

**Arizona Governor's Council on Spinal and Head Injuries
Strategic Plan
2010-2013**

**PROMOTING QUALITY OF LIFE
FOR ALL CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH SPINAL CORD AND BRAIN INJURIES
AND THEIR FAMILIES**

BY

FACILITATING EMPOWERMENT OF CONSUMERS AND FAMILIES

IMPROVING SYSTEM INCLUSIVENESS AND RESPONSIVENESS

PROMOTING PREVENTION OF INJURIES AND SUBSEQUENT CONDITIONS

STRENGTHENING AND SUSTAINING THE COUNCIL

Arizona Governor's Council on Spinal and Head Injuries Strategic Plan 2010-2013

MISSION

Promoting quality of life for all children and adults with spinal cord and brain injuries and their families

The mission of the Arizona Governor's Council on Spinal and Head Injuries is to enhance health, safety, and quality of life for all persons with spinal cord and brain injuries, their families, and communities by building comprehensive, coordinated, and inclusive systems, facilitating access to services and full community participation for all, and promoting prevention of injuries and related subsequent conditions, in collaboration with persons with spinal cord and brain injuries, their families, government agencies, community organizations, and the business community.

The Council:

- (1) Advises appropriate State agencies, the governor, and legislature on matters and issues relating to spinal cord and brain injuries and rehabilitation.
- (2) Reviews and makes recommendations, plans, and strategies for meeting the needs, on a statewide basis, of persons with spinal cord or brain injuries and their families.
- (3) Conducts activities that lead to the prevention of spinal cord and brain injuries and related subsequent conditions.
- (4) In cooperation with related organizations, conducts comprehensive professional and public education to heighten awareness of the capabilities, potential, and needs of persons with spinal cord or brain injuries and their families.
- (5) Gathers and provides information on spinal cord and brain injuries and available resources.
- (6) Promotes efficient and coordinated use of resources in providing services for persons with spinal cord or brain injuries.
- (7) Develops, implements, and monitors the plan for the expenditure of the Trust Fund in accordance with the Law, for such purposes as: public information, prevention, and education of the general public and professionals; information and referral; rehabilitation and related services; surveillance; and the administration of the Council.

VISION

Our vision is that there is a comprehensive, well-coordinated, easily accessible, and effective service delivery system for all persons with spinal cord and brain injuries. We envision a system in which all partners understand their roles and accept responsibility for doing their part to create a seamless system. We envision a system that is responsive to and reflective of the diversity¹ of people throughout Arizona. We envision a system in which injuries are identified early, needs are assessed regularly, and services and supports are planned, developed, and delivered to meet these needs and maximize quality of life.

Our vision is that policy makers recognize the capabilities, potential, and needs of all persons with spinal cord and brain injuries and their families and that this heightened awareness has had a positive impact on public and private sector policies and practices.

Our vision is that all Arizonans are aware of spinal cord and brain injuries and work together to decrease the incidence and severity of these injuries and to ensure the full inclusion of all persons who have sustained spinal cord and brain injuries in the life of the community.

Finally, we hope that the Arizona Governor's Council will serve as a model for others in its efforts to work collaboratively with all persons with spinal cord and brain injuries, their families, government agencies, community organizations, and the business community in realizing this vision.

¹ The concept of diversity encompasses awareness that each individual is unique; recognition of individual differences; exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment; demonstrating acceptance of and respect for one another; and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. (Based on a definition of diversity originally published by the University of Oregon.)

VALUES AND BELIEFS

#1: Spinal cord and brain injuries affect persons of all ages, and dealing with the consequences of these injuries is a lifelong process. Services and resources should be developed and delivered with an awareness of and sensitivity to both immediate and ongoing needs of children, adults, and families and their changing needs over time.

#2: Persons who sustain spinal cord or brain injuries and their families need understanding, information, and support in order to access services and resources and to achieve ongoing quality of life. Information should be readily available in an understandable and useful format that allows all persons with spinal cord or brain injuries and their families to make informed choices and to be effective self-advocates.

#3: Prevention is the best approach. Through heightened public awareness, education, sound public policy, and public cooperation, the incidence of spinal cord and brain injuries can be reduced, as can the subsequent disabling conditions that often follow these injuries.

#4: We all need to work together—persons with spinal cord or brain injuries, families, professionals, government, providers, **the business community**, funding sources, and advocates—to promote the empowerment of persons with spinal cord and brain injuries and their families, to eliminate barriers to independent living and full community presence and participation, and to develop an effective service delivery system.

#5: The Council is in a unique position to take a leadership role in promoting consumer and family empowerment, eliminating barriers, ensuring inclusion, and fostering the development of an effective service delivery system. The Council should be a catalyst for change.

#6: The service delivery system should be comprehensive, coordinated, inclusive, understandable, consumer and family centered, and culturally sensitive. Services should be individualized, flexible, accessible, affordable, available statewide, and high quality. The focus of service delivery should be promotion of good health and quality of life for all persons with spinal cord or brain injuries, especially those who are likely to be underserved.

#7: Using the best research and practice information available about spinal cord and brain injury will promote health and quality of life. The Council and its partners should utilize this information in designing and delivering programs and services.

#8: People have the right and should be afforded equal opportunity to learn, to be productive, to enjoy their lives, and to contribute in their own unique ways to the life of the community. The Council and its partners should respect and promote these rights.

#9: People should experience power, control, and ownership of their personal and financial affairs and have choices regarding supportive services when needed. People with spinal cord or brain injuries should be afforded the opportunity and resources to be as self-reliant as possible and to direct the support provided to them by others throughout their lives.

KEY DIRECTIONS AND STRATEGIES

Key Directions	Strategies
Key Direction 1: Facilitate empowerment of consumers and families	Education for survivors and family members Education for providers Website and other informational materials Collaborations with State Associations and other community partners
Key Direction 2: Improve system inclusiveness and responsiveness	Education for survivors and family members Education for elected officials and other policy makers Education for providers Collaborations with State Associations and other community partners
Key Direction 3: Promote prevention of injuries and subsequent conditions	Education for survivors and family members Education for providers Website and other informational materials Collaborations with State Associations and other community partners Data collection and surveillance
Key Direction 4: Strengthen and sustain the Council	Education for elected officials and other policy makers Council staffing Planning Evaluation Budget and Council administration Implementation of federal grant