



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

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COMMISSIONER

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January 5, 2015

**To: Executive Directors, Behavioral Health Directors, and Utilization Managers
Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs)
North Texas Behavioral Health Authority (NTBHA) and Value Options**

**From: Trina K. Ita, MA, LPC
Director, Program Services Section II 
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Division, Program Services Section
Rod Swan, Director, Contractor Services Section**

**Re: Implementation of the Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Screen also known as
the Balancing Incentives Program (BIP)**

Texans with severe mental illness live an average of 29 years less than other people and experience chronic, physical illnesses at higher rates. Also, members of this population who cannot access LTSS services in the community often enter nursing facilities. Behavioral health issues such as depression are relatively common in LTSS populations and affect people's ability to remain independent. This includes the older adult population.

To address this issue, Texas received direction from the federal government to implement statewide an LTSS Screen system during the summer of 2015. This system is intended to create a "No Wrong Door/Single Entry Point" for an individual to gain system-wide information on available services and supports to assist with their needs. This information will be collected through on-line self-service entry, face-to-face office visits, or via telephone calls with mental health or substance abuse personnel. The system will be implemented and managed through the "Your Texas Benefits" application and integrated with several other State software applications.

To accomplish these activities, LMHAs must ensure functionality in their local Information Technology (IT) systems so that they may send, receive, and process LTSS Screen referrals as of the date of implementation.

Implementation of the Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Screen also known as the Balancing Incentives Program (BIP)

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The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) does not intend to require contractual obligations regarding an LMHA's ability to send, receive, and process referrals in Fiscal Year 2015. However, effective September 1, 2015, LMHAs will be required via contract to send, receive, and process referrals.

Please direct any questions regarding implementation of the LTSS Screen to Robert Dole, LCSW at (512) 206-5016 or robert.dole@dshs.state.tx.us.