

FYI Monthly e-News

For Your Information – August 2010
Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities

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The “FYI” is on the Internet at <http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/resources/publications/fyi/fyindex.asp>.

FYI *Monthly e-News*

August 2010

TEXAS UPDATE & OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

Senate Finance Committee Seeks Input on SSLCs & Community Services

The Senate Finance Committee has requested input from invited speakers and the public on August 18, 2010, in Austin, on implementation of several bills the Legislature passed in 2009 related to state supported living centers (SSLCs, previously called state schools) and efforts to serve more individuals in the community. This includes an appropriations contingency rider (Section 48) to reshape the service system and support more individuals in the community; Senate Bill 643 to increase oversight/protections for individuals in SSLCs; and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) settlement agreement terms regarding SSLCs. Invited speakers at the hearing include the Department of Aging and Disabilities (DADS) Commissioner Chris Traylor and Assistant Commissioner for SSLCs Chris Adams. A link to the hearing notice, for more details, is at <http://www.legis.state.tx.us/Committees/MeetingsByCmte.aspx?Leg=81&Chamber=S&CmteCode=C540>.

The Section 48 Contingency Appropriations allocated \$464.5 million in state and federal funds to **reduce the interest/waiting lists** for home and community-based programs and expand waiver slots in the community by 7,832 by August 2011. Section 48 also requires DADS to increase the number of slots during fiscal years 2010-2011 for (1) individuals moving out of medium and large intermediate care facility for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ICFs/MR), (2) children aging out of foster care services, (3) children who are at risk of being institutionalized, and (4) individuals at imminent risk of institutionalization.

Section 48 also required that [case management services](#) were moved from HCS providers to local Mental Retardation Authorities, which was done on June 1, 2010. It also requires a study that is in progress on creating a [managed care pilot](#) for Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities, with recommendations due in October.

SB 463 required the following reforms. It:

- Established the **Office of the Independent Ombudsman** and a **new assistant commissioner** to oversee all SSLC operations. Information on the Ombudsman's office, as well as monthly and biannual reports from the office, is at <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/SSLCombudsman/index.html>.

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Senate Finance Committee Hearing *Continued*

- Created a **hotline** to the SSLC Ombudsman's office to report allegations of misconduct. The toll-free hotline was activated in June 2010 and can be called 24 hours a day at 1-877-323-6466 or TDD 1-877-648-2233. E-mails can be sent to sslc.ombudsman@dads.state.tx.us.
- Enhanced **abuse and neglect investigations** by notifying and including the Health and Human Services' [Office of the Inspector General](#) in criminal investigations.
- Required **video surveillance cameras** in all common areas to reduce abuse and neglect. Video cameras were installed in the Corpus Christi SSLC in 2009, and installation is to be completed in the other 12 centers by August 2011.
- Required FBI fingerprint **background checks** and random drug testing of employees.
- Increased **penalties for employees who abuse or neglect residents**, or who fail to report these.
- Required independent **mortality assessments** to determine if deaths could have been prevented for individuals with a developmental disability who were receiving services from DADS in the community or an institution at the time of their death.

Information on status of the (DOJ) settlement agreement regarding SSLCs is in an article on page 3 on [Baseline Monitoring Reports on SSLCs](#). Each facility is monitored in 20 areas, including psychological, medical, nursing and dental care.

DADS Seeks Input on Draft Report on State Supported Living Centers

During fiscal years 2004-2009, the average enrollment of individuals in the state supported living centers (SSLCs) in Texas decreased by 7.14 percent, the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) stated in a draft report. The average enrollment in the centers, which were previously called state schools, decreased from 4,985 in 2004 to 4,629 in 2009. "The trend downward in enrollment continues in 2010 and is projected to do so through succeeding years," according to the "*Draft Report Update for State Supported Living Centers: Fiscal Years 2010-2011*" released on July 29, 2010.

The report also states that "Since FY2004, separations from state supported living centers have exceeded the number of admissions." In 2009, there were 177 admissions and 425 dismissals. Of the dismissals, 252 individuals moved to an alternate living environment, 136 died and 37 were discharged.

