A STUDY OF THE COLLIN COUNTY TEXAS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES SYSTEM

A NorthSTAR County PHASE ONE REPORT

MAY 2010

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND FINANCING OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES IN COLLIN COUNTY, TEXAS
Collin County Study Phases

**Phase One**

**Describe**
Collin County’s “share” of NorthSTAR expenditures

**Describe**
The Utilization of NorthSTAR Services by Collin County Residents

**Evaluate**
The Organizational Structure and Communications

**Phase Two**

**Analyze**
The Services Utilization by Indication of Need (diagnoses, risk)

**Assess**
Community Needs

**Recommend**
A Services Plan
# Table of Contents

**INTRODUCTION**
- Purpose of the study 
- Background  
- Study Design and Methods  
- Assumptions and Cautions  
- Purpose and schedule for Phase Two of this study  
- Organization of Phase One Report  

**SECTION ONE - Population and Financial Statistics**
- Population: Who was served?  
- Population: What is the encounter consumption distribution?  
- *Financial Expenditures*  
- Providers: How much were providers paid?  
- Providers: What was the distribution of dollars to providers?  
- What was spent for services?  
- How were encounters distributed by urban and rural residents?  
- Expenditures: How are funds distributed among the top 10 largest outpatient inpatient community based providers for Collin County residents?  
- Medicaid and Non-Medicaid services expenditures  
- Prescription Drug expenditures  
- State Hospital Utilization  
- Invoiced Services  
- Funding Mental Health Authorities in Texas  

**SECTION TWO - Systems Issues**
- Populations at Risk for behavioral health care needs  
- Organizational Costs, Communications and Planning  
- Observations  
- Recommendations  
- Final Comment  
- Appendices I - IV
Principles in preparing the report

- Respect for individuals
- Recognize all systems have strengths and limitations
- Acknowledge concerns about public tax-payer funds used for profit
- Respect political perspectives
- Inspire meaningful discussions to address stakeholders’ mutual concerns and serve the needs of Collin County as it grows and changes
What is NorthSTAR?

- A financially and programmaticallly blended system of mental health and chemical dependency services for all ages of residents of Collin, Dallas, Ellis, Hunt, Kaufman, Navarro, and Rockwall Counties.
- A diverse and fast growing area of 5,430 square miles, with a population of approximately 3.8 million.
- Population growth varies across these counties between 15% and 42% since 2000.
- Collin and Rockwall Counties almost doubled in population.
- Hunt and Navarro defined as rural.
- Texas overall growth 12.7% in the same time period.
Pooled Purchasing

- Separate and unique systems of care and funding sources are blended into one
- Reduced State and provider administrative costs
  
  (*Centralized local authority for spending and managing services is VO*)

- Provides comprehensive benefit package for eligible Medicaid and medically indigent individuals
  
  (*this is changing with reductions in services*)

- Access to services determined by clinical need and financial eligibility

- Continuation of services regardless of Medicaid status
Four key findings

- No evidence of systematic disparities or differential treatment for Collin County residents compared to the rest of NorthSTAR and no discernable differences between any previous reports taken as a whole, and these DSHS data
  
- If the “recovery” model is the foundation, certain services are under-resourced
  
- Confounded communications in provider negotiations, client/customer service, and services evaluation and planning
  
- Confounding in the organizational structures and processes (tension between power groups)
## Financing Behavioral Health Care in NorthSTAR Counties

