

Texas Update - July 2006

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<http://votervoicenet.com/groups/tachc/?registeronly=true>

Governor Perry Declares August 6-12, 2006 Community Health Center Week!

See the attached pdf file for a copy of the declaration. Feel free to post it in your centers or have it on display during your events. Texas health centers are planning a host of events during the upcoming National Health Center Week, August 6-12, 2006. Activities range from staff appreciation lunches to health fairs, to parades, to tours for Congressional representatives. The week promises to be a great showcase of community health center successes and appreciation for community boards.

Please post all your events on the health center week website:

Go to http://www.healthcenterweek.com/tools_eventPosting.asp

The password is "healthy"

And don't forget the **Advocate Registration Contest!** The Texas health center with the most advocates per patient served at the end of health center week will receive *one free registration to TACHC's annual conference* this October in Houston. You can start recruiting more advocates now by forwarding this update to your contacts and asking them to register as a health center advocate by clicking on this link:

<http://votervoicenet.com/groups/tachc/?registeronly=true>

PCCM Phase Out of Urban Areas

As you recall, PCCM (Primary Care Case Management), the non-capitated version of Medicaid managed care, expanded to 197 additional non-urban counties in Texas that had been using the traditional fee for services care delivery model. In the next phase of the Medicaid managed care model transition, PCCM is being completely phased *out* of some urban areas beginning September 1, 2006. Providers in the Nueces service area will convert from traditional fee for service Medicaid to the STAR program (Medicaid HMO model). Also, providers in the Bexar, Dallas, El Paso, Harris and Lubbock service areas will see PCCM phased out entirely in favor of STAR. Follow this link (entitled PCCM Expansion) for counties included in the new STAR only services areas.

http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/medicaid/MMCEP/pdf/PCCM_ExpansionMap.pdf

Long Term Care Management

On April 1, 1998, HHSC implemented a pilot program, STAR Plus, in Harris County to integrate and manage acute and long term care services in the Medicaid program. On January 1, 2007, the STAR Plus model will be implemented in Bexar, Harris, Nueces, and Travis service areas. Though El Paso and Lubbock were originally supposed to be included, the expansion no longer includes them. (Please note that the model is sometimes referred to as sometimes denoted as STAR + PLUS or the STAR Plus "carve-out", which is STAR Plus managed care of all care excluding hospital based care.) A new Integrated Care Management (ICM) model, another non-capitated managed care model, is supposed to be implemented in Dallas and Tarrant service areas, but a consultant was only hired May 30, 2006 to design the program. Thus, ICM likely will not be implemented any time soon. The following link shows a map of the new STAR Plus service areas.

http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/starplus/061906_Map.pdf

Impact on Community Health Centers

Those centers who experienced the PCCM expansion know that changes in managed care models do not always go as smoothly as would be hoped. Here are a few things to think about as these changes come to your area:

- **Urban Centers: Remain enrolled as a PCCM provider.** If your center is located in an urban area where PCCM is being phased out, be sure to enroll as a provider in the network of the incoming managed care organizations. However, do not disenroll as a PCCM provider. There may be cases where you will see patients who have traveled from a PCCM area to your center for care, even though PCCM no longer operates in your center's service area.
- **Pay close attention to your patient panels during the transition.** Despite assurances from the state that their default methodology for assigning a medical home (if the patient does not actively choose a provider) will honor the current relationship between you and your patients, this process does not go always according to plan, and your patients may be reassigned in error. If you think you have patients that were reassigned to another provider and that this reassignment does not represent the will of the patient, do the following:
 - Keep track of the Medicaid numbers patients you feel were wrongly reassigned to another PCP.
 - Send those case numbers to TACHC. HHSC staff have indicated they will track down what happened with those patients.

Medicaid Provider Coalition Forms

Even though the next Texas regular legislative session is still five months away, many groups are already gearing up for the next round of legislative activity. Texas Medicaid provider representatives, including TACHC, have formed a Medicaid provider coalition.

The coalition is working together to advocate for Medicaid reforms and budget items that will benefit all Medicaid patients. The coalition submitted a letter last week to the HHSC Advisory Council indicating its desire to work collaboratively with the agency as it develops its budget requests. Keep an eye out for further updates as the coalition's work develops. Please let us know if there are particular health center issues you think should be brought to the group.

CHIP Perinatal Program Receives Federal Approval

Last month, the update reported on some of the CHIP Perinatal Program's operating details as well as TACHC's involvement with program workgroups. Many stakeholders have been working hard to get prepared for this new program. Now, the Perinatal program has achieved a significant milestone. On May 26, the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approved Texas' state plan amendment, clearing the path for implementation of the CHIP Perinatal program, providing health services to unborn children of low-income women.

The CHIP perinatal program will provide services to the unborn children of low-income women who earn too much money to qualify for Medicaid. The maximum income limit for pregnant women who apply will be 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Benefits and eligible services in the program will be limited to prenatal care, labor and delivery, and postpartum care associated with the birth of the child. After the birth, the newborn will receive full CHIP benefits.

Work has started on a plan to make people aware of the program. The first applications will be accepted Jan. 1, 2007.

The most up-to-date information on the CHIP perinatal program will be available at the [July HHSC Stakeholder Forum and Desktop Forum](#).

CMS Revises Citizenship Documentation Rules for Some Beneficiaries

In an Interim Final Rule issued July 6, the Health and Human Services Department corrected a drafting error in the Deficit Reduction Act. The rule exempts Medicare beneficiaries and most individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) from the new Medicaid citizenship documentation requirements. Roughly eight million beneficiaries across the country fall into this category. Roughly 795,000 Texans will now no longer be required to produce citizenship documents they have already provided other government programs. For more information on Texas' implementation of the Medicaid citizenship documentation requirement, go to:

<http://www.hhs.state.tx.us/medicaid/index.shtml>

County Level Data on Children - CPPP announces a new database

For those grant writers out there, the Center for Public Policy Priorities announces some new data sources on children's health nationally, statewide, and by county. Follow the links below to access this useful data.

<http://www.aecf.org/cgi-bin/cliiks.cgi> - Annie E. Casey Foundation produces the Kids Count data. This link takes you to the CLIKS database.

<http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/databook.jsp> - National Kids Count Databook is a good resource. You can also find state level data here.

http://www.cppp.org/files/10/tkc_2005_full.pdf - CPPP released its own Texas Kids Count based on the national survey.

Don't forget to ask your friends to join the network!

Click here to register as a community health center advocate:

<http://votervoice.net/groups/tachc/?registeronly=true>