



New Member Guide

for

**Community Resource
Coordination Groups**

◀ 2001 ▶

Purpose of Guide

Frequently, there is turnover of staff in the fields of health and human services, education and criminal justice which results in the “changing of the guard” on committee memberships. This also holds true for county-based local community resource coordination group teams. This New Member Guide is intended to be used for the purpose of providing a clear and concise orientation to a new member or representative that may be joining this worthwhile local collaborative process.

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Reviewing the CRCG Initiative



Making a Difference - One at a Time

I. Reviewing the CRCG Initiative

CRCG: Defined

Community Resource Coordination Groups (CRCGs) are local interagency groups composed of representatives from public and private agencies that develop service plans for children, adolescents and adults whose needs can be met only through interagency coordination and cooperation. CRCGs for children and youth originated when the Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 298 into law in 1987. This bill directed the state agencies serving children to develop a community-based approach to provide better coordination of services for children and youth who have multi-agency needs and require interagency coordination. After achieving statewide coverage for CRCGs for children and youth, there was interest in using the CRCG collaborative approach for adults. Thus Community Resource Coordination Groups for Adults (CRCGA) were formed. CRCGAs are serving adults with needs beyond the capacity of any one agency. Other groups are using a CRCG approach to serve a specific population of adults, including adults with Alzheimer's disease, adults with both substance abuse and mental health problems, and adults leaving the state's penal system. Inclusive CRCGAs are emerging in various locations in Texas.

CRCG Membership

CRCGs are organized or established on a county-by-county basis. CRCG and CRCGA members are from public and private sector agencies or organizations who provide services within a designated county(ies). In addition to professional service providers, CRCG teams include a standing parent representative, a consumer or a caregiver for children or adults as a regular CRCG member. Local, county-based CRCG members include the following state agencies:

CRCG for Children/Youth

- Texas Commission for the Blind
- Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse
- Texas Department of Health
- Texas Department of Human Services
- Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation
- Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services
- Texas Education Agency
- Texas Interagency Council on Early Childhood Intervention
- Texas Juvenile Probation Commission
- Texas Rehabilitation Commission
- Texas Youth Commission
- Private Child Serving Providers

CRCG for Adults

- Texas Commission for the Blind
- Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse
- Texas Council on Offenders with Mental Impairments
- Texas Department on Aging
- Texas Department of Criminal Justice
- Texas Department of Health
- Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs
- Texas Department of Human Services
- Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation
- Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services
- Texas Education Agency
- Texas Rehabilitation Commission
- Texas Workforce Commission
- Consumers of Adult Services
- Private Adult-Serving Providers

The CRCG Mission

The Community Resource Coordination Group system enables persons at risk to have the support needed to allow them to develop into full and productive members of their community. The Community Resource Coordination Groups of Texas provides a mechanism which helps local public and private agencies and organizations work together to meet the needs of those individuals which no one agency can meet.

Through a collaborative effort, CRCG/CRCGA members meet in partnership with consumers to plan for needed services which would enhance the quality of life for those individuals. These efforts contribute to a seamless delivery care system, which offers freedom of choice and preserves individual confidentiality.

A child or an adult receiving special services through his or her mental health and mental retardation center is also receiving important supplemental services from another organization. Due to a change in eligibility requirements, the organization's supplemental services ceased causing the individual to experience numerous roadblocks to replace this service and threatening the person's progress. The individual, with the assistance of an agency, is referred to the area CRCG or CRCGA. The group in partnership with the individual developed a coordinated plan to address the service needs of this individual.



**The Role of the
Individual
CRCG Member**

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II. The Role of the Individual CRCG Member

Each CRCG is comprised of both public and private providers and family / consumer / caregiver representatives. Each of these individual members brings a number of resources to the CRCG.

Although the make up of each group may vary by its private representatives, **public providers** tend to remain generally the same throughout Texas. **Private provider** members tend to represent several diverse aspects of a local community. The selection of private sector providers typically remains the responsibility of the known or existing CRCG membership in each county or combined counties. For the CRCG that serves children and youth, the private sector membership may include up to 5 representatives that includes a provider in substance abuse treatment. The private sector membership of the CRCG for Adults is more flexible and chosen at the discretion of the existing CRCGA members.