The draft report also provides an update on the provision of services and supports at the 12 state supported living centers operated by DADS and the intermediate care facility for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ICF/MR) component of the Rio Grande State Center that is operated by the Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

It contains six main sections:

- 1) Profiles the SSLCs in Texas.
- 2) State trends regarding the provision of services and supports for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) residing in SSLCs.
- 3) Initiatives that are leading to improved services and supports for persons residing in the SSLCs.
- 4) Factors affecting the future need for institutional services provided by these facilities.
- 5) The projected cost for maintaining these facilities.
- 6) A discussion of the future direction for providing services and supports at SSLCs in Texas.

The draft report is online at <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/homepage/SSLCupdatereport2010-2011.pdf>. **Comments on this report can be e-mailed** to jose.saenz@dads.state.tx.us by 5 p.m., August 13, 2010.

Baseline Monitoring Reports Done on State Supported Living Centers

Baseline reports by federal monitors on all 13 of the state supported living centers (SSLCs) were completed and posted on the Internet by mid-July 2010. **Reports added in July are for the centers in Richmond and San Angelo.** Reports that were previously online are for Abilene, Austin, Brenham, Corpus Christi, Denton, El Paso, Harlingen (the ICF/MR component of the Rio Grande State Center), Lufkin, Lubbock, Mexia and San Antonio. These reports were prepared as part of a 2009 settlement agreement between the state of Texas and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) regarding living conditions, medical care, investigations of abuse or neglect, serving individuals in the most integrated setting, and other areas reviewed at each facility.

In July, the three monitoring teams moved to the next stage of the settlement agreement and started formal compliance reviews that will be conducted at each facility every six months. Once a facility achieves substantial compliance with any substantive provision(s) of the agreement for one year, no further monitoring of that facility is required on that provision. Reports are issued about 45 days after each on-site review is done. The reports are at <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/monitors/reports/index.html>.

Like the baseline reviews, the compliance reviews are multiphased and include:

- A review of facility compliance status updates;
- An intensive five-day on-site compliance review at each facility; and
- Subsequent analysis of relevant data and information to determine compliance with each of the 20 required areas of improvement outlined in the settlement agreement.

Texas Organizations File Lawsuits to Increase Accessibility

In conjunction with the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26, 2010, several organizations in Texas filed lawsuits to increase accessibility for people with disabilities across the state. A statewide disability group, ADAPT of Texas, and the Texas Civil Rights Project (TCRP) teamed up to file more than 20 lawsuits targeting inaccessibility in restaurants, streets and municipal buildings, and by doctors and police officers. Meanwhile, South Texas Civil Rights Project filed lawsuits against the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and two Rio Grande Valley doctors, saying they failed to make required accommodations for people who are deaf.

The lawsuits were filed to draw attention to the fact that changes are still needed 20 years after the ADA was passed. They demonstrate a problem in awareness by the public, business owners, state and local entities, and public officials to make their places equally accessible to all people, explained TCRP attorney Joseph Berra. "These cases underline unjust barriers in the daily lives of people with disabilities and wounded veterans," he said. "We use litigation and education on every anniversary of the ADA and throughout the year to bring an end to discrimination and the promise of equal rights for all."

The Civil Rights Project filed six cases in Austin, including one against a Congressman Lamar Smith which states there is no wheelchair ramp to his Austin office, and another against The University of Texas School of Architecture for failing to provide full access to parts of Goldsmith Hall. The group also sued the city's Duck Tours for not being wheelchair accessible, a night club for not allowing a service dog to enter, and Seton Healthcare of Brackenridge, saying it refused to provide an interpreter after a person who is hearing-impaired was hit by a drunk driver.

Other lawsuits were filed in Eagle Pass over inaccessible city sidewalks, and in Bellville over recreational facilities that are inaccessible for fans with disabilities. Additionally, TCRP's Paso del Norte office filed several suits in the county and city of El Paso, including one stating the city council chambers are inaccessible to wheelchairs.

