

Take and keep notes about the information you receive or ask someone to help you keep notes.

- You might be talking with several different providers and it will help to get organized.
- You might want to talk to several staff from one provider and compare responses.
- Go over your notes and compare to the list of things that are most important to you.
- From your MRA, additional tools may be available to assist you in this process.

Be persistent and ask questions that are important to you — no question is unimportant.

- Call back if you need clarification or if you forget to ask something.
- Ask the provider to explain if you don't understand.

Most importantly,
remember ...
The choice
is YOURS.
These services
are for YOU!

MRA Name
Address
City, State, ZIP
Phone Number

label here

postage

Making A Good Match ...



... With YOUR HCS Program

Congratulations!



You are in the process of enrolling in the Home and Community-Based Services Program (HCS). One of the first decisions you will be making is the choice of your provider. You will receive a list of

providers in your area that have contracts with the state to provide HCS services. Some of the providers will be serving people currently. Others want to provide services in your area but have not yet had the opportunity.

Your Mental Retardation Authority (see contact information) will be available to help you through the process, however because the choice of a provider is based on your personal preferences, they are not to recommend a provider. Parent meetings and provider fairs may be offered to assist you in making your decision. Although the task of choosing a provider can seem overwhelming—don't let it be. Choice allows you to make a good match for you and your family.

This information is meant to help you through the process of selecting a provider.

Educate yourself about the services and supports available through HCS.

- Every provider is required to offer all HCS services.
- How they provide the service may differ.
- Ask about staff selection process.
- Ask about staff training.
- Ask about how they screen staff.
- Ask about how you will be involved in staff selection.
- Ask how they differ from other providers — what do they see as their strengths or specialty services?

Determine what is most important to you.

- What are your personal goals and how will the provider help you achieve them?
- Is the provider willing to develop individualized and creative methods to meet your needs?
- Don't just look at the service definitions; ask the provider how the HCS services can help you meet your goals.
- What process does the provider use to find out what is important to you?
- State your preferences. (i.e. supported employment, residential, nursing)

Your relationship with your provider will be important when receiving services.

- Ask how problems or concerns will be addressed.
- Was the provider respectful to you during the interview — did the provider use terms that you did not understand, did the provider maintain eye contact and listen to you or did they do all the talking?
- Ask about the complaint process.
- Ask how they work to improve services.
- What overall feeling did you have during the interview — did you feel comfortable?

How much control will you have over your services and supports?

- How and in what areas does the provider allow for choice?
- Will you have choice of your staff?
- Will you be able to easily change staff if you wish?
- What knowledge does the provider have about self-determination or person directed services?
- In residential situations, can you choose your roommates or participate in activities of your choice? How do they allow for that choice?
- How will the provider support you with maintaining personal relationships?

Look to other people who have gone through the selection process or to people who can support you in the process.

- Ask the provider for names of people who receive their services who you may contact.
- Get help from support groups who may know of others who have gone through the process.
- Contact advocacy organizations such as The Arc of Texas for support. www.thearcoftexas.org
- DADS Web site: www.dads.state.tx.us

