

## **The Arizona Governor's Council on Spinal and Head Injuries**

### **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, 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 latest and 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.