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Texas Health Steps Branch
Health Screening & Case Management Unit
Texas Department of State Health Services
1100 West 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756
512/458-7745

Strategies to Improve Oral Health

Center for Health Care Strategies highlights six states' successes

The Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) is a national non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of health services for beneficiaries served by publicly financed care, especially those with chronic illnesses and disabilities. CHCS advances its mission by working directly with state and federal agencies, health plans, and providers to design and implement cost-effective strategies to improve health care quality.

The State Action for Oral Health Access initiative, launched in 2002 by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, was designed to address the disparities in access to dental services for low-income children and adults. The initiative, managed by CHCS, funded six states – Arizona, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Vermont – to develop programs to improve the oral health delivery system.

The *Catalyzing Improvements in Oral Health Care: Best Practices from the State Action for Oral Health Access Initiative Report* highlights the successes, challenges, and results of these state efforts to eliminate disparities in oral health care. To view the report in its entirety, visit the [CHCS web site](#).

Upcoming Events

Regional Monthly Conference Call

The next regional monthly conference call is scheduled for November 9, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. CST. The agenda has been finalized and two program overviews will be presented by Elijah

Brown of the Vision Program and Joy O'Neal of the Hearing Program.

National Provider Identifier (NPI) Workshops Scheduled

The Texas Medicaid and Healthcare Partnership (TMHP) will be conducting NPI workshops throughout Texas during November 2006. Providers may attend the upcoming NPI workshops free of charge. . Provider representatives will be available at the workshops to answer questions and to share information on how the NPI affects providers, particularly when submitting claims to TMHP.

For details concerning these workshops and registration information, visit the [TMHP Workshops web page](#). For assistance with the workshop registration process, or for more information, call the TMHP Contact Center at 1-800-925-9126.

Region 9/10 Medicaid Provider Responsibilities Workshop

Workshop to be held in conjunction with the HHSC Medicaid Fraud Unit on the following dates:

November 10, 2006 – El Paso
December 1, 2006 – San Angelo
December 8, 2006 – Odessa

For questions or to register for the Region 9/10 THSteps experts forums, contact [Donna Pena](#), THSteps Team Lead, at (915) 834-7733.

New Immunization Plans

Plan developed to increase Texas' immunization rates

Raising vaccine coverage levels for Texas children is one of the highest priorities for the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Recognizing that no single intervention



alone can be successful, DSHS has initiated a comprehensive, collaborative approach that includes proven strategies for raising vaccine coverage levels and integrates local involvement and the commitment of other public programs, private organizations, and community groups.

The *Plans to Increase Immunization Rates in Texas Report*, issued by the DSHS Immunization Branch on September 30, 2006, investigates several key barriers to timely vaccinations, the impact of the medical home concept, increasing public and parent education efforts, developing public-private partnerships, and other issues affecting immunization rates in Texas. To view the report in its entirety, visit the [Immunization Branch web site](#). If you would like more information, please contact Casey S. Blass, Director, Disease Prevention and Intervention Section, at (512) 458-7607, or Casey.Blass@dshs.state.tx.us.

\$3.5 Million Outreach Effort

HHSC tentatively awards outreach contracts

The HHSC announces the tentative award of outreach contracts to 21 community-based organizations to help Texas families enroll in the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Medicaid, and other state services. For more information, visit the [HHSC New Release web page](#).

HHSC Desktop Stakeholder Forum

September 14, 2006 Stakeholder Forum materials now available

The September 11 Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Stakeholder Forum featured news and updates regarding:

- Legislative Appropriations Request

- New Data Available on HHSC Website
- Results of Survey of Katrina Evacuees
- Medicaid/Children’s Health Insurance Program updates:
 - Medicaid Buy-In
 - Women’s Health Program
 - Foster Care Medical Model
 - Integrated Care Management Model
 - STAR+PLUS Expansion
- New Eligibility System

To view or download the documents distributed during this forum, visit the [HHSC web site](#). To view the recorded archive of the forum, visit the [HHSC Web-Based Presentation web page](#) and select the appropriate web-based presentation title.

HHSC Reports to the 79th Legislature

Medicaid main topic in presentations to Senate Committees

On September 19, 2006, HHSC presented to the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services regarding Medicaid Reform in Texas. HHSC focused on the significant changes that have been incorporated into the Texas Medicaid Program since 2003. The changes have focused on containing costs, managing care, and improving health outcomes. To view the slide presentation and notes of this report, visit the [HHSC web page](#).

