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## **Biennial Disability Report Makes Recommendations to Improve Services**

As the number of Texans with disabilities continues to increase and people live longer, the state needs to expand services and make supports more flexible to meet individual needs, according to a new report on the status of disability services. The “2008 Texas Biennial Disability Report” makes 31 recommendations to improve services and supports while using state resources wisely.

This report was prepared jointly by the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) and Texas Office for Prevention of Developmental Disabilities (TOPDD). It was designed as a tool to help policy makers, advocates and others understand the scope of needs, services and supports for Texans with disabilities and as a guide for future policy development and decision making procedures.

*Some of the key concepts in the recommendations include:*

- Develop and implement a comprehensive plan to reduce the institutional bias in long-term services and support systems and redirect funds to community services infrastructure by 2018.
- Expand the capacity of the community services system at a steady pace by serving a minimum of an additional 4,604 people each year between 2009 and 2018 in Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waivers for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Address insufficiencies in payment rates for community care services to ensure a stable, high quality community service system.
- Strengthen current processes to ensure that residents of institutions receive appropriate education about, and are able to access community options.
- Enhance the capacity of community services infrastructure to better support individuals with complex needs.
- Develop a reliable and accurate means for tracking service demand and associated trends.
- Ensure that people receiving services have meaningful participation on state/local committees working on policy, services and supports and program development.
- Provide insurance coverage for mental and behavioral disorders equal to other medical conditions.
- Increase services for awareness, prevention, and intervention for individuals at risk for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.

The “2008 Texas Biennial Disability Report” is online at [http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/resources/publications/biennial\\_report/biennialindex.asp](http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/resources/publications/biennial_report/biennialindex.asp). For a print copy, call Koren Vogel at 1-800-262-0334 or (512) 437-5416, e-mail [koren.vogel@tcdd.state.tx.us](mailto:koren.vogel@tcdd.state.tx.us) or write to: Texas Council for DD, 6201 E Oltorf, Suite 600, Austin, TX 78741-7509.