



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

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COMMISSIONER

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October 17, 2014

Mr. Ken Levine
Director
Sunset Advisory Commission
1501 North Congress, 6th Floor
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Mr. Levine:

Enclosed is the State Health Services Council's response to the *Sunset Advisory Commission Staff Report on the Health and Human Services Commission and System Issues*, dated October 2014. This represents the response to the recommendations as voted on by the Council as a whole. Individual Council members may be sending additional comments directly to you.

We thank you and your staff for the detailed review of the health and human services system. We appreciate your diligence and professionalism in working with the staff at the Department of State Health Services and the other health and human services agencies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jacinto P. Juarez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jacinto" and last name "Juarez" clearly legible.

Jacinto P. Juarez, Ph.D.
Chair, State Health Services Council

Attachment

cc: Dr. Kyle L. Janek, Executive Commissioner, Health and Human Services Commission
Dr. David L. Lakey, Commissioner, Department of State Health Services
State Health Services Council Members

State Health Services Council

Response to Issue 1

The Vision for Achieving Better, More Efficiently Run Services Through Consolidation of Health and Human Services Agencies Is Not Yet Complete.

The State Health Services Council does not support this recommendation, but is open to changes that would improve the ability of the Department of State Health Services to focus on its core mission. Council members commented that abolishing the agency advisory councils would remove an important source of public input and would result in less transparency and accountability. Members also stated that the consolidation into one agency could diminish the focus on public health and the response capability in times of public health emergencies.

Responses to Issue 2

Incomplete Centralization of Support Services Deprives the State of Benefits Envisioned in Consolidating the Health and Human Services System.

The State Health Services Council voted not to take a position on this recommendation.

Response to Issue 3

Fragmented Administration of Medicaid Leads to Uncoordinated Policies and Duplicative Services and Could Place Future Transitions to Managed Care at Risk.

The State Health Services Council supports this recommendation with the qualifier that, in respect to patient care delivery, the Department of State Health Services continue current relationships with the entities involved. Members commented that changes should be made in such a way as to improve access to services, not make it more difficult.

Response to Issue 4

HHSC Has Not Fully Adapted Its Processes to Managed Care, Limiting the Agency's Ability to Evaluate the Medicaid Program and Provide Sufficient Oversight.

The State Health Services Council voted not to take a position on this recommendation.

Responses to Issue 5

Fragmented Provider Enrollment and Credentialing Processes Are Administratively Burdensome and Could Discourage Participation in Medicaid.

The State Health Services Council voted not to take a position on this recommendation.

Responses to Issue 6

The State Is Missing Opportunities to More Aggressively Promote Methods to Improve the Quality of Health Care.

The State Health Services Council voted not to take a position on this recommendation.

Response to Issue 7

HHSC Lacks a Comprehensive Approach to Managing Data, Limiting Effective Delivery of Complex and Interconnected Services.

The State Health Services Council voted not to take a position on this recommendation.

Response to Issue 8

Administration of Multiple Women's Health Programs Wastes Resources and Is Unnecessarily Complicated for Providers and Clients.

The State Health Services Council supports the recommendation to consolidate the administration of these programs.

Response to Issue 9

NorthSTAR's Outdated Approach Stifles More Innovative Delivery of Behavioral Health Services in the Dallas Region.

The State Health Services Council voted against this recommendation as stated, indicating that more information is needed about the model that would replace NorthSTAR.

Response to Issue 10

Poor Management Threatens the Office of Inspector General's Effective Execution of Its Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Mission.

The State Health Services Council did not take a position on this recommendation.

Response to Issue 11

Credible Allegation of Fraud Payment Hold Hearings Do Not Achieve the Law's Intent to Act Quickly to Protect the State Against Significant Cases of Fraud.

The State Health Services Council did not take a position on this recommendation.

Response to Issue 12

HHSC's Uncoordinated Approach to Websites, Hotlines, and Complaints Reduces Effectiveness of the System's Interactions With the Public.

The State Health Services Council voted not to take a position on this recommendation.

Response to Issue 13

HHSC's Advisory Committees, Including the Interagency Task Force for Children With Special Needs, Could be Combined and Better Managed Free of Statutory Restrictions.

The State Health Services Council did not take a position on this recommendation.

Response to Issue 14

HHSC Statutes Do Not Reflect Standard Elements of Sunset Reviews.

The State Health Services Council did not take a position on this recommendation.