THE MONEY FOLLOWS THE PERSON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PILOT PROJECT

The Money Follows the Person Behavioral Health Pilot is a demonstration project designed to help adults with serious mental health and substance use disorders leave nursing facilities and live successfully in the community. The Pilot coordinates evidence-based services, such as Cognitive Adaptation Training and substance abuse counseling provided through the Local Mental Health Authority, with community-based, long-term care and medical services provided through the State’s STAR+PLUS Medicaid managed care program. Cognitive Adaptation Training is a special rehabilitative service developed at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio that helps people who lack basic living skills to establish daily routines, organize their environment, and build social skills.

Since its inception in April 2008, the Pilot services have proven effective in enabling individuals to live successfully in the community and empowering them to independence and recovery. Examples of increased independence include getting a paid job at competitive wages, driving to work, volunteering, getting a GED, attending computer classes, and working toward a college degree. Pilot participants also demonstrate statistically significant improvement on standardized scales that measure ability to survive in the community, independence in daily life, money management and coping skills.

The Behavioral Health Pilot is funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services through a grant to the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services, and is administered by the Department of State Health Services. UT Austin’s Addiction Research Institute is currently examining processes and outcomes in the Pilot in order to guide quality improvement and inform policy recommendations. The Pilot currently operates in Bexar and Travis counties and, if successful, could result in changes to the State’s long term care system, making these evidence-based services available to people throughout Texas.