### Estimated NorthSTAR Budget State FY 2008-09 NTBHA Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local</th>
<th>$ 4,600,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SA Block</td>
<td>$ 10,252,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other DSHS</td>
<td>$ 32,954,942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCOOMMI</td>
<td>$ 1,750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outpatient Competency Restoration</td>
<td>$ 578,773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis Re-Design</td>
<td>$ 4,461,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid</td>
<td>$ 51,648,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Hospital</td>
<td>$ 34,968,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 141,214,124</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Median Household Income 2009 (% of Texas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Income 2009</th>
<th>(% of Texas)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collin</td>
<td>$81,875</td>
<td>(163.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>$47,155</td>
<td>(94.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellis</td>
<td>$63,500</td>
<td>(126.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunt (rural)</td>
<td>$45,396</td>
<td>(90.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaufman</td>
<td>$58,497</td>
<td>(116.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navarro (rural)</td>
<td>$40,730</td>
<td>(81.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockwall</td>
<td>$79,703</td>
<td>(159.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Matching reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNDING SOURCE</th>
<th>Funds (Actual) source</th>
<th>Source NTBHA Plan</th>
<th>Plus competency funds</th>
<th>Plus supplemental</th>
<th>Add difference in Crisis funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DSHS State Funds (includes Supp)</td>
<td>$38,933,724</td>
<td>$32,954,942</td>
<td>$33,533,715</td>
<td>$38,533,715</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid</td>
<td>$51,321,173</td>
<td>$51,648,281</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse Block Grant</td>
<td>$10,252,716</td>
<td>$10,252,711</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local County Funds</td>
<td>$4,781,208</td>
<td>$4,600,000</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interagency Receipts</td>
<td>$2,133,714</td>
<td>$1,750,000</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>$383,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis Redesign Funding</td>
<td>$5,840,180</td>
<td>$4,461,410</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>$578,770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Hospital</td>
<td>$34,968,007</td>
<td>$34,968,007</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>same</td>
<td>$146,792,894</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$147,438,722  $138,885,351  $141,214,124  $146,214,124  $146,792,894  $637,828

- Collin County utilizes approximately 5.47% of the total NorthSTAR allocated state hospital bed costs, and 8.69% of all other services dollars.
- Collin County residents may receive some benefit from the crisis funding, although it receives limited direct funds at this time, and receives no TCOOMMI funding at this time.
Financing Behavioral Health Care in Collin County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collin County Expenditures</th>
<th>All Categories 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Expenditures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>$5,551,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescription Drugs</td>
<td>$2,626,411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Hospital</td>
<td>$1,912,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invoiced Services</td>
<td>$597,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$10,598,167</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Until August 2009 Collin County funds represented 5.2% of the $8.7 million expenditures (excluding state hospital costs)

Collin County spends an additional ~$ 800,000 locally
Additional observations regarding expenditures for behavioral health services in NorthSTAR

- **Between 2004 and 2009**
  - Total number of individuals receiving services annually increased from 18,000 to 22,000
  - Emergency room and 23-hour care costs nearly doubled, from $3.9 million to $7.8 million
  - Inpatient expenditures increased from $8 million to $14 million, thus 23-hour care did not appear to reduce the need for inpatient
  - Outpatient expenditures increased by only 10% from $38 to $43 million
  - Medication expenditures decreased by 50% from $22 to $10 million

- According to data on the DSHS web site, Value Options has acquired profit equal to or exceeding $25 million in the past three years.
GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY OF SITES OF SERVICE

KEY:
- Mental Health Providers = Yellow Balloons
- Chemical Dependency Providers = Green Pins
- Both CD and MH Providers = Purple Balloons
- Hospitals = Red Cross
- The Bridge Homeless Shelter = Green People
- NTBHA = Pink Pin
Which providers received payment for services to Collin County residents?

