

Who We Are

Texas Health Institute (THI) is leading the way in the development of health policy solutions to shape the Texas healthcare environment. As a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, THI takes a broad view of healthcare issues and their impact on Texans and their communities. From acting as an honest broker and hosting unbiased health policy forums that facilitate dialogue among policymakers and other healthcare stakeholders, to creating a vision of an improved future healthcare system, THI is a think tank – providing evidence-based options and solutions as well as innovative, “outside the box” collaborative options to improve the health of Texans and their communities.

Our Focus

THI provides non-partisan, evidence-based health policy options to make a difference. We convene diverse stakeholders to provide ongoing dialogue on how to improve the status of health in Texas. We educate policymakers at every level on what they can do to improve the health of Texans at a community, regional, and state level.

Our Projects

Shared Vision Project for Healthcare

In 2003, THI launched the Shared Vision for Healthcare in Texas Project (SVP) – a process to produce consensus-driven solutions to achieve quality, access and cost-effectiveness for healthcare in Texas. In year one of the multi-year project, THI developed a process for using a panel of six stakeholder groups: business, community leaders, consumers, government, insurance, and providers and six workgroups to address focused healthcare issues. SVP panel leadership developed a strategic plan for healthcare in Texas to RAISE the level of health of Texans by implementing projects that address:

Regional solutions for regional differences-but within a statewide strategic plan.

Access for all. A more rational system for access other than the emergency room.

Incentives for personal responsibility. Everyone doing what they can do for wellness and health.

Sound use of resources.

Education about consequences of actions and/or inactions.

This Project is producing Texas’ shared vision for healthcare. The Project is grounded on three premises. First, there is no model for delivery of healthcare services nor vision for what a model should be in Texas. Second, all stakeholders are dissatisfied, to varying degrees, with the current “system” of delivery. Third, the pervasive “sense of urgency” makes this the right time for significant change. To forge a new and mutual vision, each stakeholder must be prepared to accommodate changes to achieve a common good. With vision, there can be leadership to evaluate policymaking proposals and provide recommendations or alternative solutions for policy changes. THI has recruited a unique panel of stakeholders from diverse backgrounds to provide leadership in the development of Texas’ shared vision for healthcare.

Today, the implementation of THI’s Shared Vision for Healthcare Project focuses on three major areas: Access/Uninsured, Public Health/Prevention and Long Term Care.

- **Access/Uninsured** – THI is launching ***A Vision for Change: Policy Solutions for Increasing Health Coverage in Texas***, a major initiative to increase health coverage for the uninsured in Texas by almost 50 percent and to measure the economic and fiscal impact of

increasing Texans' access to health coverage. The project will offer cost-effective and workable policy solutions to the uninsured issue that policymakers at state, regional and local levels can deploy.

- **Public Health/Prevention** – THI facilitates the work of the Texas Strategic Health Partnership, a large scale public health transformation project with activities addressing both health status and infrastructure improvement. Currently, we are working on obesity issues in the state through the Partnership for a Healthy Texas: *Conquering Obesity*. THI also works with the Mental Health Substance Abuse Workgroup on public health/prevention issues.
- **Long Term Care** - In January 2006, THI launched a first phase, 18-month project to focus on short and long-range issues and societal changes impacting Long Term Care (LTC). This project engages LTC providers, experts, payers and other key stakeholders in a dialogue that identifies and prioritizes core LTC issues and policy options. To help assure the LTC Project results reflect the best available expertise and experience, THI created a Long Term Care Industry Council made up of leading LTC providers and consumer representatives.

The Shared Vision Project provides a nonpartisan Texas policy development and educational resource for policy decision-makers. THI maintains an honest broker role in serving as the catalyst for collaboration among the varied stakeholders. This entrepreneurial process will produce both a reinvention of the policy process that begins at the community level and a coordinated implementation effort of change producing model demonstration projects. With this shared vision, Texas can lead the nation in innovation and improved access, effectiveness, and efficiency.

Health Policy Forums

THI plays a critical role in the dissemination of health and healthcare information to health policy decision-makers. The goal of the forums is to provide legislators and other healthcare leaders and stakeholders with balanced, non-partisan information about critical statewide health and medical issues and a “safe harbor” environment to discuss those issues. Forum attendees represent increasingly varied and divergent political and health policy viewpoints – a solid indication that the forums are serving their purpose of bringing together diverse policymakers to explore solutions to complex health policy issues.

Communities Taking Charge

While all levels of government have a role in addressing healthcare issues, THI believes that solutions for the future of healthcare must be reinvented from the “bottom up,” community by community. THI encourages the development of stakeholder groups to take leadership in their community to pursue a community-health collaborative process. THI works with a community's unique needs and issues.

Friends of the Institute

THI plays a critical role in improving the health of healthcare through information, education, collaboration and vision. In 2003, the THI introduced the *Friends of the Institute* to support our 501(c)(3) entity. *Friends* members receive invitations to THI events and mailings of policy briefs and other special publications produced by THI. If you would like more information on membership opportunities or other ways to participate in the work of THI, please contact us at (512) 279-3910.