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Lawsuits filed to Increase Accessibility *Continued*

In South Texas, a Brownsville resident who is deaf said HHSC denied him an interpreter on four separate occasions, despite advance requests, and which resulted in him losing his food stamp benefits. A Mission resident said he waited nearly five hours at his physician's office for an interpreter that he was told was coming but never arrived. Eventually the patient returned with a friend who helped translate the personal discussion. Another man in McAllen requested an interpreter while taking his son to a pediatrician only to be told the office wouldn't pay since his 9-year-old child was not deaf.

"The ADA requires that public and private buildings and facilities be physically accessible to people with disabilities, as well as government and private programs and services," said TCRP Director James Harrington. "This runs the gamut from buildings, stores, parks, music venues, movie theaters, gas stations, and restaurants to jury service, interpreters for hospital and doctor visits, jumbo-tran signage at sports events -- all aspects of living in society."

For more information on the ADA, go to <http://www.dlrp.org> or contact the Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC) Southwest ADA Center in Houston at 1-800-949-4232.

HHS Strategic Plan for FY 2011-2015 Is Online

The Texas Health and Human Services System Strategic Plan for fiscal years (FY) 2011-2015 consolidates the strategic plans of the state's five health and human services (HHS) agencies into one system-wide planning document. It includes discussions on system-wide planning; planning at each agency plus their goals, objectives and strategies; and system-wide information technology. The 262-page plan is online at <http://www.hhs.state.tx.us/StrategicPlans/SP11-15/StPlan.shtml>.

The strategic plan assesses the economic, demographic, and legislative environment in which the five HHS agencies will operate during the plan period. It covers the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS), Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), and Department of State Health Services (DSHS).

The plan focuses on current and planned actions the agencies are undertaking to address the major challenges associated with significant population growth, the recent recession and increasing caseloads. *It identifies specific items of focus on under the following priorities:*

- Improve the health and well-being of Texans;
- Create opportunities for increased self-sufficiency and independence;
- Protect vulnerable Texans from abuse, neglect, and exploitation;
- Deliver the highest quality of customer service;
- Encourage partnership and community involvement; and
- Strengthen and support the health and human services workforce.

For a print copy of the strategic plan, contact the:
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Strategic Decision Support
PO Box 13247
Austin, TX 78711-3247
(512) 424-6659

The document is also available upon request in large print and Braille. Please contact the Division for Blind Services at the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services at (512) 377-0665.

Nation Celebrates ADA's 20th Anniversary; Announces New Efforts

On July 26, 2010, people across the United States celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and announced plans for new initiatives to improve opportunities for people with disabilities. The ADA gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age and religion. It also guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services and telecommunications. About one of every six Americans -- nearly 50 million people -- has a disability.

Highlights of some ADA activities and announcements follow, with links for more information.

- **President Barack Obama and other individuals spoke at an event commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Obama signed an executive order to increase employment of people with disabilities in federal jobs.** The president pointed out that, "Americans with disabilities have an employment rate far lower than that of Americans without disabilities, and they are underrepresented in the federal workforce. Individuals with disabilities currently represent just over five percent of the nearly 2.5 million people in the federal workforce, and individuals with targeted disabilities currently represent less than one percent of that workforce." He stated that "As the Nation's largest employer, the federal government must become a model for the employment of individuals with disabilities."

The president's remarks are at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-20th-anniversary-americans-with-disabilities-act>. A video of speakers at the White House event is at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/photos-and-video/video/20th-anniversary-americans-with-disabilities-act>. The executive order on employment is at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/executive-order-increasing-federal-employment-individuals-with-disabilities>.

- **The U.S. Department of Justice passed two new rules to prohibit disability-based discrimination by state and local government entities and private businesses** which become effective in 18 months. The 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design will require that new buildings, such as stores, restaurants, schools, stadiums, hospitals, hotels and theaters must be constructed in a way that is compliant with the new design standards for doors, windows, elevators and bathrooms. New rules also will cover recreational facilities like amusement parks, marinas, gyms, golf facilities and swimming pools, and municipal facilities like courtrooms and prisons. More details are at <http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/ADAregs2010.htm>.

