would require the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to develop a state plan and an education and prevention program for diseases caused by *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. The bill also would allow DSHS to conduct a study on the current and future impact of *Streptococcus pneumoniae* on the state.
- State plan.** The bill would require DSHS to develop a state plan for prevention and treatment of diseases caused by *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. DSHS would be required to use existing resources and programs to the extent possible and would review and modify the plan at least once every five years and may update it biennially.

The state plan would include strategies for prevention and treatment of

diseases caused by *Streptococcus pneumoniae* in specific demographic groups that are disproportionately affected, including the elderly, children under two years old, those living in long-term care facilities, those with a chronic heart or lung disease, smokers, and individuals with asplenia.

DSHS would seek the advice of the following groups in developing the plan:

- the public, including those who have been infected with *Streptococcus pneumoniae*;
- each state agency that provides *Streptococcus pneumoniae* services or has duties related to diseases caused by the bacteria, including the Health and Human Services Commission and its departments, the Employees Retirement System and the Teacher Retirement System;
- any advisory body that addresses issues related to diseases caused by the bacteria;
- public advocates concerned with *Streptococcus pneumoniae*-related issues;
- service providers to individuals who have a disease caused by *Streptococcus pneumoniae*; and
- a statewide professional association of physicians.

Education and prevention program. The bill would require the Department of State Health Services to develop a program to heighten awareness and enhance knowledge and understanding of *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. As part of the program, DSHS would:

- conduct health education, public awareness, and community outreach activities to promote public awareness and knowledge about *Streptococcus pneumoniae* risk factors, the value of early detection, availability of screening services, and available treatment options for diseases caused by the bacteria; and
- post on the DSHS website the available prevention, treatment, and detection options for diseases caused by *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, including information on risk factors, methods of

transmission, and the value of early detection.

Study. The bill would allow DSHS, using existing resources, to include as part of the education and prevention program a study to estimate the current and future impact in Texas of diseases caused by streptococcus pneumoniae.

HB 970 would take effect September 1, 2017.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

HB 970 would help prevent deaths and illnesses related to Streptococcus pneumoniae by developing a state plan and a program for preventing and treating these diseases. The program would include health education, public awareness, and community outreach. Streptococcus pneumoniae is a bacteria associated with many deaths in Texas. Anyone can contract Streptococcus pneumoniae, but it can be deadly for young children and people over the age of 65, as well as those with weak immune systems. Common illnesses caused by Streptococcus pneumoniae include pneumonia, meningitis, ear infections, sinus infections, and bacteremia.

The bill would require the Department of State Health Services to use existing resources to develop this state plan and program so no appropriation would be necessary to establish this important public health program.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.