



The Sexually Transmitted Disease/Human Immunodeficiency Virus (STD/HIV) Prevention Services Grant Program

Dallas County Health and Human Services

Results in Brief

Why OIG Conducted This Audit

The Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Inspector General Audit and Inspections Division (OIG Audit) conducted an audit of Dallas County Health and Human Services, a local health department administering sexually transmitted disease (STD) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) control and prevention activities under the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) STD/HIV Prevention Services Grant Program.

This program provides essential services designed to prevent and control the spread of STDs through monitoring, surveilling, and responding to STD outbreaks.

For the period from January 1, 2019, through August 31, 2021, Dallas County Health and Human Services had a total budget of \$7.9 million, had total expenses of \$8.9 million, and received reimbursement from DSHS of \$7.8 million for the STD/HIV Prevention Services Grant Program.

Summary of Review

The audit objective was to determine whether Dallas County Health and Human Services had processes and controls in place to ensure it administered the STD/HIV Prevention Services Grant Program in accordance with selected grant agreement requirements for performance, data management, reporting, and grant expenditures.

Conclusion

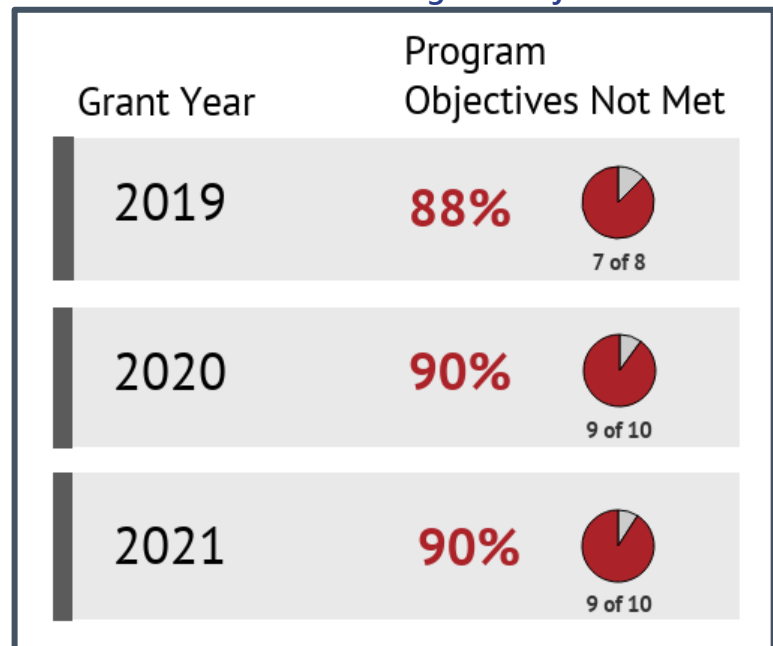
Dallas County Health and Human Services performed key sexually transmitted disease (STD) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) prevention services activities; however, it did not have processes in place to ensure (a) program objectives were met, (b) financial expenditures were recorded accurately, and (c) compliance with a selected security and confidentiality requirement was achieved.

Key Results

Dallas County Health and Human Services performed grant agreement activities; however, it consistently did not meet program objectives designed to measure the effectiveness of the STD/HIV Prevention Services Grant Program.

Specifically, Dallas County Health and Human Services did not meet 25 of 28 (89.3 percent) program objectives reviewed as part of this audit. Figure 1 details the number of program objectives Dallas County Health and Human Services did not meet by grant year.

Figure 1: Dallas County Health and Human Services' Performance of Program Objectives



Source: OIG Audit

The audit scope covered the period from January 1, 2019, through August 31, 2021. The audit included a review of Dallas County Health and Human Services' internal controls as well as testing of controls that were significant within the context of the audit objective.

Background

The DSHS STD/HIV Prevention Services Grant Program is designed to control and prevent the spread of STDs, including Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and viral hepatitis.

Dallas County Health and Human Services performs STD/HIV Prevention Services Grant Program activities to prevent and control the spread of STDs. The prevention activities include identifying individuals with STDs, identifying partners of those diagnosed with STDs, and connecting both the diagnosed individual and their partners to care and treatment. The control activities include conducting surveillance, responding to STD-related outbreaks, and promoting U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-recommended practices to relevant providers.

Dallas County Health and Human Services directly administers STD testing and provides STD counseling. In addition, DSHS assigns outreach activities to Dallas County Health and Human Services, which then provides education, outreach, and screening services to individuals diagnosed with STDs and other at-risk populations. DSHS acts as a pass-through entity between the CDC and Dallas County Health and Human Services for STD prevention and control programs.

Management Response

Dallas County Health and Human Services agreed with the audit recommendations and indicated corrective actions would be implemented by October 2022.

For more information, contact:
OIGAuditReports@hhs.texas.gov

Additionally, Dallas County Health and Human Services did not ensure expenditures were incurred and allocated to the correct grant year. Specifically, of the expenses tested, Dallas County Health and Human Services did not provide sufficient documentation to support:

- 13 of 22 expenses, totaling \$90,759, in 2019
- 10 of 14 expenses, totaling \$101,939, in 2020
- 10 of 12 expenses, totaling \$85,425, in 2021

Further, Dallas County Health and Human Services did not always sufficiently support the salaries it charged to the STD/HIV Prevention Services Grant Program. Specifically, Dallas County Health and Human Services did not provide sufficient documentation to support:

- 4 of 27 tested salary expenses, totaling \$22,437, in 2019
- 4 of 29 tested salary expenses, totaling \$20,967, in 2020
- 1 of 27 tested salary expenses, totaling \$3,745, in 2021

In addition, Dallas County Health and Human Services did not have effective security and confidentiality controls in place to ensure required documentation was maintained.

Recommendations

Dallas County Health and Human Services should:

- Implement (a) processes to identify when grant activities are not meeting program objectives and (b) initiatives to improve performance.
- Ensure it has processes and controls in place to ensure grant activities are allocated to the appropriate year and limit reimbursement requests to allowable grant activities for the STD/HIV Prevention Services Grant Program.
- Ensure it has processes and controls in place to ensure salaries charged to the STD/HIV Prevention Services Grant Program are appropriate and supported with required documentation.
- Ensure all grantee staff with access to confidential information sign an annual confidentiality agreement and maintain a copy of each signed confidentiality agreement.