



April 30, 2014

Mental Health Screening and Intake in County Jails

How We Identify Individuals with Mental Health Needs at the Point of Booking

Public Service Match Data: Continuity of Care Query

- In 2007, the Texas Health and Safety Code was amended to require that the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) work with the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to design and implement a data exchange process that would allow personnel at local county jails to **obtain real-time public health service match data at the point of an individual's booking into the jail.**¹
- This **new process replaced a previous public service data match process** which Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) were required to perform manually within 72 hours of receiving the inmate's name from the local jail upon booking (referred to as the CARE check system). The new data match process is instantaneous and real-time and is known as the **Continuity of Care Query (CCQ).**²
- In 2013, over **40% of bookings into local Texas county jails** were for individuals who had either an "exact" or "probable" CCQ match, indicating some prior contact with the public mental health system, whether at a CMHC or a state hospital.³
- This data match process helps to flag individuals who may have a mental health need and **who may be eligible for continuity of care services.** As of 2013, all counties were using the CCQ data match process.⁴

Mental Health Screening

- The CCQ is complemented by a **mental health screening** that is conducted for every inmate at the point of booking into the local jail.⁵
- The screening instrument, provided by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards (TCJS), is called the **Screening Form for Suicide and Medical and Mental Impairments.**⁶
- The form includes **staff observations and self-report questions**, and TCJS is currently providing training materials to local county jails to help jail staff recognize mental illness and fill out the form correctly.
- If the individual is demonstrating signs and symptoms of mental illness, the **sheriff must notify a magistrate within 72 hours.**⁷



For more information or to request an interview, please contact Megan Randall and Katharine Ligon by e-mail at randall@cphp.org and ligon@cphp.org or by phone at 512.823.2869.

About CPHP

The Center for Public Policy Priorities is a nonpartisan, nonprofit policy institute committed to improving public policies to make a better Texas. You can learn more about us at CPPP.org.

Join us across the Web

Twitter: @CPPP_TX

Facebook: [Facebook.com/bettertexas](https://www.facebook.com/bettertexas)

YouTube: [YouTube.com/CPPPvideo](https://www.youtube.com/CPPPvideo)

ENDNOTES

¹ Texas Health and Safety Code § 614.017, accessed 16 April 2014 at <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/HS/htm/HS.614.htm>.

² For more information on the CCQ process, see Texas Department of State Health Services, *Mental Health Service Data Exchange Rider 60, 81st Legislative Session*, p. 2, 2010; Texas Department of State Health Services, *Mentally Ill Offender Screening and Information Exchange Rider 43, 83rd Legislative Session*; and Texas, Department of State Health Services, “Information Item T Data Exchange and Continuity of Care Guidelines,” *FY 2012 – 2013 Contract*.

³ Texas Commission on Jail Standards, “Request from County Jail by Match Type,” 2013. Please note the distinction between “bookings” and “inmates.” It is possible that a single individual may be booked into the jail on multiple occasions throughout the year. The CCQ booking data includes and does not distinguish between repeat bookings for the same individual. Therefore “40% of bookings” is not necessarily synonymous with “40% of jail inmates” or “40% of people booked into jails.” This data represents individuals who have had a state hospital admission, mental health community service encounter, authorization, or assessment since September, 2004.

⁴ Texas Department of State Health Services, *Mentally Ill Offender Screening and Information Exchange Rider 43, 83rd Legislative Session*.

⁵ Texas Administrative Code § 273.5(b), accessed 16 April 2014 at [http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=37&pt=9&ch=273&rl=5](http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=37&pt=9&ch=273&rl=5).

⁶ Texas Commission on Jail Standards, “Screening Form for Suicide and Medical and Mental Impairments ,” accessed 23 April 2014 at <http://www.tcjs.state.tx.us/docs/JailScreeningForm.pdf>.

⁷ Texas Code of Criminal Procedure § 16.22 accessed 23 April 2014 at <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/CR/htm/CR.16.htm>.