- **The U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board issued proposed accessibility guidelines for buses**, over-the-road buses and vans used to transport people. Over-the-road buses, as defined by the ADA, have a passenger deck over a baggage compartment.

To access the proposals, click on the links below, or go to the links in the table of contents of the "Federal Register" for July 26, 2010, at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/a100726c.html (pages 43748–43789).

Accessibility Guidelines for Transportation Vehicles (buses) [\[TEXT\]](#) [\[PDF\]](#)

Comments must be received by Nov. 23, 2010.

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Nation Celebrates ADA's 20th Anniversary *Continued*

- **The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) published four new ADA/accessibility proposals on:**
 - The accessibility of websites for persons who are blind or have low vision;
 - The captioning and video description of movies shown in theaters;
 - Accessible equipment and furniture including medical equipment; and
 - The ability of 9-1-1 centers to take text and video calls from individuals with disabilities.

The proposals are in the form of advance notices of proposed rulemaking which provide information on these issues and ask questions seeking comments and information from the public. They are available in the “*Federal Register*” from July 26, 2010.

To access the proposals, click on the links below, or go to the links in the table of contents of the “*Federal Register*” at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/a100726c.html.

- Equipment and Furniture, pages 43452–43460; [\[TEXT\]](#) [\[PDF\]](#)
- 9-1-1 Accessibility, pages 43446–43452; [\[TEXT\]](#) [\[PDF\]](#)
- Web Accessibility, pages 43460–43467; [\[TEXT\]](#) [\[PDF\]](#)
- Movie Captioning and Video Description, pages 43467–43476; [\[TEXT\]](#) [\[PDF\]](#)

Comments on the proposals must be submitted electronically or postmarked by Jan. 24, 2011.

More information is at <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2010/July/10-crt-850.html>.

- **A series of television and radio public service advertisements (PSAs)** have been distributed across the country by the Ad Council and the American Association of People with Disabilities. The ads, which feature President Obama, celebrate the progress that has been made during the last two decades and remind the public that there is still a lot of work to do so that all Americans have equal opportunity and full participation in this country. To access the PSAs, visit <http://www.youtube.com/user/AAPDvideo>.
- **Several Texas organizations filed lawsuits to increase accessibility** for people with disabilities across the state. More than 20 lawsuits target inaccessibility in restaurants, streets and municipal buildings, and by doctors and police officers. The lawsuits were filed to draw attention to the fact that changes are still needed 20 years after the ADA was passed. For more details, go to the article on “[Texas Organizations File Lawsuits to Increase Accessibility](#).”
- **The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) filed briefs in California and Illinois supporting the Supreme Court’s Olmstead decision** as part of its continuing effort to enforce civil rights laws that require states to end discrimination against and unnecessary segregation of persons with disabilities. The briefs allege that public entities in California and Illinois administer their health care systems for Medicaid-eligible individuals in a manner that violates the ADA and the 1999 Supreme Court’s decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.* The *Olmstead* ruling requires states to eliminate unnecessary institutionalization of individuals with disabilities and provide those individuals with services in the most integrated setting appropriate. More details are at <http://www.disabled-world.com/disability/legal/olmstead-decision.php>.
- **Thomas Perez who heads the Civil Rights Division in the U.S. Department of Justice spoke to a Congressional subcommittee about the ADA and his agency’s enforcement efforts.** He also talked about changing attitudes and stereotypes; enforcement of the 1999 Supreme Court’s *Olmstead* decision; education efforts, voluntary compliance and mediation on the ADA; emerging issues and challenges such as the use of technology; and what’s ahead. “As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the ADA, it is fitting that we take time to recognize the remarkable progress we have made in two

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Nation Celebrates ADA's 20th Anniversary *Continued*

decades,” Perez said on July 22, 2010. “But no matter how vigorously we enforce the law, we still face the challenge of attitudes and stereotypes that stigmatize disabilities; we still find buildings with barriers, city sidewalks without curb ramps, and local hospitals with no sign language interpreters to serve their patients who are deaf. We cannot forget that we still have unfinished business.” His full remarks are at <http://www.justice.gov/crt/opa/pr/testimony/2010/crt-testimony-100722.html>.