Figure 1. Proportionate Distribution of Expenditures for Collin County Residents Community-Based Services 2007-2009

- Other Mental Health Outpatient 1: $3,642,940
- Chemical Dependency Services: $2,455,142
- Other Rehab Counseling: $2,249,769
- Inpatient Psychiatric 2: $1,226,059
- Other Local Hospital Service: $1,071,569
- LifeNet: $365,512
- LifePath Systems: $503,292
- MetroCare: $330,069
- LifePath Systems: $133,094
Figure 2. Expenditures by Service Category: Collin County Residents Each Study Year
Figure 4. Individual Collin County Residents Served by Service Category Each Study

- Psychiatric Observation
- Community Inpatient
- Emergency Room Management
- ACT Counseling
- Outpatient Counseling
- CD Non-Residential Counseling
- Crisis Counseling
- Lab and Med Services
- Jail Diversion

(Bar chart showing service categories and years 2007, 2008, 2009)
Perspective: Average number of encounters per individual Collin County client of the system
### Comparing Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>FY07 Ave/Per Enrollee</th>
<th>FY08 Ave/Per Enrollee</th>
<th>FY09 Ave/Per Enrollee</th>
<th>FY07 Ave/Person</th>
<th>FY08 Ave/Person</th>
<th>FY09 Ave/Person</th>
<th>2007 Ave Cost/Person</th>
<th>2008 Ave Cost/Person</th>
<th>2009 Ave Cost/Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Inpatient</td>
<td>$237</td>
<td>$260</td>
<td>$214</td>
<td>$2,566.36</td>
<td>$2,845.67</td>
<td>$2,616.68</td>
<td>$2,512</td>
<td>$3,310</td>
<td>$2,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Hour Obs</td>
<td>$136</td>
<td>$137</td>
<td>$127</td>
<td>$1,331.14</td>
<td>$1,241.41</td>
<td>$1,241.51</td>
<td>$974</td>
<td>$1,032</td>
<td>$1,039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ER</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$15</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$213.82</td>
<td>$200.18</td>
<td>$224.20</td>
<td>$222</td>
<td>$202</td>
<td>$245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>$82</td>
<td>$83</td>
<td>$5,834.43</td>
<td>$6,555.07</td>
<td>$6,934.78</td>
<td>$4,640</td>
<td>$5,167</td>
<td>$4,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Mgt</td>
<td>$74</td>
<td>$69</td>
<td>$72</td>
<td>$162.69</td>
<td>$153.67</td>
<td>$169.38</td>
<td>$91</td>
<td>$107</td>
<td>$140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>$34</td>
<td>$34</td>
<td>$36</td>
<td>$213.93</td>
<td>$247.08</td>
<td>$286.20</td>
<td>$77</td>
<td>$202</td>
<td>$217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>$27</td>
<td>$43</td>
<td>$53</td>
<td>$78.24</td>
<td>$105.75</td>
<td>$127.58</td>
<td>$83</td>
<td>$131</td>
<td>$137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD Non Residential</td>
<td>$98</td>
<td>$98</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$739.51</td>
<td>$735.82</td>
<td>$736.44</td>
<td>$694</td>
<td>$756</td>
<td>$912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD Residential</td>
<td>$97</td>
<td>$83</td>
<td>$77</td>
<td>$1,480.17</td>
<td>$1,545.90</td>
<td>$1,556.23</td>
<td>$1,477</td>
<td>$1,460</td>
<td>$1,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$175</td>
<td>$151</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$192</td>
<td>$234</td>
<td>$291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medication Services</td>
<td>$106</td>
<td>$129</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$202.35</td>
<td>$238.25</td>
<td>$263.91</td>
<td>$192</td>
<td>$234</td>
<td>$291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehab Services</td>
<td>$238</td>
<td>$284</td>
<td>$360</td>
<td>$528.36</td>
<td>$627.20</td>
<td>$678.39</td>
<td>$440</td>
<td>$605</td>
<td>$754</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions we have heard... and so has the LBB
(source Texas State Government Effectiveness and Efficiency January 2009)

- There aren’t enough providers
- Children aren’t being served
- People can’t get enrolled
- People aren’t getting services they need
- People have to drive long distances for services especially crisis and inpatient
- Outcome measures are not transparent or examined by stakeholders
Map 4  Number of Community Based Services Encounters
Collin County Residents by Billing Zip Code
2009

Map created May 5, 2010 by the Mental Sciences Institute at UNT MSC. Map based on encounter data from the Texas Department of State Health Services, using 2007 ESRH shapefiles provided by the Collin County GIS Department.
Medicaid providers?

