

FYI *Monthly e-News*

For Your Information – August 2011
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>.



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TEXAS UPDATE & OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

Texas Submits Waiver Proposal to Redesign Health Care, Works to Expand Medicaid Managed Care Statewide

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) submitted a proposal to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in mid-July 2011 to create a [Section 1115 Demonstration Waiver](#). This proposal under the Social Security Act would expand the STAR and STAR+PLUS Medicaid managed care programs to new counties on Sept. 1, 2011, and more counties on March 1, 2012. STAR will be statewide by March 2012, while STAR+PLUS will only be in specific counties. The 1115 waiver will also create Regional Healthcare Partnerships and transition to quality-based payment systems for managed care and hospitals. It would also divert savings it creates into a pool to cover uncompensated care costs for hospitals and other providers.

The **STAR+PLUS** Medicaid managed care program for people who have disabilities or who are age 65 or older **will expand into 21 more counties on Sept. 1, 2011**. The program combines traditional health care, such as doctor visits, with community-based long-term services and support (LTSS), such as help at home with daily activities, home modifications, respite care and personal assistance. Counties being added are Austin, Bandera, Brooks, Chambers, Fayette, Goliad, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Karnes, Kenedy, Liberty, Live Oak, Matagorda, Newton, Orange, Polk, San Jacinto, Tyler, Walker and Wharton.

People affected include:

- Most adults in the 21 expansion counties who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) must join STAR+PLUS.
- Children age 20 and younger who receive SSI can choose to join STAR+PLUS or STAR or stay in traditional Medicaid.
- People in the Community Based Alternative (CBA) program must switch to STAR+PLUS; however, individuals in STAR+PLUS service areas who are on any other Medicaid waiver or who live in a nursing facility or other institution cannot join STAR+PLUS.

The **STAR Medicaid managed care program will expand** into the same 21 counties on Sept. 1, plus seven more counties: Carson; Deaf Smith; Hudspeth; Hutchinson; Potter; Randall and Swisher. STAR is Texas' main managed care program and served 1.3 million people in 2010. Under this expansion,



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Texas 1115 Waiver Proposal *Continued*

about 140,000 clients will move into STAR and STAR+PLUS. Some come from fee-for-service Medicaid, but most from Primary Care Case Management (PCCM). Individuals moving to either program on Sept. 1 must pick a health care plan and primary doctor by August 12, or they will be assigned to a plan.

If approved, the new demonstration waiver will create the Texas Healthcare Transformation and Quality Improvement Program, which seeks to improve Texans' care and health while reducing the costs. Under the proposal, the STAR and STAR+PLUS managed care programs would be moved into the 1115 waiver; however, their names would not change.

In addition to expansions planned for September 2011, the proposal includes the following changes:

Starting Dec. 1, 2011:

- **Limit prescriptions** for most drugs for adults in STAR and STAR+PLUS to three per month. This will not apply to children age 20 and under in these programs. Some drugs, such as insulin and drugs for smoking cessation and contraception, are excluded from the limit. Most prescriptions can be written for 90 day supplies. Unlimited prescriptions will be provided to STAR+PLUS members who qualify for home and community-based long-term services and supports and to individuals in other Medicaid waivers who receive services and supports in the Medicaid Rural Service Area.

By March 1, 2012:

- **Expand STAR+PLUS to the Lubbock and El Paso service areas.**
- **Expand STAR and STAR+PLUS to 10 counties** in the Hidalgo Service Area of **South Texas.**
- **Expand STAR into 164 rural counties** in the Medicaid Rural Service Area (MRSA), making it statewide and ending the PCCM program.
- **Convert dental services** from fee-for-service to a **statewide managed care model** called the Children's Medicaid Dental Services.
- **Add prescription drug benefits/limits**, currently provided under the fee-for-service Medicaid program, to managed care benefit and capitation rates.
- **Include non-behavioral health inpatient hospital services in STAR+PLUS managed care** benefits/capitation.
- **Add some wrap around physical health services, currently covered under Medicaid, to managed care** for individuals in STAR+PLUS who qualify for both Medicaid and Medicare (individuals who are dually eligible). Medicaid wrap services will also be added to STAR benefits in the MRSA, where STAR+PLUS will not be available. People who are dually eligible currently make up more than half of STAR+PLUS members.

Who Would Be Covered Under the Demo?

The proposed 1115 waiver would cover most Medicaid beneficiaries statewide including children, adults, pregnant women, persons with disabilities, and individuals over age 65, including individuals dually eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare. Some groups would be excluded from the demonstration, such as people living in institutions and individuals in most other Medicaid waivers, while some others can enroll on a voluntary basis.

Children age 20 and younger who get SSI can choose to join either STAR+PLUS (where it exists) or STAR, or stay in traditional Medicaid, with a few exceptions. Children in an MRSA who are dual eligibles are required to enroll in STAR. All children who receive SSI are also required to enroll in Children's Medicaid Dental Services.

