

**Administrator's Statement**

8/11/2014 10:25:28AM

84th Regular Session, Agency Submission, Version 1  
Automated Budget and Evaluation System of Texas (ABEST)

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**537 State Health Services, Department of**

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The Department of State Health Services' (DSHS) mission is to improve health and well-being in Texas. DSHS is responsible for addressing a broad range of health issues that face Texans, either in a leadership or supportive role. Those health challenges include: mental illness, substance abuse, chronic disease, infectious disease, emergency response, food safety, maternal & children's health, and access to health care services. Additionally, DSHS manages a large number of licensing programs to ensure the public's health, including regulation of health care facilities, professions, radiation, and drugs and medical devices.

During the past biennium, we have been reminded how suddenly these challenges can develop into threats. The outbreaks of West Nile Virus, dengue and other communicable diseases amplify the need for vigilance to protect the public's health from quickly-spreading infectious diseases. Moreover, DSHS has engaged in activities supporting public health and medical operations during critical events occurring in the state, such as the fertilizer plant explosion in West, Texas, and the influx of unaccompanied minors crossing the US/Mexico border in Texas. Within the past several years, outbreaks of food borne illnesses have reinforced the importance of DSHS regulatory and public health services efforts across the state to protect the food supply and track down the sources of these illnesses.

Mental illness and substance abuse remain challenges for Texans, their families and communities. Many individuals with these conditions end up homeless, in the criminal justice system or emergency rooms. They can also be affected by many negative health outcomes. The 83rd Texas Legislature made a significant investment in the funding of mental health and substance abuse services. This funding continued progress made between the 80th through 82nd Legislative sessions by supporting state hospitals and increasing funding for behavioral health services in communities. These investments reduce the burden on communities by serving mentally ill individuals in more appropriate settings than in emergency rooms and local jails. Additionally, the 83th Legislature funded new behavioral health services targeted at prevention and early identification, diverting families from becoming involved with the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), assisting veterans, and addressing homelessness.

The 83rd Texas Legislature prioritized women's health services by funding over \$100 million in new funding for comprehensive primary care and preventive services for women, including breast and cervical cancer screenings, STD-HIV screenings, perinatal services, prenatal services, and contraceptives. These services detect health issues such as breast and cervical cancers early, reduce potentially preventable hospitalizations due to hypertension and diabetes, and help avoid costs in the Texas Medicaid program.

Although coverage for health care may expand through federal health care related changes, health care costs will continue to increase without action to prevent or mitigate certain diseases and conditions. DSHS continues to use public health strategies, data and other interventions to improve health and decrease health care costs. These include efforts for prevent or reduce tobacco use and chronic diseases, reduce unnecessary hospitalizations, and improve birth outcomes.

DSHS collects health care information data and seeks innovative ways of using it to improve outcomes in Texas. DSHS uses discharge data from health care facilities to identify communities with high rates of preventable hospitalizations for conditions such as bacterial pneumonia, congestive heart failure, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, urinary tract infection, dehydration, hypertension, and angina. Effective evidence-based interventions can be utilized to target those counties to reduce adult hospital costs for potentially preventable hospitalizations

DSHS operates and maintains 10 state-owned facilities, which provide direct services 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to individuals requiring in-patient or residential services. The design and age of these facilities creates challenges relating to patient safety and also lead to significant maintenance and renovation costs each biennium. In light of the continuing challenges to provide quality care at the state mental health hospitals in the most safe, accessible and therapeutic environment possible, DSHS is in the process of developing a legislatively directed comprehensive ten-year plan for the provision of inpatient psychiatric services. The plan is due December 2014, and is intended to provide a road map for the future of state funded inpatient psychiatric services.

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THE DSHS LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST

The DSHS appropriations request complies with the guidance provided by the Legislative Budget Board.

The LAR addresses current and future needs across the breadth of DSHS responsibilities and includes 11 exceptional items focused on: (1) maintaining current services and operations, (2) ensuring compliance with current state and federal requirements, and 3) moving health forward in Texas.

- (1) Maintain Services Levels at FY 15 Levels – Mental Health Services, Tobacco Prevention, EMS/Trauma, & Preparedness
- (2) Hospital Facilities Repairs and Maintenance and Vehicles
- (3) Primary Health Care Expansion for Women
- (4) Enhance Substance Abuse Services
- (5) Community Mental Health Services
- (6) State Hospital System Improvement
- (7) Fund Waiting Lists – CSHCN
- (8) Sexually Transmitted Disease Prevention and Treatment
- (9) Improve prevention of Chronic Diseases
- (10) Improve Mobile Technology
- (11) Emergency Planning

DSHS is currently undergoing the Sunset process, working with the Sunset Commission on ways to enhance the ability of the department to best meet its mission. We will continue working with the Legislature to address the issues identified during the review, which are critical to moving health forward in Texas. In addition to the funding needs outlined in this request, important funding for DSHS has been included in the Health and Human Services System request. DSHS looks forward to working with the 84th Texas Legislature to make Texas healthier.