

# California Women's Mental Health Policy Council

## **Position Statement: Integrated Services**

Integrated services and integrated systems are defined from the perspective of the consumer. Services should be offered in a manner that appears seamless to the consumer.

### **Some tests of “seamlessness” are:**

- Does the consumer tell her story once to helping professionals and team members or does she have to tell her story multiple times to obtain needed services?
- Does the consumer feel that the services she is offered make sense and are coordinated, a part of a single plan or does she find that many services and options are given to her in a way that makes it hard to sort out or choose what she can and should do? Or even worse that services conflict with each other?
- Does the consumer have the chance to define and describe her goals and needs for services or do goals and objectives from different agencies or services present conflicts for her?
- Does the consumer have to go one or two locations to get needed services or is she required to go to many locations?
- Are forms streamlined, easy to complete and efficient in facilitating the services she needs or does she have to fill out many forms for service?

### **It is strategy not structure that determines integrated services**

The Women's Mental Health Policy Council recognizes and supports different approaches to integration. Services can be integrated in a number of ways:

- They can be delivered by a single agency offering multiple services or
- They can be coordinated through interagency agreements, planning and services and collocation of services.

**Effective integrated services occur when all providers work with the client to help her determine her goals for treatment and services, and all services are a part of a single, seamless coordinated plan. This plan should support the client and at no time should it lead to confusion, fragmentation and further stress.**