- 1,162 medical offices were surveyed between September and March 2008. Dallas had a Medicaid acceptance rate of 38.6 percent, compared with the national average of 55 percent.

- Dallas ranks **last** among 15 major cities in the percentage of physicians accepting Medicaid

(source: a study by Merritt Hawkins & Associates, an Irving-based health care consulting and recruiting company)
Increased Choice of Providers who can Serve Medicaid and non-Medicaid Public Sector Clients

Providers That Have Served at Least One NorthSTAR Enrollee by County

- Rockwall
- Navarro
- Kaufman
- Hunt
- Ellis
- Dallas
- Dallas
- Collin
Map 2

2009 Payments to Providers by Provider Zip Code for Community Based Services to Collin County Residents

Map created April 22, 2010 by the Mental Sciences Institute at UNTHSC. Map based on expenditures data from the Texas Department of State Health Services, and provider zip code information obtained from the Value Options NorthSTAR Member Information and Provider Directory published March 1, 2010. 2007 ESRI shapefiles provided by the Collin County GIS Department.
### Table 6. Top 10 Largest Agency Providers of Community Based Services to Collin County Residents in NorthSTAR by Encounters, Amount Paid, Individuals and Average Rates Paid 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encounters</td>
<td>Paid</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outpatient</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rate/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LifePath Systems</td>
<td>18,786</td>
<td>$1,418,189</td>
<td>$75.49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child &amp; Family Guidance Centers</td>
<td>6,341</td>
<td>$530,674</td>
<td>$83.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADAPT</td>
<td>4,870</td>
<td>$364,037</td>
<td>$74.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Management Resources</td>
<td>5,143</td>
<td>$274,395</td>
<td>$53.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas Metrocare</td>
<td>2,149</td>
<td>$171,768</td>
<td>$79.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LifeNet</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>$49,967</td>
<td>$108.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avenues Counseling Center</td>
<td>2,796</td>
<td>$147,545</td>
<td>$52.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inpatient</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Oaks Psychiatric Hospital</td>
<td>1,621</td>
<td>$1,378,068</td>
<td>$850.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Center of McKinney</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>$163,799</td>
<td>$98.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timberlawn</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>$216,420</td>
<td>$655.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5. Rate per Encounter from Table 5**

- Timberlawn
- Medical Center of McKinney
- Green Oaks Psychiatric Hospital
- Avenues Counseling Center
- LifeNet
- Dallas Metrocare
- Life Management Resources
- ADAPT
- Child & Family Guidance Centers
- LifePath Systems

$-$ $500.00 $1,000.00 $1,500.00
NorthSTAR covers more persons in need than other mental health authorities
(page 16-17)

- Medicaid and persons up to 200% of poverty
- Eligibility guidelines differ
- Poverty for family of 4 is about $22,000 per year
- 200% is about $44,000 per year
- Medicaid is “impoverished” i.e. no assets except perhaps a house
- Poverty you can still have a job

Figure 6. Proportion of Expenditures, Collin County Residents by Medicaid Status: All Study Years
Table 9. State Hospital Utilization Collin County Residents Each Study Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th>Persons in the Hospital</th>
<th>Bed Days</th>
<th>Average Length of Stay (for this year only)</th>
<th>Allocation of &quot;Cost&quot;</th>
<th>Average Expenditure Per Person (for this year only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>5,940</td>
<td>39.34</td>
<td>$1,442,360</td>
<td>$9,552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>6,806</td>
<td>37.40</td>
<td>$1,934,653</td>
<td>$10,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>6,792</td>
<td>41.00</td>
<td>$1,912,280</td>
<td>$11,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sums</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>19,538</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$5,289,293</strong></td>
<td><strong>$13,493</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All NorthSTAR 2007-09

