

# Texas Health Steps Connections

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Health  
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### Texas Health Steps Branch

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

## What's New?

*New Format for Weekly THSteps Regional Communications*

The *THSteps Regional Connections* e-mail document will be replaced with the *Texas Health Steps Weekly Connections* newsletter beginning with the July 6, 2006 issue. It is available on the THSteps web page.

### Locating the Newsletter Online

To access the new *Texas Health Steps Weekly Connections* newsletter, open the THSteps web site at [http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/thsteps/whats\\_new.shtm](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/thsteps/whats_new.shtm). You will find the newsletters listed on this web page by date and volume and issue numbers.

## Upcoming Events

### TNA Training

THSteps Region 4 /5 North will host a Texas Nurses Association (TNA) *THSteps Pediatric Assessment Training*. The class will take place in Tyler, Texas, on July 19 - 21, 2006. For more information about enrolling in this class, the continuing education credit that can be earned, etc., visit the TNA web site at <http://www.texasnurses.org/thsteps>.

### HHSC Stakeholder Public Forum

The next Health and Human Services Commission Stakeholder Public Forum will be held July 10, 2006, at the Brown-Healy Building, Public Hearing Room, 4900 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin, Texas. Agenda items include:

- Legislative Appropriations Request
- Federal Deficit Reduction Act: Medicaid Eligibility Policy Update
- New Medicaid Eligibility System Update
- Medicaid/CHIP Updates

For more information visit the Texas Health and Human Services web site at [http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/news/meetings/past/2006/071006\\_Stackholder.html](http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/news/meetings/past/2006/071006_Stackholder.html)



### THSteps/Case Management Meeting

The combined THSteps/Case Management DSHS staff meeting will be held July 27, 2006 (9:00 a.m. CST-4:30 p.m.) at the DSHS offices in Austin.

Highlights of the topics to be covered are updates on Newborn Screening developments, Integrated Eligibility and Enrollment, and HHSC TMHP Contract Extension. Other topics to be covered are: verification of citizenship declarations, the medical home, PCCM services, and others.

The THSteps/Case Management combined meeting will be followed by the THSteps Regional Operations Team Lead meeting on Friday, July 28, 2006 (8:30 a.m. CST - noon). Updates will be provided on THSteps dental, TVFC and immunization policy, DSHS Laboratory, and others topics.

### Regional Monthly Conference Call

The next regional monthly conference call is scheduled for September 7, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. CST. **Reminder:** No regional conference call is scheduled for August 2006.

# HHSC Reports



*Use of psychotropic medications for foster care children*

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) released a report in June 2006 regarding an analysis that was done on prescribing psychoactive medication to Texas foster children for state fiscal year 2005 (September 1, 2004 through August 31, 2005). HHSC, DSHS and DFPS conducted this analysis because psychoactive medication prescribing to foster children continues to be higher on average than to other Medicaid children. Click here to view the [“Use of Psychoactive Medication in Texas Foster Children State Fiscal Year 2005”](#) report in its entirety.

## CHIP Prenatal Care Program

The DSHS Maternal and Child Health Program has posted to their web page a

draft of an informative HHSC document regarding the extension of CHIP services to unborn children of non-Medicaid eligible women below 200% of FPL through the CHIP Prenatal Care Program. For more details about this program’s purpose, key components, and implementation strategies, click here to view the [CHIP Prenatal Care Program document](#).



## Telemedicine in Texas

On June 28, 2006, HHSC presented information to the Texas House Appropriations Subcommittee regarding telemedicine in Texas and Medicaid reimbursement for services rendered using telemedicine. To view the slide presentation HHSC used to provide this briefing, click here to visit the [HHSC web page](#).

## Regions Plan for THSteps Experts Forums

### Region 9/10 Forums

- San Angelo, July 25, 2006
- Odessa, July 26, 2006
- El Paso, July 28, 2006

In addition, a vision and hearing workshop is planned for October 2-6, 2006 in Midland, Texas, as well as a Comprehensive Pediatric Assessment training session scheduled for October 2006 (time and place to be determined). For more information on the forums and trainings, please contact Donna Peña at (915) 834-7733 or by e-mail at [donna.pena@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:donna.pena@dshs.state.tx.us).

### Region 11 Forums

Region 11’s forum schedule will be posted as soon as the agendas are finalized. For more information, please contact Ray Garza, THSteps Team Lead, at (956) 444-3257 or by e-mail at [ray.garza@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:ray.garza@dshs.state.tx.us).

## DSHS IT Announcement

Beginning July 1, 2006 employee names in the Outlook Global Address List will change to be listed by the last name then first name. The change now aligns the DSHS e-mail system with the HHSC Enterprise preferred listing. This email system enhancement will not affect any distribution lists or other items you may have in email. It will only change the way you look up employees currently in the Global Address List.

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

## Questions and Answers

**Question:** Our medical providers have notified us that some of the new immunization procedure codes (i.e., codes 90734, 90680, 90715, and 90710) are being denied by TMHP. What is the status for getting these codes updated at TMHP? **Answer:** THSteps and the Immunization Branch are still addressing system changes to get each of these procedure codes corrected, as soon as possible.

**Question:** With a scheduled fifth vaccine to be release in the near future, would it be possible to get the vaccine codes added prior to the release? Hopefully, this would prevent the need for our providers to go through the payment denials and appeal process. **Answer:** HHSC, TMHP, and the DSHS Immunization and THSteps Branches are working on a vaccine policy that will address most, if not all, of the issues about vaccine coding and claims. However, some lag time (hopefully much shorter) may continue to exist between the time a vaccine is approved by ACIP and when Medicaid coverage begins. This is due to the Medicaid review process and the resulting systems changes. The new policy (when completed and implemented) will address the communication to make the entire process as streamlined as possible.

**Question:** What date in August 2006 is the HHSC Managed Care Training scheduled to take place in Austin, Texas? **Answer:** August 18, 2006.

**Question:** What are the numbers of THSteps eligibles (total) as of 2006? **Answer:** As of the end of May 2006, the total number of THSteps eligibles was 2,668,431. That is an increase in comparison to 2,593,104 eligibles as of the end of May in 2005, suggesting that the final number of eligibles for SFY 2006 will be higher than the final number for SFY 2005.

