



Mental Health Services Data Exchange Rider 64, Senate Bill 1, 80th Texas Legislature

Rider 64, General Appropriations Act, 80th Texas Legislature, requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to report to the Legislative Budget Board its efforts to facilitate the exchange of information between state agencies pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 614.017.

Overview

In compliance with Chapter 614 of the Health and Safety Code, DSHS requires all 37 Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHA) and the NorthSTAR program to match the names of individuals booked into local and county jails with information maintained by DSHS' mental health database. This data matching must occur within 72 hours of the receipt of this information. In collaboration with the Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments and the Texas Commission on Jails Standards, DSHS developed this process:

1. to serve as a mechanism to ensure continuity of care for individuals with mental illness who are involved with the criminal justice system; and
2. to provide a mechanism for post-booking diversion of individuals with mental illness from the criminal justice system.

During fiscal year 2008 (i.e., from September 1, 2007 through August 31, 2008) approximately 1,038,700 individuals booked into local and county jails statewide were checked against the DSHS database. Of these individuals, approximately 182,292 received an "Exact" or a "Found" match with information maintained within the DSHS database. Thus, approximately 18% of individuals booked into local and county jails with a current or past history of state mental health care may be eligible for continuity of care or diversion from the criminal justice system.

Data Exchange Process

LMHAs and the NorthSTAR program receive via phone, facsimile, or email, the names and other identifying information of individuals booked into local and county jails on a daily basis. Once received, the LMHA and the NorthSTAR program prepare an electronic file that is matched against DSHS' mental health database. The DSHS database is comprised of information on individuals that are current or past recipients of state mental health care. Once DSHS receives an electronic file from an LMHA or the NorthSTAR program, a return report is prepared and sent back to the LMHA or the NorthSTAR program. The DSHS report contains detailed information for individuals booked into local and county jails who were a match to information in the DSHS database. The LMHA or the NorthSTAR program must either provide a copy of the DSHS report, or some local compilation of the information contained within that report to the local or county jail within the required 72-hour time period. This information is used by the LMHAs, the NorthSTAR program, and the local and



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county jails in diverting or providing continuity of care for individuals involved with the criminal justice system who are current or past recipients of state mental health care.

Type of Data Exchanged

Information that is routinely submitted by local and county jails to the LMHAs or the NorthSTAR program includes an individual's name, date of birth, social security number, sex and ethnicity. This information is matched to information maintained in the DSHS database. The DSHS report that is prepared and sent to the LMHAs and the NorthSTAR program includes results based upon how well the information submitted by the local or county jail matches with information maintained by DSHS as well as information specific to each type of match.

There are three levels of matches that are recorded by DSHS which include:

1. Exact - the information submitted by the local or county jail matches exactly with information maintained in DSHS' mental health database;
2. Found - the information submitted by the local or county jail matches with the information maintained in DSHS' mental health database enough to indicate that this consumer has been registered, but not all information matched; and
3. Maybe - the information submitted by the local or county jail matches with the information maintained in DSHS' mental health database enough to warrant some sort of further investigation by a mental health professional.

"Exact" and "Found" matches will contain more detailed information including the individual's name, date of birth, social security number, sex, ethnicity, identification number, principle diagnosis, an LMHA or NorthSTAR program service provider identifier, and the dates of most recent service by the LMHA or NorthSTAR program. "Maybe" matches will contain less detailed information including the individual's name, date of birth, social security number, sex, ethnicity, and an LMHA or NorthSTAR program service provider identifier. No information is placed on the return report for individuals booked into local and county jails who do not match with information maintained in the DSHS database.

Data Exchange in the Future

Senate Bill 839, passed by the 80th Texas Legislature, amended Chapter 614 of the Health and Safety Code to include the Department of Public Safety's (DPS) Bureau of Identification and Records in the data exchange process. DSHS is currently working with the DPS to develop a real-time identification system for individuals with a current or past history of state mental health care who are arrested and booked into local and county jails. This process will allow personnel at local and county jail information system terminals, with access to the Texas Law Enforcement Telecommunications System, to run a real-time match with DSHS' mental health database. A



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Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DSHS and DPS has been executed to support development of this system. The MOU outlines information system changes that allow for connectivity and transmission of information, as well as the data elements that will be transmitted between DSHS and DPS. This modification to the data exchange process will relieve the requirement that local and county jails submit the name or other identifying information for individuals booked into the local or county jail to the LMHA or the NorthSTAR program. It will also decrease the amount of time that local and county jail personnel must wait to receive information on individuals with a current or past history of state mental health care. The ultimate goal of this process is to provide a more expeditious mechanism to ensure continuity of care and post-booking diversion for individuals with mental illness who are involved with the criminal justice system. DSHS and DPS are moving forward on a timeline with projected implementation occurring during or shortly after the third quarter of fiscal year 2009.