It is important that all members of the CRCG are persons who can commit resources from their agency or organization. This aspect is important when trying to secure appropriate services for individuals in crisis. Often, CRCG representatives are designees who have been empowered with some limited authority to delegate funds or services during service planning meetings.

Based on the CRCG Guiding Principles, Community Resource Coordination Groups are encouraged to include **family/parent/caregiver** representatives as standing members. Both public and private providers should help identify these representatives. **Family/parent/caregiver** members serve as regular CRCG members and adhere to the same rules of confidentiality as private and public providers.

Member Responsibility



Member
Responsibility

III. Member Responsibility

Attendance and participation are important and required elements if the CRCG process is to be successful. Normally, most CRCGs meet on a monthly basis throughout the year on a set date and time every month. Being consistent with meeting place and time helps increase the likelihood for consistent participation. CRCG Chairpersons may inquire from their membership to find out if they are meeting on the best day and time to allow full group participation. As a CRCG member, you are asked to become involved with the CRCG process. Having been assigned to attend a local CRCG is a privilege. Someone in your agency and/or organization has seen the benefit in becoming involved with this interagency collaborative effort. The meeting is the focal point where your role is realized.

Building trust is said to be the foundation of all relationships. While the make up of CRCGs is often predetermined, the manner in which they develop as a team does vary. Building team unity is based on the actions of the individual members. With CRCGs, the primary role of the team is to coordinate individual service plans for persons with complex needs. All members are asked to join forces, pool resources and find solutions as they strive to reach a mutual and satisfactory agreement. The responsibility of each member is to commit services and coordinate efforts to help implement the recommendations arrived by the entire group. Reaching this goal takes a lot of individual effort.

The main focus of the CRCG is to secure group consensus and commitments from its members to help meet the needs of the children/youth and adult consumers seeking coordinated assistance. Therefore, the first role of each member is to develop a level of trust as a basis for doing collaborative work. **Building trust** involves four key elements: reliability, acceptance, openness, and

congruence. *Reliability* is the first element of trust. Fellow CRCG members will want to know that you will do what you say. If you make promises, keep them or people will lose faith in you. *Acceptance* is the second element; it involves learning how to get along with others. Accepting your team members without judging or criticizing them will help insure that trust is being built. Learning to recognize and respect differences in others is very important in developing interagency cooperation. *Openness* is the third trust element. Be yourself at the meetings. Members tend to want to collaborate with other people they can trust. As you develop a good working relationship with your team members, you will feel more comfortable in sharing and being heard. In turn, you will be the kind of person that is known as honest and straight-forward, and (if acceptance is included in openness), people will want to work with you. The fourth and final element that builds trust is *congruence*, the knowledge that what you say matches what you believe, what you know to be true, and what you do. Congruence sounds like the same thing as reliability, but there is a difference. Reliability means following-up and seeing through the promises and commitments you make. Congruence means saying and doing what you believe, being straight-forward and honest, saying what is true even if it is unpleasant and not exactly what you think members of the collaborative team want to hear. In other words, it's internal consistency with a set of values and beliefs.

Apply reliability, acceptance, openness, and congruence in your CRCG and soon you will find that you are the kind of person with whom people want to collaborate.

All CRCG mandated agencies have rules and regulations related to **confidentiality** of consumer information. Each CRCG member is asked to follow their own agencies' standards when sharing or delivering specific client information at a local CRCG meeting. As a potential

referral source, you must insure that you have secured and followed specific procedures for releasing information. All information shared in the CRCG meeting is considered confidential and every member is bound by the confidentiality rules of their agency. Any information obtained at the CRCG should not be shared outside the CRCG except as needed to secure services and resources for the individual being assisted.

In developing individualized service plans, gaining **group consensus** is a major requirement. Individuals seeking coordinated assistance from the local CRCG for children and youth or the CRCGA are interested in outcomes. Therefore, your input as a CRCG member becomes critical. CRCG members should make every attempt to partner with their counterparts and challenge each other at attaining the best possible solutions.

As important as securing group consensus, is the idea of having the right people at the table to secure **commitments** to resources and services. As mentioned in the ***Guide for New Chairs of CRCGs***, "The power of the CRCG rests with the willingness of the members to commit resources to assist the customers referred to the CRCG." It is imperative that your agency/organization provide you enough authority to commit resources at the local meetings. If you find yourself having to delay in committing a service or delegating a resource, you might want to question if your agency/organization is sending the right person to the meeting. In the end, if the services commitments are not met and not followed-up, the consumer dissatisfaction will be evident.

