



NAMI Texas Public Policy Principles Adopted 2013

Access to Services—NAMI Texas supports access to mental health services for all persons who need them. This includes assuring that mental health services are on parity with other medical services, and that public sector services are sufficiently funded to allow all who qualify to receive them.

Strong Community Services—NAMI Texas supports robust community services for persons living with mental illness to improve quality of life for those utilizing services, reduce the need for higher levels of care, and reduce the drain on other public services and funding.

Adequate Access to Higher Levels of Care—NAMI Texas supports sufficient inpatient capacity to meet the need for civil commitments, voluntary admissions, and forensic commitments.

Access to Safe and Affordable Housing—NAMI Texas supports the rights of persons living with mental illness to have access to safe and affordable housing with sufficient supports, if needed, to maximize the potential for successful community integration.

Elimination of Stigma—NAMI Texas recognizes that mental illnesses are brain disorders, which are only distinguishable from other medical disorders in the fact that they may affect behaviors. Mental illnesses are not caused by or the result of poor character or the choice of bad behavior. Persons living with mental illness deserve the same empathy, respect, and access to services as persons living with any other medical condition.

Transparency of Public Mental Health System—NAMI Texas supports reporting by the public sector mental health system, which is supported by tax funds, so that citizens can evaluate the efficacy of utilization of funds and outcomes for persons receiving services and make informed choices about both their local systems and proposed changes to the overall system.

Choice and Local Control—NAMI Texas supports allowing local communities to determine what model of mental health services delivery system best fits the needs and available resources for their area and to exercise local control, with stakeholder input, over the design and delivery of services. Texas is a large and diverse state with widely varying local needs and resources that will make designing one system that fits the needs of all areas unlikely to effectively meet the needs of all.

Reducing the Population of Persons with Mental Illness in Jails and Prisons—NAMI Texas supports robust community mental health services and pre and post book-in jail diversion and mental health court programs to reduce the numbers of persons living with mental illness in jails and prisons. NAMI Texas supports this position because it is more humane, more cost effective, and produces better outcomes for the individuals involved and the community.

Family Friendly and Recovery Oriented Services—NAMI Texas supports the principle that all persons living with mental illness deserve to have the expectation that they can achieve a meaningful life. Service delivery systems should support this expectation and assist users in establishing and maintaining natural supports in the community, which include family and friends, religious organizations, programs provided by advocacy groups, social organizations, etc. This includes reinforcing family supports and integrating family members and others who provide supports into the treatment planning process, as well as fostering appropriate communications with family members and encouraging persons receiving services to develop natural community supports.