



DPC Issue Brief

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Title: Consolidation of Waivers

Background: The Disability Policy Consortium supports efforts to improve and consolidate home and community-based Medicaid waivers to more efficiently and effectively provide individuals with disabilities the services they need to remain in their communities. An improved system should provide services across populations based on their level of functional needs with waiver reimbursement rates appropriate to the level of need of the individual receiving services based on their functional need.

Texas currently has eight 1915(c) waivers (including Star+Plus) providing long term supports and services to individuals with disabilities. The majority of these waivers were developed over time to address the needs of specific populations. As a result, while the waivers are similar in the services they provide (Community supports and services) they are vastly different in administration, reimbursement rates, dollar caps, service coordination, and more. Each program was developed based on a specific population and not based on maximizing services for people with disability in general. The result is a fragmented system that causes confusion for consumers, limits services based on diagnosis, and prevents many who need services from getting the appropriate services.

Recommendations have been made by the Promoting Independence Advisory Committee, the Children's Policy Council, and through the SDS process at DADS to analyze the feasibility of consolidating various waiver programs. Recommendations have been made to ensure, regardless of the disability, that those providing services to those individuals needed more extensive support needs are paid at a level appropriate to the support provided. No recommendation has been made as to how many waiver programs would be appropriate or which ones to consolidate.

Recommendation: The Disability Policy Consortium (DPC) recommends that the Texas Legislature supports efforts to improve and consolidate home and community-based Medicaid waivers to more efficiently and effectively provide individuals with disabilities the services they need to remain in their communities. An improved system must result in maintaining, expanding, and increasing access to appropriate services across populations based on the functional needs of the individual. An improved system must also provide services with waiver reimbursement rates appropriate to the level of need of the individual receiving services based on their functional level.

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MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS: *Statewide Members:* Advocacy, Incorporated, Brain Injury Association of Texas, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, Epilepsy Coalition of Texas, The Institute for Disability Access/ADAPT, Lone Star Association for Persons in Supported Employment, Mental Health Association in Texas, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Texas, National Multiple Sclerosis Society of Texas, Texas Advocates, Texas AIDS Network, Texas Association of Centers for Independent Living, Texas Association of the Deaf, Texas Center for Disability Studies/ Texas Technology Access Project, Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities, Texas Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, Texas Legal Services Center, Texas Mental Health Consumers, Texas State Independent Living Council, Texas State Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, The Center on Disability and Development at Texas A&M University, Council for Families for Children, United Cerebral Palsy of Texas, The Spina Bifida Association of Texas, Inc., and the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of Texas. *Local Members:* Epilepsy Foundation Central & South Texas. REACH Resource Centers on Independent Living – Dallas, Fort Worth and Denton, Corpus Christi Committee for Persons with Disabilities, Goodwill of Central Texas and Coastal Bend Center for Independent Living