



# Betty Hardwick Center

A Local Mental Health Authority Contracted  
with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission

## Results in Brief

### Why OIG Conducted This Audit

The Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) Audit and Inspections Division (OIG Audit) conducted an audit of Betty Hardwick Center. At least once every five years, OIG must conduct a performance audit of each local mental health authority (LMHA) in Texas.

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) paid Betty Hardwick Center \$7.5 million for mental health programs and services delivered during state fiscal year 2022, which covered the period from September 1, 2021, through August 31, 2022. Of the \$7.5 million, \$6.4 million was associated with the LMHA performance contract between HHSC and Betty Hardwick Center. During state fiscal year 2022, Betty Hardwick Center reported 63,875 mental health encounters for 5,285 individuals to HHSC.

### Summary of Review

The audit objective was to determine whether Betty Hardwick Center complied with selected state and contractual requirements.

The audit scope included mental health services at Betty Hardwick Center during the period from September 1, 2021, through August 31, 2022.

### Conclusion

Betty Hardwick Center, a local mental health authority (LMHA), conducted mental health assessments with associated screenings timely, delivered services through qualified staff members, documented each individual's progress, and paid for private psychiatric beds at contracted rates.

However, Betty Hardwick Center did not comply with some requirements for financial assessments, recovery plans, level of care deviations, and the Inpatient Care Waitlist.

### Key Results

Betty Hardwick Center complied with certain requirements reviewed as part of this audit. Specifically, Betty Hardwick Center:

- Conducted mental health assessments for routine care services for all 18 individuals tested within required time frames when associated with a screening.
- Included the assessment date and signature and credentials of the qualified LMHA staff member who performed the assessment on all 60 mental health assessments for routine care services tested.
- Included required elements selected for testing on all 54 recovery plans.
- Paid for private psychiatric hospitalizations at the contracted rate for only invoiced days for all 14 inpatient stays tested.

Additionally, for all 92 service notes reviewed, which were associated with one or more core services listed in the recovery plans, Betty Hardwick Center documented (a) the individual's progress or lack of progress in achieving recovery plan goals and (b) the signature and credentials of the qualified LMHA staff member that provided the service.

## Background

To deliver mental health services in Texas, HHSC contracts with 37 LMHAs. Each LMHA:

- Supports mental health services through planning, policy development, coordination, and resource allocation and development.
- Provides adults and children with assessment, crisis, intensive, and comprehensive services in a clinically appropriate manner.
- Incorporates jail diversion strategies to reduce involvement of the criminal justice system.

Betty Hardwick Center is the LMHA for five Texas counties: Callahan, Jones, Shackelford, Stephens, and Taylor.

## Management Response

Betty Hardwick Center agreed with the audit recommendations and indicated corrective actions would be implemented by September 2024.

However, Betty Hardwick Center did not:

- Conduct or update financial assessments (a) during the audit scope for 5 of 51 individuals and (b) within required time frames for 8 of 51 individuals.
- Have a recovery plan in effect before providing routine care services for one of 54 mental health assessments.
- Obtain a signature from the individual receiving services on 14 of 54 recovery plans.
- Document the information it provided to 2 of 4 individuals it deviated to a lower level of care.
- Add 2 of 16 individuals to the Inpatient Care Waitlist within one business day.

Additionally, Betty Hardwick Center did not document its waitlist determination dates for 2 of 18 individuals it added to the Inpatient Care Waitlist.

## Recommendations

Betty Hardwick Center should:

- Strengthen its processes for conducting and updating financial assessments as required.
- Develop recovery plans before providing routine care services.
- Obtain individual's signatures.
- Discuss necessary information for each individual to make an informed decision and document the discussion.
- Revise its processes to include documenting its waitlist determination dates and add individuals to the Inpatient Care Waitlist within one business day.

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