- **A Webinar and related materials on “Everything You Always Wanted to Know about the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA) but Were Afraid to Ask”** is online at <http://www.ilru.org/html/training/webcasts/archive/2010/07-20-DBTAC.html>. The training includes a review of resources available on the ADA and practical approaches to compliance and accommodations for people with disabilities. The webinar was supported through the DBTAC Southwest ADA Center, which is one of 10 Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTACs) that provide training, technical assistance and materials dissemination on the ADA and other disability-related laws.

For more information on the ADA, go to <http://www.dlrp.org> or contact the Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC) Southwest ADA Center in Houston at 1-800-949-4232.

CMS Expands Nationwide Money Follows the Person Demo

Under federal health care reform passed this year, Medicaid's Money Follows the Person (MFP) Rebalancing Demonstration Program is being extended for five more years, through Sept. 30, 2016. This program provides states with money to help Medicaid enrollees move from institutional settings into community settings, and to help balance the states' long-term care systems.

Texas is one of 29 states that are currently participating in the federal demonstration, as well as the District of Columbia. These states must submit a written request in the summer of 2011 to remain in the MFP program. A new [grant announcement](#) was posted on July 26, 2010, for states that are not currently participating in MFP to apply for funding.

The extension of the federal program also changes the definition of individuals eligible to participate in MFP. Instead of having to reside in an institution for more than six months, individuals are eligible for MFP after 90 days in an institution. The extension also offers states an enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage and other resources to help Medicaid enrollees transition from long-term care facilities to home- and community-based services.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) sent a letter to state Medicaid directors on June 22, 2010 explaining its plans to extend the MFP demonstration. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act authorized \$450 million per year through fiscal year 2016 to maintain the program. MFP was started in 2005 to increase the use of home and community based services (HCBS). By December 2009, almost 6,000 individuals had moved out of institutions nationwide under MFP projects.

More details on MFP and the extension are at <http://www.cms.gov/smdl/downloads/SMD10012.pdf> and http://www.cms.gov/CommunityServices/20_MFP.asp. The grant announcement for more states to apply for funding is at <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2010pres/07/20100726a.html>.

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Money Follows the Person Demos *Continued*

Background on Money Follows the Person in Texas

Before the federal MFP demonstration was created, Texas started its own MFP program in 2001. Its success was one of the many factors Congress considered in developing the nationwide MFP program. Since September 2001, more than 20,000 Texans have been able to move out of nursing facilities and back into their communities through MFP.

Texas is one of the first states to expand the MFP program to include residents of privately-owned Intermediate Care Facilities for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ICFs/MR) as well as nursing home residents. This ICF/MR pilot program is focusing on voluntary closure of privately owned facilities in Texas that have nine or more residents and which choose to close and help the people move into the community. Texas also has a Money Follows the Person Behavioral Health Pilot in Bexar County now, and the state has requested federal approval/funding to add a behavioral health specialist function to the MFP statewide demonstration.

More information MFP in Texas is at http://www.dads.state.tx.us/news_info/news/fy10/MFP-milestones-5-13-10.pdf and http://www.dads.state.tx.us/providers/pi/mfp_demonstration. Personal stories of some individuals who have moved out of institutions are at <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/pi/olmstead/index.html>.

ADD Seeks Ideas for Projects of National Significance

The federal Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD) is seeking input on ways that it can help meet the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families across the nation. The ADD is specifically looking for ideas to focus on in future Projects of National Significance (PNS).

These projects are intended to:

- Create opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to directly and fully contribute to, and participate in, all facets of community life; and
- Support the development of national and state policy development, with the support and assistance of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, to reinforce and promote the self-determination, independence, productivity, inclusion, and integration of these individuals into all facets of community life.

