

Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Texas Mental Health Landscape – A Decade of Public Sector Progress

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Recent Legislative Behavioral Health Actions

The Texas Legislature has systematically built out the state’s behavioral health system over the last decade. Now there is an opportunity to better coordinate and leverage these investments and determine ways to further improve the system.

Past areas of development:

1. Crisis System Redesign: The **80th Legislature** initiated the redesign, which was expanded later under DSRIP; it has become a national model (Colorado copied our crisis system when they expanded theirs after the Aurora shooting).
2. Community Mental Health and Addiction Services (all funding figures biennial):
 - **81st Legislature** began with investments in Transitional / Intensive Services (\$55 million) and also created a Medicaid Substance Abuse benefit.
 - **83rd Legislature** reduced waitlists (\$160 million) and initiated the 1915i Medicaid State Plan Amendment for extremely long-term care state hospital cases.
 - **84th Legislature** kept pace with population growth (\$9 million), made adjustments to average per capita spending (\$37 million), and expanded 1915i risk groups (e.g., jail, repeat inpatient use).
3. Inpatient Systems: The **83rd, 84th Legislatures** expanded community inpatient capacity.
4. **83rd Legislature** targeted services for specific populations: SB 58 Healthy Communities Homeless Collaboratives and SB 1185 Harris County Jail Diversion Pilot.
5. **84th Legislature added:** Texas veterans and families with SB 55 Veterans+Family Alliance

New developments: Super-utilizers (6.1), First Episode Psychosis (6.2), High Risk Children (6.3).

System Structure

