

Northern Highlights

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Center For Independent Living of NE MN
Fall 2007

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

DISABILITY-RELATED LEGISLATION

Self-Directed Personal Supports Option

A new self-directed personal supports option was authorized for Minnesota's Medical Assistance program. Persons eligible for personal care assistance (PCA) are eligible for the new self-directed option. The new service option allows PCA funds to be used in a more flexible manner for items or services to maintain or increase independence for persons with disabilities. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) is required to establish a stakeholder group which will work on developing the parameters for the program which is expected to begin in 2008.

Chapter 147, Article 7, Sections 7 and 12 (HF 911, SF 1054). Effective July 1, 2007.

Home Care Assessment and Service Update

Changes were made to the Medical Assistance Home Care Assessment law which clarify that a PCA telephone service update can be completed for two consecutive years when there is no change in the recipient's condition, instead of the face-to-face assessment which is only required every three years. Also, personal care provider organizations are required to notify the county and the PCA recipient of the need for a reassessment at least 60 days prior to the end of the current authorization. If a county does not complete the reassessment on time, the payment rate for the assessment will be reduced by 25 percent, beginning July 1, 2008.

Chapter 147, Article 7, Sections 9-11. Effective July 1, 2007 (except for assessment payment reduction).

Personal Care Assistant (PCA) Service Changes under Medical Assistance

Current administrative rule provisions governing the training of personal care assistants, personal care provider responsibilities, PCA employment prohibitions and supervision of personal care services have been added to the PCA law.

Chapter 147, Article 6, Sections 19-22. Effective July 1, 2007.

Special Transportation Services and Level of Need Assessment Requirements

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is prohibited from using a volume purchase contract through competitive bidding and negotiation for special transportation under Medical Assistance (MA). DHS has determined that the current broker contract will continue until it expires in June 2008. Level-of-need determinations, mileage reimbursement and other MA transportation access services will still be performed under a broker contract. Also, the level of need determination for non-emergency medical transportation eligibility must be performed by specified medical personnel. The level-of-need determinations, including stretcher transportation eligibility, must not be performed more than semi-annually unless the person's medical circumstances have changed. Persons living in licensed nursing facilities are automatically eligible for special transportation services.

Chapter 147, Article 4, Sections 6 and 7. Effective July 1, 2007.

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SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

DISABILITY-RELATED LEGISLATION (Continued From Page 1)

Infant Hearing Screening and Children's Hearing Aid Coverage

Hospitals are now required to screen newborns for hearing loss at birth. Another new law requires state-regulated (as opposed to self-insured) health plans to cover hearing aids every three years for children age 18 or younger for policies renewed on or after August 1, 2007.

Chapter 147, Article 16, Section 10 (SF 1056) and Chapter 60 (SF 805). Effective August 1, 2007.

American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter Services

Minnesota law has been clarified to require American Sign Language interpreters for services in both Medical Assistance (MA) and General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC) programs, regardless of the number of employees the service provider organization has.

Chapter 147, Article 5, Section 17 and Article 7, Section 6. Effective July 1, 2007.

Assistive Technology (AT) Funding

State funding was provided to obtain federal matching funds to be used for micro-loans for assistive technology and to continue the regional AT collaboratives operated by Assistive Technology Minnesota. Also, recommendations and proposed legislation on AT needs and resources will be completed by the Minnesota Council on Disability and provided to the legislative chairs responsible for this area by January 1, 2009.

Chapter 147, Article 19, Section 8 and Article 7, Section 70. Effective July 1, 2007.

Parent Fees for Children with Significant Disabilities

Minnesota law now clearly states that parent fees paid for children with significant disabilities using the TEFRA Medical Assistance Option or a home and community waiver program are eligible for employer-sponsored health flexible spending accounts.

Chapter 147, Article 7, Section 2. Effective July 1, 2007.

Family Member Allowed to Become Licensed Provider for Person with Developmental Disabilities

A change in state law means that a family member who is licensed to provide adult foster care and disability services is allowed to serve an adult relative provided 1) the county certifies the qualified family member for adult foster care and 2) the licensed provider family member is not also the legal guardian. The Department of Human Services is required to seek an amendment to the federal Home and Community Waiver Program in order to implement this change.