The ADD would like ideas for projects that will address current issues, are sustainable, can be replicated, promote systems change, and encourage collaboration. Some broad topics that could be considered are family support, data collection, technical assistance, information and referral, self-advocacy support, educating policymakers, federal interagency initiatives, support for the participation of racial and ethnic minorities, youth transition, quality assurance, aging adults and aging caregivers, access to generic community services, community economic development, increased community living options, positive behavioral supports and other emerging needs.

To provide input or suggestions to the ADD, please go to its online survey at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/add/survey/survey_landed.html by Sept. 1, 2010.

COUNCIL NEWS

TCDD Announces Funding for 3 Grants:

Faith-Based Symposium; Meaningful Relationships; Guardianship Alternatives

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) has released three requests for proposals (RFPs) to fund the following grant projects. *Applications for all three RFPs are due on Sept. 22, 2010.*

- **Inclusive Faith-Based Communities Symposium:**

This RFP is for one project to develop and host two statewide symposiums for faith-based communities, about one year apart, on how to support and fully include people with developmental disabilities and their families. The symposiums and all grant activities must be non-denominational and seek to include organizations from different faiths, both Christian and Non-Christian.

Organizations participating in the symposium are expected to return to their communities with a one-year action plan to improve the inclusiveness of their particular faith community, as well as follow-up support. Up to \$50,000 per year for up to two years is expected to be available for this project.

- **Meaningful Relationships:**

This RFP will fund one project that will demonstrate how to support lasting, meaningful relationships for people with developmental disabilities (DD). Up to \$125,000 per year for up to three years is expected to be available. This project is intended to demonstrate that:

1. Service clubs and volunteer organizations can support full and equal participation by people with DD in a way that promotes the development of relationships based on common interests and shared values.
2. People who have DD can identify and express relationship-related needs and preferences and find ways to and establish healthy relationships with others, if they have the necessary supports.
3. Individuals or organizations providing support for people with DD can help people develop and maintain close, respectful, long-term relationships. This may require agencies to change policies.

- **Alternatives to Guardianship: Volunteer Supported Decision-Making Advocate Pilot:**

This RFP will fund two projects to demonstrate how volunteers can provide appropriate supports to help individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities to make decisions concerning their own lives. TCDD is partnering with the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) on this project to develop and evaluate two Volunteer Supported Decision-Making Advocate pilot programs. One pilot is to be in a rural area and the other in an urban area. Up to \$75,000 per project, per year, for up to three years is expected to be available for each project under this RFP.

Grant Proposers' Telephone Conferences

TCDD will hold telephone conferences to help potential applicants understand the grant application process and RFPs. Answers to frequently asked questions will be posted on the TCDD website. Individuals wanting to participate in telephone conferences should sign up on the TCDD website.

Dates for the Grant Proposers' Telephone Conferences are:

- Friday, Aug. 13: 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Central Time
- Tuesday, Aug. 24: 10 a.m. - Noon Central Time
- Wednesday, Sept. 1: 3 - 5 p.m. Central Time
- Monday, Sept. 6: 1 - 3 p.m. Central Time

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TCDD Announces Funding for 3 Grants *Continued*

The application packet for all three RFPs is available on the TCDD website at http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/grants_projects/rfp.asp or may be requested in writing by U.S. mail, fax or e-mail. Send written requests for application packets to Barbara Booker, Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities, 6201 E. Oltorf, Suite 600, Austin, TX 78741-7509; fax (512) 437-5434; or e-mail Barbara.Booker@tcdd.state.tx.us.

Individuals are not eligible to apply for grants under these RFPs. Individuals and/or organizations wishing to collaborate with others to develop a proposal may post their contact information on the TCDD website and/or contact others who have posted information.

RESOURCES

6th Regional, Subsidized Health Care Plan for Small Employers Opens

In July 2010, **Dallas County** became the sixth area in Texas to offer a low-cost subsidized health care plan to small businesses for their employees. The five other communities participating in the TexHealth Coalition, a statewide voluntary association to reduce the number of uninsured employees in Texas, are **Brazos Valley, Central Texas, El Paso County, Galveston County and Harris County**. Bexar County is also participating in the coalition but does not offer a health care plan yet. The Central Texas plan includes Travis, Hays, Williamson, Burnet, Caldwell and Bastrop counties. The Brazos Valley plan includes Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Leon, Madison, Albertson and Washington counties.

