

From: Alyse Ferguson
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2014 7:50 AM
To: Bill Bilyeu
Subject: sunset review

Bill,

A few situations come to mind, when I look at the sunset review as it relates to mental health. We face a number of issues because we have the NorthStar system vs. a Mental Health Authority (MHA.)

- 1) When a defendant is found incompetent, the Judge has the ability to utilize an outpatient competency restoration program (OCR). These programs are more cost effective than hospitalization, when appropriate. We have had a number of cases, in which OCR was the recommendation of the doctor, but were denied by Value Options. These defendants must be sent to the hospital instead. Additionally there are several defendants that will never regain competency. If the state refuses to drop the charges, and the hospital recommends OCR, these are also refused by Value Options. The result is very costly extended hospitalizations.
- 2) We receive no in custody services. The in custody services can be of great benefit to assist these individuals in connecting with services and doing so timely.
- 3) The required enrollment/financial paperwork is extensive. It becomes very overwhelming to those with mental illness. Further many of these individuals do not have the official documents (birth certificates, ID's) and cannot afford to obtain them without assistance.
- 4) MHA's are identified in several statutes as the responsible entity.
- 5) Collin County MH consumer needs are very different than consumers in Dallas County, for example transportation issues. There are no specialized services provided in Collin County, such as those established in Dallas.