Questions and Answers

Dental Issues

Question: A provider has always understood and abided by the requirement for language translators, new management refuses to provide such translation for Medicaid dental clients. The provider also refuses to allow the client-provided 19 year-old relative to be the translator. What is the citation of the Medicaid requirement that providers must ensure that translation services are provided for Medicaid clients?

Answer: The Tx. Medicaid Provider Procedures Manual, 2006 Section 1.2.5, Compliance With Federal Legislation says in essence, that all providers must comply with Title VI of Civil Rights Act, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Americans with Disabilities Act. The Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of national origin, which may require a provider to get translation services for a client who does not understand English. ADA requires translation services for blind, deaf, disabled, etc.

Medical Issues

Question: Can an audioscope be used in place of the audiometer for the hearing screening component of the THSteps well check?

Answer: Texas guidelines for hearing screening require that the child is to be screened at 1000 Hz, 2000 Hz, and 4,000 Hz at 25 dB, or at 20 dB if the provider chooses to do so. The provider is responsible in determining if the audiometric equipment being considered for purchase meets these requirements.

Question: Are the 24 hours Dietary Recall Assessment Forms available in Spanish?

Answer: These forms are currently unavailable in Spanish but THSteps CO is in the process of initiating a translation of the documents.

On October 10, 2006, HHSC presented to the Senate Finance Committee regarding uncompensated care and Medicaid hospital reimbursement related to Senate Bill 1, Article II, HHSC Riders 60 and 61. HHSC covered the following points:

- Understanding uncompensated care costs as reported by Texas hospitals (HHSC Rider 61).
- Understanding the current methodology for reimbursing hospitals (HHSC Rider 60).
- Enhancing the state’s ability to be a prudent purchaser of Medicaid healthcare by determining the amount of hospital cost that should be reimbursed by Medicaid. (HHSC Rider 60).
- Identifying preliminary issues associated with the reform of the current Medicaid reimbursement system (HHSC Rider 60).

To view the slide presentation and notes of this report, visit the [HHSC web page](#).

Texas Legislature Online Updated

Note web address changes

The Texas Legislature has updated its web address to <http://tlo2.tlc.state.tx.us>. There you may browse, among other things, statutes that are current through the third Called Session of the 79th Texas Legislative Session by selecting the fourth bulleted item, “Texas Statutes” located at <http://tlo2.tlc.state.tx.us/statutes/statutes.html>.

Interesting Web Sightings

Check out these informative web pages

[Association of Maternal Health and Child Health Programs](#) - The Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP) is an important resource and advocate for quality health care for women, children,

and families, especially those who are low-income and underserved. AMCHP represents state public health leaders who promote the health of America’s families and accomplishes its mission through the active participation of its members and vital partnerships with government agencies, families and advocates, health care purchasers and providers, academic and research professionals, and others at the national, state, and local levels. Visit the AMCHP web site where you will find a number of useful resources.

[Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality \(AHRQ\)](#) – The AHRQ is the lead Federal agency charged with improving the quality, safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of health care for all Americans. As one of 12 agencies within the US Department of Health and Human Services, AHRQ supports health services research that will improve the quality of health care and promote evidence-based decision-making. This link should be of great use: <http://www.ahrq.gov/> because it includes information for clinicians and other health care providers, such as hospitals; consumers and patients; health care policymakers at the Federal/State/local levels; purchasers and payers, such as employers and public and private insurers, and; other health officials, such as hospital systems and medical school faculty.

[First Signs](#) – First Signs is dedicated to the early identification and intervention of children with developmental delays and disorders. Their primary goal is to educate parents, healthcare providers, early childhood educators, and other professionals about developmental delays in order to ensure the best developmental outcome for every child. Our goals are to improve screening and referral practices in order to lower the age at which young children are identified with autism and other developmental disorders. The First Signs Web site provides resources covering a range of issues dealing with healthy development, concerns about a child’s development, screening and referral processes, and treatment for autism disorders.

Should you have questions regarding the information presented in this publication, please contact Marty Darnell, Program Specialist, THSteps Branch, at 512/458-7745.