These regional plans are available to business owners who employ two to 50 people and have not offered healthcare coverage to their employees for the past six to 12 months. The plans are partially subsidized and split the costs of coverage for lower-wage employees between the employee, employer, and public or philanthropic funding sources.

While the coalition says the plans provide basic health benefits that are adequate for most individuals, TexHealth plans are not conventional insurance. Each plan is different and is focused on wellness, primary and preventative care, including diagnostic testing and medication to help manage chronic disease while covering a range of other basic services -- such as physician visits, hospitalization, specialty care, wellness and mental health. The plans have a limited network of providers, and they do not offer comprehensive health coverage or assume the full risk for all of a member's healthcare needs.

More information and links to all six TexHealth plans are at <http://www.texhealth.com>. Details on the Dallas County plan -- which intends to expand into additional counties in North Texas -- are at <http://www.northtexas3share.org> and http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/latestnews/stories/DN-healthplan_15met.ART.Central.Edition1.29637b4.html.

TCDD Expands Internet Resources Web Page

TCDD is compiling [Internet Resources](http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/resources/internetresources.asp) at <http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/resources/internetresources.asp>. A brief summary of resources added this month follows:

Resource Directories:

- **Fort Worth Area:** A resource list for families who include someone diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder is at http://www.arcnetc.org/uploads/Autism_Resource_List_-_2010.pdf.
- **Austin Area:** The “Austin Area Autism Resource Guide” is at http://www.autism-society.org/site/DocServer/Austin_Area_Resource_Guide.doc.pdf?docID=17241.

Employment:

- “*Accommodating People with Cognitive Disabilities in the Workplace*” helps employers and other people understand the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and legal responsibilities. It is at <http://www.adagreatlakes.org/Presentations/CognitiveDisabilities/slides.asp>.

Education:

- A “*Resource Guide on Higher Education for People with Disabilities*” by the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) was updated in July 2010 at <http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/resources/publications/college.asp>.
- **Tips on moving to a new home, with a focus on changing schools**, are available at <http://www.nichcy.org/FamiliesAndCommunity/Pages/moving.aspx>. More information on “*Changing Schools and IEPs*” is at <http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/iep.change.schools.htm>.

Long Term Care/Services:

- **A comparison of five Medicaid home and community-based waiver programs** is on the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) website at http://www.dads.state.tx.us/providers/waiver_comparisons/index.html. It compares the CBA, CLASS, CWP, DBMD and HCS waivers.

Miscellaneous Disability Resources:

- **The Texas Youth Connection website** provides tips and resources on education, finances, jobs, housing, food, health, and legal help, etc., at <http://www.texasyouthconnection.org>.
- “*Making the Move to Managing Your Own Personal Assistance Services: A Toolkit for Youth Transitioning to Adulthood*” is at <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/PAS-Toolkit>.
- **Information about alternate-formats that can be used to support students with print disabilities** is at <http://aim.cast.org/learn/aim4families> and <http://aim.cast.org/learn/accessiblemedia>.

Conferences, Training and Other Disability Events

Information on conferences, training and other disability events is in the “[Training and Events](http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/training_events/training.asp)” section of TCDD’s website at http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/training_events/training.asp. If you would like to suggest an addition to the events list, send details to Melissa Rosser at melissa.rosser@tcdd.state.tx.us. Please note, however, that we do not include routine/monthly meetings or support groups in this list.

Got News? Please send any information you would like to submit for the “FYI” to: Lucy Walker, Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities, 6201 E Oltorf, Ste 600, Austin, TX 78741-7509; 1-800-262-0334 or (512) 437-5415; (512) 437-5434 fax or by e-mail to lucy.walker@tcdd.state.tx.us. We’d especially like to hear about any advocacy opportunities, good resources, websites and conferences, etc.