Chapter 112, Sections 49 and 50. Effective upon federal approval.

Cost-of-Living Increase for Community Service Providers and Intermediate Care Facilities for Persons with Mental Retardation (ICF/MR)

The Legislature appropriated a 2 percent cost-of-increase for community service and ICF/MR providers for each year of the coming biennium.

Chapter 147, Article 7, Section 74. Effective 2 percent October 1, 2007 and 2 percent July 1, 2008.

Special Education Funding Increased

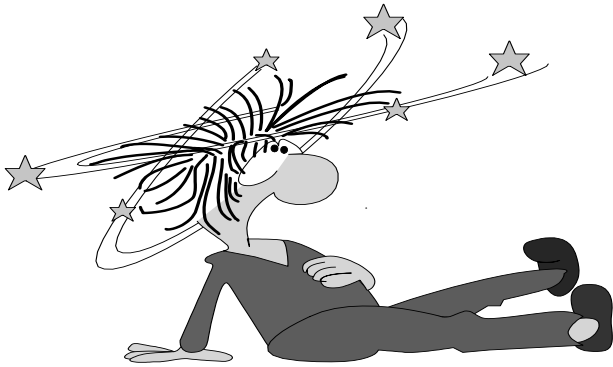
The Legislature substantially increased funding for special education services for students with disabilities.

Chapter 146, Article 3 Various effective dates.

Don't Let Unsafe Behaviors Trip You Up. Falls in the Home

Source: National Safety Council Celebrating Safe Communities

People think of home falls as a problem for the elderly, but the fact is that they're second only to poisoning for accidental deaths in the home and community. People of all ages are vulnerable to falls, but with some common sense, most falls can be prevented.



Home Falls Risks

- Clutter, wires and even pets create obstructions on the floor
- Slippery floors, baths and outside walkways
- Improper use of ladders; unsafe reaching for high shelves, light fixtures, etc.
- Darkness leads to falls at night.

Tips For Prevention

- Make sure the floors of your home are free of clutter, piles and other obstacles.
- Avoid scatter rugs and highly waxed floors. Don't walk around in stocking feet-wear slippers or other skid-proof footwear, or go barefoot.
- Keep rooms well-lit. Put nightlights in hallways and bathrooms for night visits.
- Install grab bars in bathtubs and showers.
- Store frequently used items in easy-to-reach areas. Use a sturdy step stool with hand rails if you must reach for something in a high place. Keep chairs for sitting.
- Clear fallen leaves, snow and ice from walkways before they become slipping hazards.
- Keep outdoor walkways and steps in good repair.
- Use caution and proper tools for home maintenance; avoid makeshift scaffolding or too-short ladders for hard to reach jobs. Stay off the roof unless you're certain you know what you're doing.

Medical Record Necessities

It's important to know what's in your health records.

The following information should be in everyone's personal file.

Your current contact information.

Your emergency contact information.

Your blood type.

All current physicians and their contact information.

A list of all current medications, including prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, topical creams and ointments and all vitamins and herbs.

Medication allergies and adverse reactions.

Current, ongoing and past health problems.

Test results, including blood pressure and cholesterol readings.

Any X-rays or scanned images.

Immunization history and/or schedule.

Up-to-date family health history of immediate family members.

Duluth Gets Assistive Technology Demonstration Lab/Library

The Center for Independent Living of Northeastern Minnesota has received a grant from the Miller Dwan Foundation's Van Gorden New Initiatives Outreach Fund to establish an assistive technology demonstration lab/lending library in the Duluth branch office. The lab will give people with disabilities, service providers and interested community members the opportunity to see what is currently on the market. Assistive technology is any device or service that increases the ability of people to maintain or improve their independence in performing daily living activities.

The lending library will give people with disabilities the opportunity to try several pieces of assistive technology to see what works for them. Individuals are also able to borrow some of the devices and

get assistance in locating funding. Assistive technology can be a common tool purchased off the shelf, like an electric can opener. Assistive technology can also be a high tech piece of equipment like an augmentative communication device. The demonstration lab includes a variety of pieces of equipment designed to showcase the wide assortment of items available.