Engaging and educating one's own agency is highly important. Every new member should make a point of communicating back to his or her agency or organization about the CRCG process. The better you and your agency are informed the better equipped you will be in coordinating services and resources for individuals in your community. One way to educate the agency or organization you

represent is to disperse CRCG brochures among your fellow co-workers. You may consider presenting CRCG information at your agency staff meetings. For those interested in more CRCG-related details, refer them to the CRCG website for more information: **www.hhsc.state.tx.us/crcg/crcg.htm**.

Support your role as a member of the CRCG by **keeping your supervisor “invested” in your CRCG activities**. Your agency’s support of your work with the CRCG, over the long haul, will largely depend on the extent to which your supervisor values the CRCG and the time and energy you devote to it. It is up to you to help your supervisor understand the value of the CRCG to you, to your agency, to your agency’s customers, and to your supervisor.

Not only can you prepare periodic formal reports, you can keep your supervisor informed and invested in numerous small and large ways such as:

- Inviting your supervisor to attend your CRCG meetings from time to time;
- Writing articles for your internal news organizations;
- E-mailing your supervisor about commitments you have made to a service plan and how it fits with the larger plan;
- Letting your supervisor know when one of your agency’s customers is referred to the CRCG and keeping your supervisor apprised of the progress and outcome;
- Asking or assisting your supervisor in making a presentation in the community;
- Volunteering to provide in-service training to agency staff on the CRCG and how to use it to achieve the agency’s objectives.

What Makes a Good CRCG Member?



IV. What Makes a Good CRCG Member?

A strong, effective CRCG depends on some of its members going above and beyond the expectations of being a "Regular" CRCG member. The more you contribute to the strength, capacity and effectiveness of your CRCG, the greater the value it will be to your community, your agency and organization and you. Some of the items, which distinguish a "Regular" CRCG member from a "Good" member are included on the "Ten Things that Make a Good CRCG Member."

Ten Things that Make a "Good CRCG Member"

- 1. Educate yourself about your CRCG;**
- 2. Attend the CRCG meetings consistently;**
- 3. Get to know your CRCG colleagues;**
- 4. Take on a leadership role;**
- 5. Be an empathetic listener;**
- 6. Contribute your ideas to the service plan;**
- 7. Commit your agency's resources as appropriate to the service plan;**
- 8. Refer customers from your agency to the CRCG;**
- 9. Educate others in your agency about the CRCG and its value to your agency and its customers; and**
- 10. Build your cultural competency.**

Supporting Roles



V. Supporting Roles

Leadership is a key element in keeping the CRCG alive in a local community. All new members are encouraged to participate in some manner with their group. Many CRCG members volunteer their time and energy by taking on a supportive role with their group. Some members take turns leading the group by accepting the role of the CRCG Chairperson. In most CRCGs, the Chairperson is the facilitator of the group and often helps set the tone on how the group will function. The burden on the CRCG Chairperson is generally not sustainable over the long run unless the Chairperson can distribute the load. As a new member, you can let your Chairperson know that you are willing to help out and accept assignments on either an on-going or as needed basis. This may include such things as chairing or serving on a committee; screening a new customer referral; setting up the meeting room; making a presentation to a community group; keeping the minutes for the meetings; arranging for lunch and collecting the money; or a host of other things. Other members could assist the group by tracking and reporting any follow-up work that needs to be accomplished. In addition, a CRCG may have a timekeeper who helps the group manage its time effectively and efficiently.

A few CRCGs are supported by full or part-time paid positions known as CRCG Coordinators. Coordinators are often responsible for coordinating logistical meeting issues, such as meeting place and time.

Overall, CRCGs are dependent on the support of the member agencies and organizations. CRCG member support comes in a variety of forms including, but not limited to: sending out meeting notices; completing and sending data forms to the state office or filling them out online; providing printing and copying; generating media announcements; including CRCG members in training

events; contributing funds for a coordinator or even creating a flexible funding pool. New members might even want to find out what their own agency is able and willing to contribute and generate in support of the CRCG.

Data Collection is an important facet of the CRCG process. It is important to have a member responsible for collecting data that helps paint a picture of the gaps and needs encountered by the community.