<p>| State Hospital | $563 | $667 | $567 | $12,087.96 | $15,367.67 | $14,967.97 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>State Fiscal Year 2007</th>
<th>State Fiscal Year 2008</th>
<th>State Fiscal Year 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total NorthSTAR Invoiced Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$4,533,918.59</td>
<td>$5,318,835.22</td>
<td>$7,414,082.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent Attributed to Collin County</strong></td>
<td>7.10%</td>
<td>6.90%</td>
<td>6.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amount Attributed to Collin County</strong></td>
<td>$321,908.22</td>
<td>$366,999.63</td>
<td>$507,977.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total All Years</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,196,885.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Trends in Enrollment in Children’s Health Insurance Program

Texas CHIP Enrollment State FY 2010
Dallas and Collin Counties

- Collin
- Dallas

Texas CHIP Enrollment State FY 2010
Collin County With Trend Line

- Sep-9
- Oct-9
- Nov-9
- Dec-9
- Jan-10
- Feb-10
- Mar-10
- Apr-10
- May-10

- Sep-09
- Oct-09
- Nov-09
- Dec-09
- Jan-10
- Feb-10
- Mar-10
- Apr-10
- May-10
- Jun-10
- Jul-10
- Aug-10
Map 6

Percent of Population At or Below 200% of Federal Poverty Level
Collin County 2008 Estimates by Zip Code

Map created April 24, 2010 by the Mental Sciences Institute at UNTHSC. Map based on 2008 estimates of population at or below 200% of federal poverty level by zip code provided by the Texas Department of State Health Services, using 2007 ESRI shapefiles provided by the Collin County GIS Department.
Population risk rates published by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

- In the uninsured group of Collin County residents under 200% of poverty, 3,577 may have a serious mental illness (schizophrenia, major depressive disorder, or bipolar disorder).
- An additional 11,328 may have a mental health problem needing treatment.
- Among those Collin County residents with an income above 200% of poverty, 9.93% (67,372) are estimated to be uninsured, adding an additional risk population to the estimates above.

Map 6
Percent of Population At or Below 200% of Federal Poverty Level
Collin County 2008 Estimates by Zip Code

Map created April 24, 2010 by the Mental Sciences Institute at UTHSC. Map based on 2008 estimates of population at or below 200% of federal poverty level by zip code provided by the Texas Department of State Health Services, using 2007 ESRI shapefiles provided by the Collin County GIS Department.
Percent of Population At or Below 200% of Federal Poverty Level
Collin and Dallas Counties 2008 Estimates by Zip Code

Map created June 7, 2010 by the Mental Sciences Institute at UNT/HS. Map based on 2008 estimates of population at or below 200% of federal poverty level by zip code provided by the Texas Department of State Health Services, using 2007 ESRI shapefiles provided by the Collin County GIS Department.
To assure that consumers and the local community were given a voice in the implementation and ongoing oversight of NorthSTAR, the State created an independent Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA) which came to be known as the North Texas Behavioral Health Authority (NTBHA).

- **Ombudsman** services to NorthSTAR enrollees,
- **Staff to serve** on the Quality Improvement Committee of [Value Options] the contracted Behavioral Health Organizations
- **Conduit** to relay issues of community concern and complaints directly to the State.
- **Meets regularly with** various community based organizations, consumer and advocacy groups, managed care coordination groups as well as NorthSTAR service providers.
Six Recommendations

1. Hire a behavioral health administrator/director for Collin County positioned in the County Health Department
2. Have a strong presence throughout the system
3. Decentralize some of VO’s current functions to re-empower local communities (e.g. advocacy, case management)
4. Require a bidding process for new services
5. Reorganize the NTBHA (e.g. create local enfranchised coordination boards; ensure NTBHA effectively interfaces with the PAC)
6. Reinvest local dollars with a memorandum of understanding or contract for the deployment of those dollars.