

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2196  
By: Truitt  
Public Health  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Research indicates that people with serious mental illness are more likely than those without mental illness to have poor physical health and face premature death due to untreated and poorly managed medical conditions, such as cardiovascular, pulmonary, and infectious diseases.

In addition to the unacceptable human cost associated with untreated medical conditions and premature death, people with mental illness and other chronic conditions are the greatest users of health services and emergency room care. Evidence demonstrates that integrated health care improves access to and service outcomes for persons with or at-risk for mental illness. Establishing a workgroup in Texas focused on improving integrated health care is of primary importance.

H.B. 2196 creates a workgroup charged with determining effective ways to achieve integrated health and behavioral health services in Texas. The mission of the workgroup is to improve the health of people with and at-risk for mental illness through expanded access to integrated health care services.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 2196 adds a temporary provision, set to expire on August 31, 2010, to require the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission to establish a workgroup to recommend best practices in policy, training, and service delivery to promote the integration of health and behavioral health services in Texas. The bill requires the executive commissioner to appoint members to serve on the workgroup and requires the workgroup to include representatives of the Department of State Health Services, the Department of Aging and Disability Services, the Department of Family and Protective Services, the Health and Human Services Commission, the Texas Department of Insurance, a state organization that represents community mental health and mental retardation centers, a state organization that represents federally qualified health centers, a state organization that represents substance abuse providers, state associations that represent medical and behavioral health professionals, a mental health philanthropy that is an administrative unit of a public institution of higher education in Texas and that agrees to provide administrative support to the workgroup, and additional members who are recognized experts in integrated health care in Texas, who have direct experience with the provision of integrated health care, or who represent the interests of consumers, communities, family members, advocates, business leaders, medical and behavioral health providers, and insurers. The bill requires the workgroup to study and make recommendations on the integration of health and behavioral health services in Texas. The bill authorizes the workgroup to request any information it needs from state agencies and requires the state agencies to comply with the request. The bill requires the executive commissioner to establish the workgroup not later than

October 1, 2009, and to file not later than August 1, 2010, a report with the appropriate committees of the senate and house of representatives that describes the best practices for health and behavioral health integration, barriers to implementing the best practices in Texas, and policy considerations for improving integrated service delivery to the citizens of this state.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2009.