For more information, see the [Section 1115 Demonstration proposal](#) and details on the [STAR/STAR+PLUS expansion](#). If you have questions on STAR+PLUS, call the program toll-free at 1-800-964-2777 or TTY at 1-800-267-5008, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Central Time.

Study Underway to Update Texas Mental Health Code

The Texas Mental Health Code has not been substantially updated in about 25 years even though behavioral health care standards, practices and services have changed significantly. Because of this, the code contains inconsistencies and provisions that are no longer applicable or practical, which can cause problems for people with behavioral health conditions in Texas.

Texas Appleseed, in partnership with Disability Rights Texas (formerly called Advocacy, Inc.), has a grant from the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health to study the code and recommend changes. They held about 14 meetings across the state by mid-summer to obtain input, with more meetings planned this year. A final report with recommendations on how to modernize the code will be produced for the Texas Legislature in July 2012.

For more information or to provide comments or suggestions on how to modernize the code, please email the project facilitator, Susan Stone, at [Susan Stone](#). More details are on the [Texas Mental Health Code Project webpage](#).

TCDD Posts Legislative Wrap Ups Online

The 82nd Texas Legislature adjourned from its Regular Session on May 30, 2011, and a Special Session ended on June 29. The legislature passed numerous bills that will impact people with disabilities, including a budget bill that allocates \$172 billion for fiscal years 2012-2013. This is \$15 billion, or eight percent, less in state and federal money than the current budget. State dollars were reduced about two percent. The biggest budget cuts are in education and in health and human services, which together make up 75 percent of the total budget. The budget cut about 17.2 percent, or \$11.3 billion, from health and human services programs, and \$844 million from public and higher education.

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities staff prepared summaries of the [2012 – 2013 State Budget](#) and [key bills that will impact people with disabilities](#).

More information on the legislative session -- including links to other legislative summaries provided by key state agencies and disability organizations -- are on [TCDD's 82nd Texas Legislature page](#) at http://www.txddc.state.tx.us/public_policy/82ndsession.asp.

New Videos Explain Early Childhood Intervention Services

Two [videos on Early Childhood Intervention](#) (ECI) explain services and the delivery system in Texas. “*Texas ECI: Family to Family*” is a 10-minute video that shares family experiences with ECI and how the whole family benefited. “*About Texas ECI*” is an 8-minute video that examines the enrollment process, where services are provided, how services are paid for, and how ECI provides value to children and their families. The videos were produced by the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS). Both videos are closed captioning with online transcripts in English and Spanish.

FEDERAL UPDATE

Input Wanted on Proposed Guidelines on Sidewalks, Streets, etc.

Proposed national guidelines for [accessible public rights-of-way](#) were released for public comment on July 26, 2011, by the U.S. Access Board. **The guidelines provide design criteria for public streets and sidewalks, including pedestrian access routes, street crossings, curb ramps and blended transitions, on-street parking, street furniture, and other elements, including access for people with disabilities.**

Once finalized, the guidelines will apply to new or altered sections of streets and sidewalks covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). They will also apply to public rights-of-way built or altered with federal funding under the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) and the Rehabilitation Act. A [webinar on the proposed guidelines](#) will be held August 9. An [overview](#) of the rule is also online.

Submit Input Online or at Public Hearing in Dallas Sept. 12

You can access the proposed guidelines and submit comments on the federal government's [rule making portal](#). You can also provide input at a public hearing on the guidelines from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Sheraton at 400 North Olive Street in Dallas on Sept. 12. Another hearing will be in Washington, D.C. on Nov. 9, 2011. For details on the hearings, e-mail [Kathy Johnson](#) or call her at (202) 272-0041. **The deadline for comments is Nov. 23, 2011.** For more information on the proposed rules, e-mail [Scott Windley](#) or call him at (202) 272-0025.

12 New Compassionate Allowances Quickly Qualify for Disability Benefits

Twelve new medical conditions were added to the list of Compassionate Allowances in July 2011 that, by definition, meet the Social Security Administration's standards for disability benefits. The new allowances involve some severe heart diseases. There are now 100 medical diagnoses that allow for claims to be processed quickly to determine if individuals qualify for benefits. These include some cancers, adult brain disorders, and a number of rare disorders that affect children.

The new Compassionate Allowances are for Aortic Atresia, Eisenmenger Syndrome, Endomyocardial Fibrosis, Heart Transplant Graft Failure, Heart Transplant Wait List - 1A/1B, Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome, Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD) Recipient, Mitral Valve Atresia, Primary Cardiac Amyloidosis, Pulmonary Atresia, Single Ventricle and Tricuspid Atresia. More [details on Compassionate Allowances](#) are online, including a list of all qualifying conditions.