Getting the word out to local communities that CRCGs exist is an important role for all CRCG members. CRCGs use a variety of methods to provide **public awareness** to its communities. Some CRCGs organize small sub-committees to help spread the CRCG message. They help create informative brochures, newsletters, websites and present educational presentations to other community providers.

Tools



VI. Tools

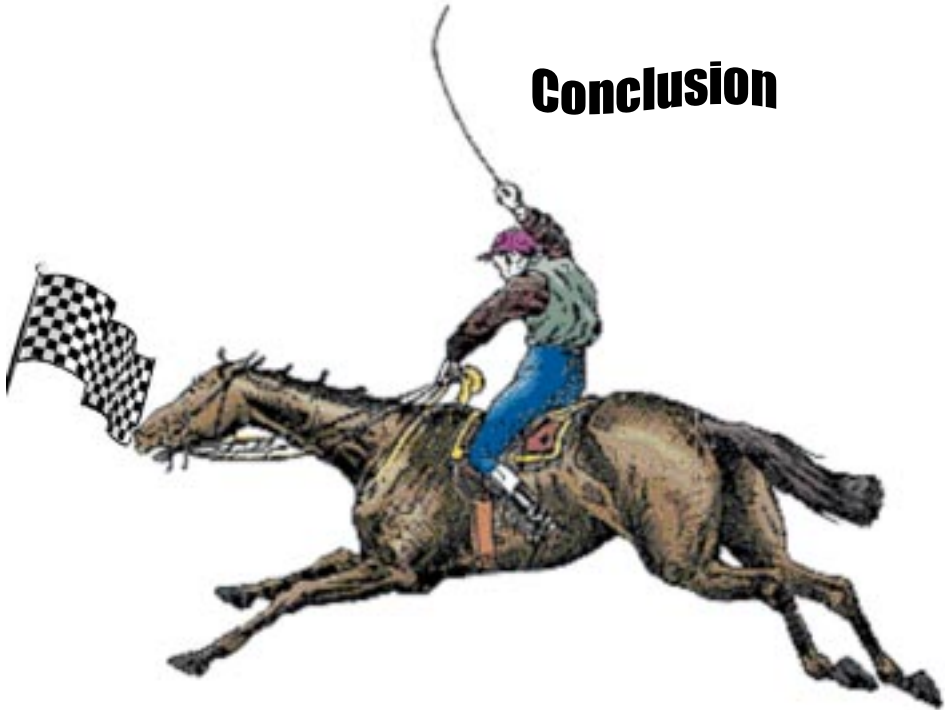
Training and education opportunities tend to keep the CRCG members informed and updated on issues that effect their work with the individuals they serve. Most CRCGs include resource-sharing time on their local meeting agendas. This task offers all CRCG team members the opportunity to share information regarding who they are, what agency or organization they represent and possible resources they have at their disposal. Others hold annual organizational meetings to help them review the CRCG mission and elect new chairpersons. The State CRCG Office often provides a variety of training and educational opportunities including regional and statewide conferences.

The State CRCG Office has several tools that are at the disposal of each CRCG or CRCGA. The many useful tools and materials include the following:

- ◆ **CRCG Handbooks**
- ◆ **Guide for New Chairs of CRCGs**
- ◆ **CRCG Staffing Form Guides**
- ◆ **CRCG Annual Reports**
- ◆ **Executive Summary of CRCG Phase I & II**
- ◆ **CRCG Video Library**
- ◆ **CRCG & CRCGA Brochures**
- ◆ **Collaborative Working Relationships Reference Guide**
- ◆ **CRCGA Data Collection Manuals**
- ◆ **CRCGA Reports**
- ◆ **Evaluation of the Demonstration CRCGA**
- ◆ **CRCG Website: www.hhsc.state.tx.us/crcg/crcg.htm**

All CRCGs are not alike but most follow the same mandate of collaborating locally in the best interest of both the young and old. Both children and youth and adult serving CRCGs work at many different levels. Some groups are very organized and are focused in the way they conduct their business. Some CRCGs use formal structures that incorporate and utilize local **by-laws, local memorandums of understanding and follow a formal referral process.** Others like to meet more informally to meet the interagency needs of their diverse populations. Over the past few years, the State CRCG Office has collected a variety of local examples of by-laws, local memorandums of understanding and formal referral forms. In addition to the many tools created and identified above, these local examples can be accessed by contacting the State CRCG Office. The State Office also has a good collection of video tapes useful for both training and public awareness.

