

While perusing the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities' website we found two helpful pages that our clients might benefit from. Their web address is www.txddc.state.tx.us.

When you reach the website, first click on "Training and Events." There you will find an extensive list of disability related events covering the whole state of Texas. From film festivals and open mikes to conferences and seminars, there is something for everyone there.

If you are interested in higher education, then scroll over "Resources."

There will be a drop down menu with many options. Click on "College Resources." Here you will find an excellent resource guide on higher learning and career options. It is also available for download as a PDF.

We hope you check it out!

If you would like to receive CARE, TX by email instead of paper, please send your name and address to carettx@dsswtx.org. We also appreciate comments and suggestions. Read past issues online at www.dsswtx.org/carettx.



*This Issue Includes:
A Look at State Budget Cuts
Disability Resources and Events*

CARE, TX FALL ISSUE

The Budget Cuts how will they affect you

Well – the Legislature came, they met, they voted. And at the end of the session, what did we know? Not much more than we did at the start. The one piece of information we did have: The Legislature passed all their bills; appropriated the money; gave the package to DADS and said: Find \$15 million in cuts.

DADS went to work on this, and has proposed new "service limitations." What is a "service limitation?" It is a process where reimbursement for certain items such as minor home modifications will be lowered as will authorizations for anyone receiving attendant services that exceed pre-determined limits. As of the writing of this article, final approval has not been issued, but we expect any changes to be minor. See the list on the following page for a summary of the major changes that have been proposed. These changes will take effect December 1.

What does this mean to you as the consumer? If any of the services you are receiving currently exceed the service limitations you will be contacted by your case manager or service coordinator about the reduction. If you feel that the services should not be reduced there are certain criteria which must be met to grant an exception. Although these vary somewhat depending on the program, you will need to prove: that the health and welfare of the individual will be negatively impacted; that the service addresses the related condition of the individual; and that it is the most appropriate way to meet the individual's needs.

Again, if your services exceed the limitations as



approved, you will be contacted by your case manager or service coordinator. All of these changes must be implemented by December 1, so it is very important that you make the time to respond to your case manager or service coordinator and that you provide them with any requested information. If you are receiving CBA services through the Star+Plus Program, these changes will impact you as well.

For a summary of some of the proposed service limitations, turn the page.

*continued on
next page*

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The Budget Cuts how will they affect you

continued from
previous page

This following is not an all-inclusive list. Current Utilization Review processes are still in effect. Again if your services exceed the new service limitations you will be contacted by your case manager or service coordinator.



Summary of Proposed Service Limitations

Program	Service	New Limit
Community Based Alternatives:	Adaptive aids	\$ 2,050
	Minor Home Modifications	\$ 6,550
	Attendant Services	2,135 hours
	Respite	24 days
Comm. Living Assistance Sup. Svcs.:	Adaptive aids	\$ 6,935
	Minor Home Modifications	\$ 7,515
	Attendant Services	3,312 hours
	Respite	29 days
	Specialized Therapies	\$10,118
Medically Dependent Children Pgm:	Adaptive aids	no change
	Minor Home Modifications	no change
	Adjunct Services	1,875 hours
	Respite	2,096 hours
Home & Community Services:	Adaptive aids	\$ 1,057
	Minor Home Modifications	no change
	Respite	no change
	Supported Home Living	<i>If exceeding the 90 percentile, reductions are based on Level of Need. Ex: 2,098 hours for LON 6</i>
Personal Care Services:		no change

The Star+Plus Program HHSC s Associate Commisioner Testifies Before Congress

The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health, chaired by Rep. Joe Pitts (R-PA), held a hearing on “Dual Eligibles: Understanding This Vulnerable Population and How to Improve Their Care” on June 21, 2011. The focus was to explore how Medicare and Medicaid can work together to give the best care possible to those eligible for both programs without imposing unnecessary regulation or costs.

Mr. Billy Millwee, Associate Commissioner, Medicaid and CHIP Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) testified how Medicaid health care services are provided to “Dual Eligibles” through the Texas’ STAR+PLUS program.

Mr. Millwee explained how these clients often have complex medical conditions and frequently need both acute care—hospitalization, outpatient services, laboratory—and long term services provided in the home or community, such as assistance with daily living, skilled nursing, and therapy services.

HHSC is the state agency responsible for administering the state’s Medicaid and CHIP Insurance Programs which now serves more than 3 million people out of a total population of about 25 million. In is commentary, Mr. Millwee noted the aged and persons with disabilities comprise about 25 percent of Medicaid recipients in the State of Texas and about 58 percent of the state’s Medicaid costs.

Mr. Millwee’s testimony concluded with the following summary:

The STAR+PLUS program has resulted in cost savings to the State and improved access and quality of care for clients. Since 1998 the STAR+PLUS program has demonstrated positive outcomes with regards to access to health care services, quality of care, client satisfaction and cost effectiveness. The STAR+PLUS program has demonstrated the ability to support aged and disabled persons in their communities and produce cost savings for a population that accounts for a disproportionate share of Medicaid costs.

Again, STAR+PLUS:

- Integrates acute care and long-term services and supports.
- Provides eligible persons that qualify for long-term services and supports access to these services without being placed on an interest list.
- Allows flexibility in benefits (can provide non-Medicaid covered services as service substitutions).
- Transfers risk for the cost of health care services from the state to the MCO.
- Facilitates the use of preventive health care and community support services.

We re on Facebook finally

DSSW, CDS in Texas and Lifespan are finally on the bandwagon and entering the 21st century. We feel very hip and with it to have our own Facebook pages. Each company will use their site to make announcements, inform you of events, and post embarrassing pictures of our employees eating birthday cake. We will also use the site to post job openings across Texas so stop by and take a look. We hope you “Like” it.

