

November 7, 2018

Via electronic submission to [jimmy.perez@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:jimmy.perez@hhsc.state.tx.us)

## **PUBLIC COMMENT LETTER**

Jimmy Perez  
Medicaid Policy Advisor  
Texas Health and Human Services Commission  
4900 North Lamar Boulevard  
Austin, Texas 78751

Re: Comments on Proposed Rule 1R052 Regarding Network Adequacy

Dear Mr. Perez:

On behalf of our more than 450 member hospitals and health systems, including rural, urban, children's, teaching and specialty hospitals, the Texas Hospital Association provides the following comments concerning a proposed rule from the Oct. 12 edition of the *Texas Register* relating to accessibility of services through Medicaid managed care organization provider networks.

THA has identified a troubling issue related to diagnostic services and psychiatric hospital coverage. The current rule requires an MCO enrollee to be able to access diagnostic services and psychiatric hospitals within 75 miles of his or her residence.<sup>1</sup> However, the mileage/travel time table linked to THHSC's proposed rule does not contain specific standards for those services. THA has concerns about the proposed rule because, by not including those services in the table, an MCO is only required to "provide reasonable availability and accessibility" to those services, which is an undefined and subjective standard.

The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that the current number of mental health professionals in Texas is able to meet only about 44 percent of the population's need for care. Omitting access to related services provided at psychiatric hospitals from MCO network adequacy requirements places another roadblock between patients and needed behavioral health treatment. In addition, Medicaid managed care enrollees require sufficient access to diagnostic services, such as laboratory and imaging services, necessary to detect and screen for illnesses.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. We look forward to working with you on these issues. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [cduncan@tha.org](mailto:cduncan@tha.org) or 512/465-1539.

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<sup>1</sup> 25 Tex. Admin. Code § 353.411 (2018).

Mr. Jimmy Perez  
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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Duncan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cameron Duncan  
Assistant General Counsel  
Texas Hospital Association