The Center for Independent Living's mission is to assist individuals with disabilities to live as independently as possible and have the same opportunities and choices as all people. The lab/lending library is one way to assist people in this by providing access to a variety of products available that support independent living.

Study Shows Providing Care for Another Adult is a Second Job for Many

There are far more Americans holding "second jobs" as family caregivers than either employers, or the federal government are aware of – and this "second job" could pose long-term problems for both. A survey conducted for the National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP, funded by MetLife Foundation, estimates there are 44.4 million caregivers who provide unpaid care to another adult.

Almost six in ten (59%) of these caregivers either work or have worked while providing care. And 62% have had to make some adjustments to their work life, from reporting late to work to giving up work entirely. And, it's not just women, as some people might think. Almost 4 in 10 (39%) of caregivers are men, and 60% of them are working full-time.

Our study shows a significant proportion of male caregivers. This is not just an issue for women, but for everyone. The study entitled "Caregiving in the U.S." was conducted to update and expand our knowledge about the activities caregivers say they perform, the perceived impact of caregiving on their daily lives, and the unmet needs of this population. Caregivers are people age 18 and older who help another person on an unpaid basis. These activities range from helping another manage finances, shop for groceries, or do housework to helping another get in and out of beds or chairs, get dressed, get to and from the toilet, bathe or shower, or eat. For more information visit: www.caregiving.org.

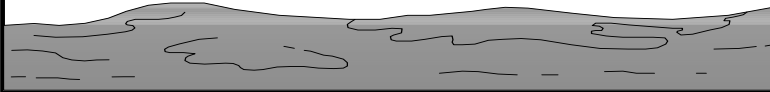
Cool Off This Summer with Recordings for Recovery

In the heat of summer, you can cool off with “cool” music from Recordings for Recovery (R4R). R4R is a music library with music for everyone. We have over 1200 titles with 26 categories of music, short stories and sound effects. R4R gives you a choice of the music you want to hear.

Patrons can select tapes and receive them through the mail. The tapes can be kept and enjoyed for up to 60 days. They are then mailed back to R4R “Free Matter for the Blind” using the provided return label.

Individual memberships are only \$10.00 per year. Service will not be denied to those who cannot afford it. Contact us now at 1-800-798-1192 and receive the summer information pack. This pack includes a large print catalog, a recorded catalog, membership information and a large print order form.

**Make R4R your personal cool music library for
“Fun in the Sun”. Call us at 1-800-798-1192.**



Do You Have A Disability?

A person with a disability is “Any individual who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person’s major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.”

Major Life Activities: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, sitting, standing, lifting, thinking, concentrating, learning, and interacting with others.

Chronic or episodic disorders that are substantially limiting when active or have a high likelihood of recurrence in substantially limiting forms may be disabilities. An individual who has two or more impairments that are not substantially limiting by themselves but that together substantially limit one or more major life activities has a disability.

“Six Pack Transition Skills Groups”

Students, Parents, & Educators

Want to try it all? There is something for everyone. Learn a variety of Independent Living/Transition skills in a fun way!

Planning for the Future, Home Living, Community Resources, Education, Employment and Recreation will be the focus of these Groups.

AccessNorth Center for Independent Living staff will offer the six sessions free of charge to area school districts. Staff will schedule with each school one classroom hour bi-weekly for three months. This will be a unique opportunity to get students involved in the Transition process.

This is a great opportunity to meet the IEP Transition Goals of students with disabilities in a unique learning environment.

**Call Pam at (218)262-6675 to schedule
or get more information.**

Accommodations Get The Job Done

What are Reasonable Accommodations?

Reasonable accommodations are adjustments or modifications which range from making the physical work environment accessible to restructuring a job, providing assistive equipment, providing certain types of personal assistants (e.g., a reader for a person who is blind, an interpreter for a person who is deaf), transferring an employee to a different job or location, or providing flexible scheduling.

Reasonable accommodations are tools provided by employers to enable employees with disabilities to do their jobs, just as the employer provides the means for all employees to accomplish their jobs.

For example, employees are provided with desks, chairs, phones, and computers. An employee who is blind or who has a visual impairment might need a computer which operates by voice command or has a screen that enlarges print.

