



**Texas Council of Community  
Mental Health & Mental Retardation Centers, Inc.**

## Texas Council Public Policy Principles

Adopted by the Texas Council Board of Trustees May 6, 2006

The following principles will guide the Texas Council in establishing public policy positions regarding the future roles of Community MHMR Centers across Texas:

- 1 Strong Communities** Consistent with Executive Order RP 45, Community Centers support infrastructures formed by networks of private and public service providers that are essential to offer individuals and families choice of providers and to sustain the ability to respond to basic health and safety needs within Texas communities. Local government entities, community organizations and the business sector collaborate and blend resources to create enduring investments in strong communities.
- 2 Local Control** Local officials and communities of interest decide how local structures and processes most effectively and efficiently deliver health and human services to meet local needs in accord with appropriate state policy. Unique urban/rural, geographic, economic and cultural factors are recognized as critical influences in local service delivery design, and preclude top down, one-size-fits-all delivery models.
- 3 Public Accountability** Public health and human services are provided by entities whose performance of contractual obligations and resource management is publicly visible and subject to stringent standards. Public stakeholder involvement at the community level is a vital consideration in best use of finite public resources to meet increasing and changing service demands. Advocates and community members have a formal role in monitoring and evaluating the success of public service outcomes and effective use of taxpayer dollars.
- 4 Proven Performance** Building on established local networks and collaboration conserves limited resources and promotes rapid adjustment to change. Citizens, including uninsured persons, receive services to prevent their need for expensive alternatives such as hospitalization. Community Centers will continue as forces for improvements that strengthen our system through options like closer coordination, innovative information technology and other creative ways of maximizing our capacity and leveraging our experience.
- 5 Personal Independence** Most people, including individuals who need assistance due to mental illness or mental retardation, want to be productive and independent as possible. Families, friends and community and faith-based groups always have been and will be their greatest source of support. Individuals come to the public system when their personal support systems are not adequate to meet their higher needs. Community Centers and local health and human services providers bolster family and personal support and focus services – limited, specialized or intensive – so people can make the most of their abilities.