



DPC Issue Brief

*...promoting progressive public policy
for Texans with disabilities.*

Title: Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Legislative Appropriations Request for FY 07 & 08.

Background: According to the DSHS strategic plan, an estimated 900,000 adults in Texas met the DSHS mental health priority population definition in 2005. Approximately 450,000 are estimated to have the greatest need (targeted priority population). DSHS program service utilization data indicates that less than half of those with the greatest need received mental health services from the state authority (173,983) in 2005. In addition, 38,752 children and adolescents were served representing an estimated 14% of the potentially eligible youth population. In total, the Department has been able to serve only 28% of the priority population in Texas. Accordingly it has been a long time since behavioral health services have received a fair share of funding based on the need. The cost is being felt across the state in other systems including city, county, and other agencies.

Recommendation: The DPC recommends that the Texas Legislature fund the following DSHS exceptional items:

- Restoration to base level funding for FY 05 & 06. Texas is currently 47th in terms of funding for mental health services. That level of funding allows the Department to serve only 28% of the targeted priority population in Texas. It is essential that we increase rather than decrease capacity. Exceptional item # 1.
- Mental health community services, which totals \$82,336,430 over the biennium which relates to the crisis services re-design package. This exceptional item will provide for a range of effective community-based interventions designed to intervene in or avoid crisis and the need for hospitalization. Exceptional item # 4.
- Recruitment and retention of critical professional staff, which totals \$9,131,197. Retention and recruitment of licensed medical professionals continues to be a challenge for DSHS as it fails to keep pace with compensation and benefits offered in the private sector and in other states, with which it competes for the limited pool of available licensed medical professionals. This funding request will allow DSHS to ensure a skilled/competent public and mental health workforce, address equity issues within the agency, establish residency programs in the state mental health hospitals, provide stipends and support continuing education. Exceptional item # 8.
- Medicaid Substance Use Disorder, which totals \$26,043,048. Research indicates that a substantial number of individuals with a mental health diagnosis also suffer from a substance abuse disorder. We support the DSHS exceptional items for community based substance abuse services and the adult outpatient Medicaid substance abuse services. Exceptional item # 9.
- Replacement of transportation which totals \$4,245,740 over the biennium. DSHS State Hospitals and Regions operate a combined total of 678 vehicles at 20 statewide sites. These vehicles are used to satisfy statutory requirements and provide for the daily life needs of the clients/consumers housed and cared for by the facilities as well as supporting direct service delivery in the regions. Exceptional item # 12.
- Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment which totals \$15,344,972 over the biennium. In 2005, DSHS estimated that 1,020,102 adults and 78,243 youth were eligible for treatment; however only 36,924 (4%) and (7%) received services. This funding request will provide more youth with substance abuse prevention services and increase the number of adults and youth that receive substance abuse treatment. Over 1,800 Texans per year would benefit from the expanded treatment capacity. Exceptional item # 15.
- Medicaid Rate Restoration. For Medicaid rates, HHSC is currently considering reinstatement of the 2.5% reduction. DSHS has administrative rules for certain programs that base reimbursement of services on the Medicaid rates. An increase in the Medicaid rates would have a financial impact on these programs. The rates would be increased and without the additional dollars reflected in the exceptional item request, would require the program to scale back services for these program to account for the additional cost. Exceptional item #18.

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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