When May a Job Accommodation be Required?

A workplace accommodation may be requested by an employee with a disability at any time during employment. After initiating the workplace accommodation process, the individual and the employer should discuss the request.

There are several considerations when determining reasonable accommodation requests, including the demands of the job, the employee's skills and functional limitations, available technology, and cost. After both parties agree that a workplace accommodation is needed, an appropriate one must be selected.

What are the Steps to Consider When Making a Workplace Accommodation?

Step 1: Decide if the employee with a disability is qualified to perform the essential functions of the job with or without an accommodation.

Step 2: Identify the employee's workplace accommodation needs by: Involving the employee who has the disability in every step of the process; employing confidentiality principles while exploring ways to provide workplace accommodations; consulting with rehabilitation professionals, if needed; using job descriptions and job analyses to detail essential functions of the job; and identifying the employee's functional limitations and potential accommodations needing to be made to these steps if appropriate.

Step 3: Select and provide the accommodation that is most appropriate for the employee and employer. Costs should not be an undue hardship. Accommodations selected should be effective, reliable, easy to use, and readily available for the employee needing the accommodation. An employee should try the product or piece of equipment prior to purchase.

Step 4: Check results by: Monitoring the accommodation to see if the adaptation enables the employee to complete the necessary work task(s); and periodically evaluating the accommodation(s) to ensure effectiveness.

Step 5: Provide follow-up, if needed, by: Modifying the accommodation if necessary.

Office Closing

The CILNM office will be closed on September 3
in
Observance of the Labor Day Holiday.

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• Friendly Visitor Volunteers •
• Needed at CILNM-Hibbing •
• Senior Companions Do What Friends Do •
• For Friends. •
• For more information about becoming a •
• Senior Companion, contact: •
• Carlene at 218-262-6675 •
.....

For a list of activities and groups in your area, contact your local CILNM Office

Range Area Groups:

- Multiple Sclerosis Support
- Functional Fitness for Older Adults
- Coffee / Crafts Group
- Fibromyalgia and Chronic Pain Support Group
- Vision Loss Support Group

Duluth Area Groups:

- Chronic Fatigue & Fibromyalgia 'For Women Only'
- TBI Group
- Vision Loss Support Group

*The Duluth Office offers ongoing DTA bus training

*We also have an accessible computer lab for consumer use

*The new Assistive Technology Demonstration Lab/Lending Library is up and running for people to come and view or borrow devices.

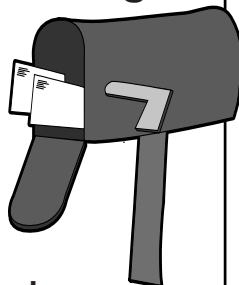
Aitkin Area Groups:

- "Do You Have A Plan?"
- MS Support Group
- Men's Group
- Young Adult Group

If you have any needs and/or ideas for a support group, please contact the CILNM Office closest to you and ask them for assistance in setting them up!

The Center for Independent Living in Hibbing has moved to:

2104 E 6th Avenue
Hibbing, MN 55746



Our phone and fax numbers will not change

(218) 262-6675 Phone
(218) 262-6677 Fax

Our Offices

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2104 E 6th Avenue
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Phone/TTY (218) 262-6675
(800) 390-3681
FAX (218) 262-6677
kim@accessnorth.net

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(888) 625-1401
FAX (218) 625-1401
roberta@accessnorth.net

Aitkin
105 4 St NW
Aitkin, MN 56431
Phone/TTY (218) 927-3748
(800) 390-3681
FAX (218) 927-3749
brian@accessnorth.net

Satellite Offices

Cloquet
(218) 879-0375
ann@accessnorth.net

International Falls
(218) 286-3134

Brainerd
(218)829-9567
pat@accessnorth.net

OUR MISSION:

To assist individuals with disabilities to live independently, pursue meaningful goals, and have the same opportunities and choices as all persons.

Serving people with disabilities in the Minnesota counties of

- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| St. Louis | Aitkin |
| Lake | Carlton |
| Cook | Pine |
| Koochiching | Cass |
| Itasca | Crow Wing |

This publication is available in alternate formats upon request.

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