Conclusion



VII. Conclusion

CRCGs and CRCGAs make it more likely for children and their families and adult consumers to get the help they need within their community before the situation becomes a crisis. Often, the services rendered are provided in a collaborative and cooperative manner. In many communities, CRCGs can recognize the gaps in services for children and youth and adult consumers which exist in their area and can plan for appropriate programs to meet those needs. As a result, more Texans get the services they need in a timelier manner.

Glossary

Glossary of Terms

Children with serious emotional disturbance - young people whose problems are so severe that they require the long-term intervention of mental health and other agencies.

Collaboration - the process of bringing together those who have a stake in a common population for the purpose of interdependent problem solving that focuses on improving services.

Coordination - sharing resources and leadership to provide services, while maintaining individual agency roles, responsibilities and agendas.

CRCGs - Community Resource Coordination Groups are local interagency groups composed of representatives from public and private agencies that develop individual service plans for children, adolescents and adults (CRCGA) whose needs can be met only through interagency coordination and cooperation.

CRCG Chairperson - leadership position and point of contact for the agencies/organizations and families to make referrals to local CRCGs.

CRCG Coordinator - a dedicated part-time or full-time position, usually funded by a variety of funding sources, who works in partnership with the CRCG Chairperson to meet the needs of the local CRCG.

Cultural competence - a set of behaviors, attitudes and policies of a system, agency or among professionals that enables them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

Integration of services - providing services in a community through multiple agencies with decreased overlap and decreased gaps in services.

Interagency collaboration - the combined, coordinated, cooperative and interdependent efforts of multiple agencies to provide services that meet the specific needs of a person.

Interagency cooperative agreement - (memorandum of understanding) - written commitments signed by agencies that spell out standards for services (who does what to whom, when, where, how often, under whose supervision, and to whose advantage), or allocation of resources, or procedures, forms and activities, or all of the above.

Lead agency - the identified agency/organization/group that has agreed to take responsibility for coordinating the recommendations made by the CRCG.

Online data collection – the process of collecting CRCG staffing information during the development of an individual service plan. Data is collected at the local meeting and then keyed on the state’s CRCG website: www.hhsc.state.tx.us/crcg/crcg.htm.

Out-of-home placement - services that require an individual to live away from home and possibly outside of their community in order to receive particular services.

Outcome - the impact or results of services provided for an individual.

Permanency planning - means a philosophy and planning process that focuses on the outcome of family support by facilitating a permanent living arrangement with the primary feature of an enduring and nurturing parental relationship.

Referral - the process of contacting a CRCG Chairperson or Coordinator to help set up a CRCG meeting to serve a particular individual.

System of care - a philosophy about the way services should be provided for children/families and

individuals that is founded on the principle that care should be provided that is child-centered (driven by the needs of the child and family) and community-based (provided in less restrictive settings within or near a child's home community). This approach provides for a comprehensive spectrum of mental health and other support services (including education, child welfare, and juvenile justice) organized into a collaborative network to meet the multiple changing needs of children, adolescents and their families.

Wraparound - the delivery of coordinated interdisciplinary services provided with the input of the child and family and tailored to the strengths and needs of the individual child and family.

(Some definitions taken from: System of Care, Promising Practices in Children's Mental Health - Building Collaborative in Systems of Care, p. 85,86).

Community Resource Coordination
Groups is a collaborative process
serving the children and youth and
adults of Texas in participation with:

Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Texas Department of Health
Texas Department of Mental Health and
Mental Retardation
Texas Department of Human Services
Texas Interagency Council on
Early Childhood Intervention
Texas Youth Commission
Texas Juvenile Probation Commission
Texas Education Agency
Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory
Services
Texas Rehabilitation Commission
Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse
Texas Commission for the Blind
Texas Workforce Commission
Texas Department on Aging
Texas Council on Offenders with
Mental Impairments
Texas Department of Criminal Justice
Texas Department of Housing and
Community Affairs
Private Providers
Families
Consumers and Caregivers



Community Resource Coordination Groups

P.O. Box 12668
Austin, Texas 78711-2668
909 W. 45th Street
Austin, Texas 78751

Phone: (512) 206-4564

Fax: (512) 206-4629

Website: www.hhsc.state.tx.us/crcg/crcg.htm