COUNCIL NEWS

Grants Improve Outreach to Ethnic Minorities in Houston Area

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) awarded grants to the [Light and Salt Association \(Chinese version\)](#) and the [Barbara Jordan Endeavors Corporation](#) in Houston to improve the lives of people in ethnic minority cultures. These one-year projects started on August 1, 2011, to help TCDD to better understand the different values, cultures and customs that exist in Texas, as well as how cultural issues may impact the way services should be provided. These projects will also raise awareness of resources the disability community can access, while increasing public awareness of cultural issues and barriers to services.

Light and Salt will provide training for Asian American families and help children with disabilities develop life skills they need to become independent. The Barbara Jordan Endeavors Corporation will use consultants from different agencies and organizations to provide information about their services during monthly workshops for cross-cultural families and students. TCDD is also funding three other projects to help Texas communities provide culturally competent support to people who have a disability. Details on these five projects and all other TCDD projects are in the [Grant Project Profiles](#).

TCDD Updating Website

Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities staff is in the process of updating the TCDD's website. Recent changes include:

- Modified the [Home Page](#) to include TCDD's [Facebook](#) postings.
- Added links at the bottom of each page that allow you to:
 - 1) Share information on that page via Digg, email, Delicious, StumbleUpon, Gmail and print;
 - 2) View recent TCDD tweets; and
 - 3) View [Facebook](#) postings.
- Updated [Profiles of TCDD Grant Projects](#).
- Updated our [82nd Legislature](#) page, including wrap ups on the budget and bills passed.
- Updated resources on [Hurricanes & Disasters](#).
- Updated [Common Disability Related Acronyms](#).

RESOURCES

TCDD Adds Crisis & Hotlines Category to Internet Resources Web Page

TCDD is compiling [Internet Resources](#). A summary of resources added this month follows, including a new category on “Crisis Resources & Disability Hotlines.”

Resource Directories:

- **Fort Worth Area:**

- The [Arc of Northeast Tarrant County’s monthly newsletter](#) contains articles, events and resources.

Crisis Resources & Disability Hotlines:

- **In a medical emergency, call 9-1-1.**
- **In a poisoning emergency, call 1-800-222-1222** for the [Texas Poison Control Network](#).
- **In mental health emergencies**, contact your Local Mental Health Authority to access its crisis/information line. Find your [Local MH Authority](#) or see a full [list of MH crisis hotlines](#).
- To find local [substance abuse treatment services](#), call **1-877-9-NO DRUG (1-877-966-3784)** for immediate help. You can also [search online for a treatment or prevention/intervention program](#). Information **specifically for children and adolescents** is on the [youth substance abuse services](#) page and [child and adolescent services overview](#).
- The national [Sexual Assault Hotline](#) connects people to their local rape crisis center **online or by phone at 1-800-656-4673**.
- [Crisis Chat](#) provides a place to talk online about problems.
- The [Texas Health and Human Services Commission](#) (HHSC) has contact information and hotlines online. Includes:
 - Call [2-1-1](#) for local & statewide information on health and human services. If out of state or cannot connect to 2-1-1, call 1-877-541-7905.
 - [HHSC Ombudsman](#) at 1-877-787-8999 or 1-888-425-6889 (TDD)..
 - [HHSC Civil Rights Office](#) at 1-888-388-6332 or (512) 438-4313 or TTY 1-877-432-7232 regarding discrimination.
- The [Department of Aging and Disability Services](#) (DADS) phone numbers and hotlines are online.
- For [DADS Consumer Rights and Services](#), call 1-800-458-9858 or 512-438-2011.
- **Texas Medicaid Client Hotline** at 1-800-252-8263.
- The Texas [Department of Family and Protective Services](#) (DFPS) hotlines include:
 - [Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline](#) at 1-800-252-5400 or [report abuse online](#) of children, people with disabilities and seniors.
 - [Texas Youth Hotline](#) at 1-800-98YOUTH (989-6884).

Employment:

- Weekly broadcasts plus past episodes of [Disabilities at Work Internet Talk Radio](#) are online. A [newsletter](#) also addresses employment issues.
- [Special Needs Apps for Kids](#) shares information on using iPad, iPhone, iPod Touch and Android devices with children with special needs.
- The [Employer Resource Guide](#) links to organizations that help employers hire people with disabilities and apply or pay for accommodations.

Internet Resources *Continued*

Community Living:

- The Department of Justice's [Olmstead website](#) contains information on the federal decision, cases, how to file a complaint, and state and local government obligations.

Long Term Care/Services:

- A brochure on [CHIP/Children's Medicaid](#) is online.

Miscellaneous Disability Resources:

- The [Texas Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders](#) website explores autism and services. New additions include [Spanish](#) at and [opportunities to participate in research](#).
- A fact sheet explains [requirements regarding service animals](#) under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Conferences, Training and Other Disability Events

Information on conferences, training and other disability events is in the "[Training and Events](#)" section of TCDD's website. *If you would like to suggest an addition to the events list*, please email details to [Melissa Rosser](#). 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](#). We'd especially like to hear about any advocacy opportunities, good resources, websites and conferences, etc.