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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK – Looking to a New Horizon

Now that health reform is a reality, providers should guide their operations by four key principles to ensure success.



Changes in the organizational arrangements underlying service delivery will be accompanied by changes in staffing, infrastructure (notably information technology systems), and financial and performance requirements. Some of these changes will be dictated by health reform legislation or ensuing federal regulations and programs.

How should we respond to all of these changes? Perhaps the best way to do so is to be guided by some key principles. Among others, the following would seem to be central:

- **Goal attainment:** The consumer comes first-addressing needs sharing decisions and promoting a full life in the community are essential components of this principle.
- **Integration:** integrate what is needed. Many public and private consumers need a range of social services, including housing, employment training and supports, family services, and help with understanding benefits and accessing services provided through personal health insurance.
- **Pattern maintenance:** Be deliberate and plan ahead. You will need to introduce change, but this should be done in a thoughtful way. At the same time, you must continue to survey the environment to learn what early adopters are doing and see what degree of success they are achieving.
- **Adaptation:** Identify new partners. This will require you to learn new cultures, new terminology, and new ways of organizing care delivery. Recognize that these new partners will have the same assignment with respect to your organization. These partnerships will be both exciting and challenging.

These four characteristics – goal attainment, integration, pattern maintenance, and adaptation – are the key operations of all successful systems. A little reflection will help you understand why each is important for helping your organization address national health reform.

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