



TO: Texas Judges Hearing Child Protective Services Cases  
FROM: Hon. John Specia (ret.), Jurist in Residence  
Office of Court Administration  
DATE: November 10, 2009  
RE: STAR Health & Psychotropic Medications

Greetings fellow judges! This is the first communiqué in what I hope and intend to be a monthly note, giving you current and compelling information you need for hearing your CPS docket. If you have any questions or topics that you would like to see covered, please let me know at [jurist@courts.state.tx.us](mailto:jurist@courts.state.tx.us).

For the first installment, I wanted to pass along information on health services for children in foster care provided through [STAR Health program](#), which contracts with DFPS through Superior HealthPlan, for physical and behavioral health care services for the benefit of children in care.

**Q: What does STAR Health do?**

A: STAR Health delivers physical and behavioral health services for each child in DFPS conservatorship and maintains an electronic “medical home” for each child.

**Q: When is a child eligible for STAR Health services?**

A: Upon entry to conservatorship and services can begin immediately.

**Q: Who is excluded?**

A: Children who are: placed outside of Texas; from other states but placed in Texas; residents in Medicaid-paid facilities (nursing homes, state schools); dually eligible for Medicaid and Medicare; adopted; in hospice; in DFPS conservatorship, but placed in a TYC facility or on probation.

**Q: Are older, transitioning youth covered?**

A: Yes. Youth who have aged out but have remained in paid foster care past their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday are eligible until the month of their 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. Youth who leave foster care at age 18 are eligible for coverage until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. It is not necessary for a court to extend jurisdiction beyond age 18 for this coverage to apply.

**Q: Does STAR Health cover prescription medication?**

A: No. Prescription medications are provided through the Vendor Drug Program through Health and Human Services, and not through STAR Health.

**Q: Do services need to be court ordered?**

A: No as long as the service is medically necessary, no court order is required. However, if a judge orders a particular service or specific care that is covered by Medicaid, a signed copy of the order should be sent ASAP by DFPS via fax to Superior at 1-866-702-4837.

**Q: What happens if I order a service that is not covered by Medicaid?**

A: DFPS will seek that service through a private pay contract. When entering orders for services that are not covered, Judges should consider drafting an order that provides DFPS the maximum flexibility in contracting because not all providers are available even in a private contract situation.

**Q: Does STAR Health monitor the use of psychoactive medications?**

A: STAR Health routinely monitors the use of psychiatric medications in children who are in care to ensure compliance with state parameters and for appropriate prescribing.

**Q: What is a Psychotropic Medication Utilization Review (PMUR)?**

A: A review of the use of psychiatric medications for any child in care can be made by **any** caseworker, judge, foster parent, medication consentor or other concerned entity. A judge can request a PMUR by calling 1-866-912-6283 or by submitting an online request via [SHPNFC@centene.com](mailto:SHPNFC@centene.com)

**Q: How are PMUR results made known?**

A: Once the PMUR is complete, the results will be provided to the caseworker and to any other entity requesting the information, if other than the caseworker.

**Q: Who can I contact if I have questions?**

A: If your question is regarding physical health, call 866-912-6283. If it regards behavioral health, or interpreting a psychological evaluation or psychiatric assessment, contact STAR Health's Integrated Mental Health Services (IMHS) at 866-218-8263. [Click here for a list of STAR Health contacts.](#)