



Lone Star Circle of Care Mental Health Grant Program

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Internal Auditor II
Release Date: July 9, 2009

**Williamson County
Auditors' Office
Yellow Internal
Audit Report**

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Williamson County

Lone Star Circle of Care - Mental Health Grant Program Audit Report

BACKGROUND

In October 2008 Commissioners Court approved a contract for the Williamson County Mental Health Grant Program. The contract, effective October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009, is an agreement for Williamson County to pay \$169.00 per qualifying mental health visit for clinic patients that meet eligibility criteria. The audit objectives were based off of these criteria. Funding is limited to \$320,000 for the contract term.

Funds for this program were exhausted in February 2009.

SCOPE: Client eligibility for October 2008 through February 2009.

OBJECTIVES: Verify:

- patients were Williamson County residents at the time of the visit
- a face to face encounter takes place between the patient and mental health professional
- progress notes for each visit document patients’ progress or lack of progress
- only one mental health visit per patient was billed on any one day

METHODOLOGY (INCLUDE SAMPLING CRITERIA)

- Sampled 112 out of approximately 1,848 patient visits. The sample was selected from the population by IDEA Data Analysis Software pulling patients that reside at zip codes that overlap the county’s border or are outside of the county. Research patients’ address in appraisal district web site and/or in online mapping website (mapquest.com).*
- Review patients’ description of service and file notes to ensure patient was present. Ensure the mental health professional was a Psychiatrist, LCSW, LPC, Ph.D, or a Psychologist as outlined in the contract.
- Review progress notes for each patient.
- Review all visits for each patient sampled. If two visits occur on the same day, ensure only one visit was billed.

County Resident	
Criteria:	Mental health visits billed were for patients that reside within Williamson County.
Condition:	Williamson County residency was verified for 91 out of 112 mental health visits sampled. 1. Nineteen mental health visits were for patients that live outside of Williamson County. 2. Residency for two patient visits was unable to be determined.
Cause:	1. These visits were either billed as an oversight or the patient lived in Williamson County at the time of the appointment. The computer system only tracks the current

address for each patient.

2. Physical addresses were not obtained from the patients, only post office boxes. The zip codes provided are not exclusive to Williamson County.

Effect: Williamson County may have paid \$5,915 for ineligible mental health patients.

Recommendation: Ensure only residents of Williamson County are billed to the county.

Management Response: The Williamson County address verification was done manually; therefore some errors are expected given the volume of patients that we serve. We will work to continuously improve this process; we recently hired a software specialist who has created a new report for our Electronic Medical Record system that will verify WC addresses; this should eliminate the error for next year's program. We will also consider developing an internal policy for not accepting P.O. Boxes as addresses for this program, or we may decide to not submit payment requests for patients who only provide a P.O. Box as their address to avoid this error in the future.

Patient Visit

Criteria: Face to face encounter took place between the patient and a qualifying mental health professional for mental health visits billed.

Condition: Mental health visits sampled were documented as a face to face encounter between the patient or the patients' family and a qualifying mental health provider.

Criteria: Each mental health visit billed is documented through progress notes.

Condition: Mental health visits sampled were documented through progress notes.

Criteria: Only one mental health visit per patient per day was billed to Williamson County.

Condition: One mental health visit per patient per day was billed for 111 out of 112 mental health visits reviewed. One patient had two visits on the same day.

Cause: Oversight.

Effect: County was billed and paid \$169 for an ineligible mental health visit.

Recommendation: Ensure only one mental health visit per patient per day is billed to Williamson County.

Management Response: The process of identifying instances where two visits occur on the same day was done manually, and therefore we had one instance of an oversight. Our new software specialist recently created a report to remove the instances of one person being seen twice in one day; therefore this error should be eliminated in the future.

Auditor's Note: Approximately 100 patient visits that were submitted during this scope were also billed to and paid by the County Indigent Health Care Program. Future contracts for the Mental Health Grant Program should specify that funds will only be provided for mental health visits that are not funded by another source.

* The audit sample was selected from the population provided by LSCC. After the audit was conducted, LSCC realized that the spreadsheet for February 2009 was provided to the auditor before the 45 non-resident visits were removed. The audit population, sample size, and findings were adjusted to reflect the non-resident visits.