



# THE HUMAN SERVICE COOPERATIVE (HSC®) Profile

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People with disabilities are the most underestimated population in America. According to the 2004 National Organization on Disability/Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities, only 35 percent of people with disabilities are employed full or part time compared to 78 percent of those who do not have disabilities. People with disabilities are also three times as likely to live in poverty. Due to eligibility guidelines for disability services, individuals with disabilities are forced into poverty and can only seek limited employment. People with disabilities are twice as likely to have inadequate transportation. They are less likely to socialize, eat out, or attend religious services than people without disabilities. In addition, the survey showed that 18 percent versus seven percent of people without disabilities go without needed healthcare. And many of those receiving healthcare do not have the authority to influence the direction of their disability services. Moreover, people with disabilities have lower reported sense of life satisfaction<sup>1</sup>.

For years, advocates, families and individuals who use disability (human) services have fought for more control and choice over the services they use. They are demanding greater inclusion and freedoms within their communities. Their struggle has grown and matured into a national movement known as self-determination. In support of their efforts people, groups and organizations have worked to develop innovative ways to answer their calls for change.

In 2001, President Bush established the New Freedom Initiative to remove barriers to community living for people with disabilities. More specifically, the initiative aims to provide all Americans the opportunity to learn and develop skills, engage in productive work, make choices about their daily lives and participate fully in community life<sup>2</sup>. This initiative has improved the support system provided by the Federal and State government, which in turn welcomes innovative opportunities, such as Human Service Cooperatives.

Under the New Freedom Initiative, the state of Arizona DES, DDD was awarded a Federal Grant titled the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) CPASS grant in October 2003 to develop Human Service Cooperatives within a sustainable infrastructure.

The Human Service Cooperative (HSC) is a revolutionary initiative that promotes self-determination and self-direction in health and human services. Conceived and instigated by Bohling Inc., an Arizona-based advisement firm, the HSC model brings together individuals with disabilities who use human services to direct and control the type and quality of services they need. The Human Service Cooperative was conceived with the purpose of providing an opportunity for families and self-advocates to be self-determined through the union of peers and partnerships. Governed by a member-elected board of directors and a committee, HSC co-ops focus on supporting membership needs.

Through the formation of a cooperative network, those using services unite to become incorporated and certify through the Federated HSC® to become a HSC. The HSC co-op then petitions the state in which the member owners reside to become a certified human service provider. As a provider, the member owners are able to screen, select and contract with their own service professionals. In addition, the HSC co-op may contract with professionals to provide services including back office support, training, in-home hourly care, physical therapy, general aging care and more.

By definition, HSC certified co-ops are incorporated, owned, and directed by individuals and families who use human services to provide supports that benefit its membership. To become a certified HSC, cooperative providers must maintain membership with the Federated HSC.

Providing supports and networking between HSC co-ops throughout the country, the Federated HSC is a national cooperative owned and directed by its HSC co-op membership. The Federated HSC provides member co-ops with resources including but not limited to: insurance, legal, accounting, business, marketing, mediation, purchasing, and IT. HSC cooperatives have additional support from the HSC Educational Foundation, a 501c3 non profit. The HSC Educational Foundation allows tax deductible donations that are used to build and enhance educational and outreach efforts while improving the quality of life experienced by people who rely on human services.

Today Human Service Cooperatives have established a position within the marketplace providing an innovative alternative for people with disabilities and transforming the traditional model for human services. The HSC co-op community works together to be self-determined, direct their own services, to advocate for the needs of the membership, and to integrate with the community through partnerships and as a business owner. The HSC co-op community promotes independence and helps people help themselves.

For more information or for tax deductible donations please contact Sara Wilson at [sara@federatedhsc.coop](mailto:sara@federatedhsc.coop) or call 602-404-7334. You can also email [info@federatedhsc.coop](mailto:info@federatedhsc.coop)

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<sup>i</sup> Landmark disability survey finds pervasive disadvantages (2004). Online. National Organization on Disability. Retrieved August 30, 2006.  
[www.nod.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&pageID=1430&nodeID=1&FeatureID=1422&redirected=1&CFID=9821682&CFTOKEN=98179968](http://www.nod.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&pageID=1430&nodeID=1&FeatureID=1422&redirected=1&CFID=9821682&CFTOKEN=98179968)

<sup>ii</sup> United States Department of Health & Human Services. Online. Retrieved January 21, 2005. [www.hhs.gov/newfreedom/init.html](http://www.hhs.gov/newfreedom/init.html)