

COALITION OF TEXANS WITH DISABILITIES

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My name is Dennis Borel and I serve as executive director of the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD). Founded in 1978 by people with disabilities, CTD is a nonprofit statewide cross-disability advocacy organization.

CTD has been among the primary consumer advocacy groups involved in the expansion and implementation of Medicaid managed care in Texas since 2003. CTD has been and continues to be engaged with legislative committees, state health agencies, appointed advisory councils, provider groups, managed care organizations and, most importantly, numerous CTD member organizations serving people with disabilities and seniors. Our focus is the aged, blind and disabled population.

The 2005 Texas legislative session saw a hotly-contested debate on whether to expand managed care in Medicaid which had been piloted in one county. Both sides, pro and con, pursued CTD support. We did see benefits in managed care and we did have concerns, ultimately we neither supported nor opposed expansion, choosing instead to promote principles for an effective Medicaid for the aged, blind and disabled. Many of these principles were adopted.

Our major concerns were (a) whether the managed care organizations could deliver on their promise to eliminate the waiting list for one of the Medicaid waivers and (b) whether relocation of individuals from nursing facilities to the community can be effectively managed. The Texas Medicaid managed care system succeeded on both counts. We also like the service coordination role in managed care, an important piece in linking acute care and long term services and supports. Flexibility to deal with unique situations is another plus. CTD became a strong supporter of further expansions.

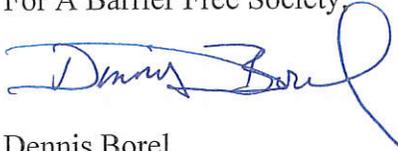
Implementation in Texas has been in stages, beginning in urban areas with a system that carved out nursing facilities and the IDD (intellectual and developmental disabilities) population. Today, Texas Medicaid managed care covers the entire state and includes nursing facilities and acute care and state plan services for IDD. IDD waivers will be phased in over several years. Positives I've seen in Texas include:

- Consumer education
- Stakeholder input

- MCOs with experience implement better
- Strong oversight
- Consumer choice
- Consumer protections
- Value-added services

It's no secret that Texas legislators promoted managed care as a cost containment strategy for Medicaid. This did not happen on Day One of course. It is safe to say that Texas would not have continued expansion had there not been cost containment. I have come to see that all successful cost containment in public health programs boils down to two components: community not institutions and keeping people as healthy as possible. Not coincidentally, following those two components brings a better quality of life, more independence and more community participation for people with disabilities--a goal we can all share.

For A Barrier Free Society



Dennis Borel
Executive Director

CTD is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with Federal Tax ID #74-2071160. CTD is a social and economic impact organization benefitting Texans with all disabilities of all ages. CTD is a membership organization controlled by people with disabilities.