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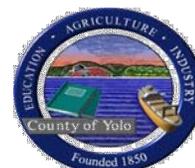
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The Consumer & Provider Connection

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

SPRING 2010



Sacramento Update by Assemblymember Mariko Yamada

For as long as I can remember, the In Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program has been in Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's bull's-eye. I recall heading across-the-river to Sacramento when I was still a Yolo County Supervisor, to protest cuts to this vital lifesaving social and health services program.

Now that I am privileged to serve in the California State Assembly, the story hasn't changed much. At both the beginning of my first and second years as a state representative for Yolo County, the Governor proposed drastic reductions to the IHSS Program. This past January, he went so far as to threaten the program's outright elimination unless the federal government ponied-up billions in new funding.

Fortunately, last year's IHSS cuts—which I voted against—have been stayed by a temporary court ruling. Unfortunately, however, we are not out-of-the-woods yet.

With our global, national, state, and local economies still sputtering, and a simultaneous rise in demands for services especially to our growing senior and disabled populations, this is exactly the wrong time to seek services reductions.



The IHSS Program has a long history in California, and has proven its cost effectiveness when compared with institutional care.

In addition, this program has literally saved lives as well as dollars for the State of California, while simultaneously providing caregiver employment and compassionate care to our most vulnerable citizens. Seems like a winning combination to me!

There will be an increasing number of "middle-income" seniors who could both contribute to and benefit from an IHSS program that is redesigned to serve those not now eligible for services. With the long-term care outlook for those with autism, AIDS, and Alzheimer's, I forecast a program that should be widened and deepened, not wrecked and destroyed. (continued...pg 8)

FROM THE CHAIR'S PERSPECTIVE

By Nancy Seyden

The State of California is in the midst of troubled economic times. Our State Government has chosen to target programs that provide services to people who are disabled and people who are elderly, people who need a little help with personal care and/or domestic services to remain safely in their own homes. With their proposal to drastically reduce services by cutting hours and services to consumers and reducing wages for providers, In-Home-Support Services Program (IHSS) the program is being gutted. It looks like our State Government wants to eliminate the program completely

The State Government believes there is rampant fraud in the program. They have allocated fraud units in each county to track down fraud. Yes, there is probably some fraud as can be seen in any large program. But, it is very small compared to the long-term benefits of the services provided to the people who need them. I wonder; couldn't the millions of dollars allocated for fraud be better spent on providing and improving services to people who are in need?

The State has now also mandated that all providers (and consumers) must be fingerprinted and have a background check before they can be hired and paid. Providers or consumers must pay for the fingerprinting each time a new provider is hired. In addition, the potential provider must meet in-person with a representative at the Department of Employment and Social Services and watch an orientation film.

Persons with significant disabilities who cannot go one day without extensive personal care assistance, would not be able to hire someone if a provider quit without notice, went home for the holidays, got sick, had car trouble, or any number of other reasons they couldn't show up for work.



This despite that a provider is still needed to get out of bed, to go to bed, to use the bathroom, to eat, and numerous other tasks that are essential to daily survival. Consumers who receive In-Home-Support Services simply do not have the money needed to pay out of their own pockets the cost of providers while they wait for the fingerprint results. There needs to be a way to hire a provider when needed during the transition of completing the required paperwork.

Today's In-Home-Support Services Program is a cost-effective program that helps people to remain in their own home rather than living in an institutional setting. We need to remember that before AB 1682 was implemented and IHSS Public Authorities came into being, California was in a state of crisis. Consumers with disabilities could not find providers because the wages were so low that providers could not live on them, and there were no health benefits. Consumers could not retain providers because potential providers could make better wages everywhere else. While wages are improved in some counties, homecare workers are still underpaid for all the work they do.

With AB 1682, Advisory Committees were mandated in each county to give consumers a voice in the services provided to them.. This is the first time in history consumers were given a voice. Out of the Advisory Committees arose a need to network with other Advisory Committees/Boards' members throughout California. This is the first time in history consumers were given a voice.

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Yolo County IHSS Advisory Committee Mission Statement

The mission of the IHSS Advisory Committee is to give consumers and providers a voice in IHSS and Public Authority policy, program development and operations. We do this by advising, advocating and making recommendations for the enhancement, availability and quality of In-Home Supportive Services and ensuring services that support a positive and productive relationship between the consumers and providers.

The Yolo County IHSS Advisory Committee was established by the Board of Supervisors to provide recommendations to the County, the Board of Supervisors, the Public Authority and the Governing Board regarding issues that impact IHSS consumers and providers. By state law and county ordinance, there shall be 11 members on the Advisory Committee and at least 50% shall be current or former users of services paid for by public funds or private pay. The committee meets the first Wednesday of every month from 1:30 – 3:30 at the Department of Employment and Social Services office at 25 North Cottonwood Street, Woodland.

Each meeting is open to the public and serves as a forum for IHSS consumers, providers, advocates and other interested parties to offer input the Public Authority on policy and program development.

“The IHSS Advisory Committee meetings are a great place to get information about things going on in your IHSS program and to offer ideas to make changes,” states Nancy Seyden, Chairwoman of the Advisory Committee. “Committee members are moving into action on goals developed to meet current challenges to the program that assists so many of the elderly and people with disabilities in Yolo County. We invite you to attend Advisory Committee meetings. There is currently a vacant ‘consumer position’ on the Committee. If you are a current or former user of IHSS services and are interested in serving on the committee, please contact the Public Authority office at 530-661-2676.”

Consumer members: Nancy Seyden, Davis; Winifred DeAnda, Davis; Sherrie Ewing, Woodland; Marcelo “Nunie” Matta, Woodland; Sharon McNeill, Davis.

Provider members: Johanne Lewis, West Sacramento; Jeremy Warren, Woodland.

Advocate for People with Disabilities: Frances Gracechild, West Sacramento.

Advocate for Seniors: Ellen Berman, Davis.

County Employee: Sheila Allen, Ph.D., Health Department.

Introducing Ellen Berman, our new Advocate for Seniors !

“My name is Ellen Frances Berman and I have lived in Woodland for the past eleven years. I received a Bachelors of Sociology from Sonoma State University and a Masters of Sociology from Sacramento State University. I have been a Social Worker for the past eight years.

I spent three years working with children as a Social Worker in Sacramento. Then, I began working with adults and seniors at Cottonwood Healthcare as the Director of Social Services and found the job to be very rewarding. Currently, I am working with seniors at Eleanor Roosevelt Circle in Davis and I enjoy assisting them to gain the necessary services to improve their lives. I believe that being on the IHSS Advisory Committee is important because without the IHSS program many seniors would not be able to live independently.”

NEW IHSS PROVIDER ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Effective November 1, 2009, the State of California Department of Social Services (CDSS) put into place a new enrollment process for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) providers. This new process is one of many changes recently put into law that is aimed at reducing and preventing fraud in the IHSS program.

In addition to receiving information on how to report suspected fraud and tips on how to avoid fraud, IHSS providers will also be required to complete a criminal background check. **Due to very strict requirements from the California Department of Justice, it is very important that you do not complete the criminal background check until you have attended a Provider Enrollment Fair or New Provider Orientation.**

EXISTING IHSS PROVIDERS

All existing IHSS providers, **including Registry providers**, will be required to attend a Provider Enrollment Fair. You can expect to receive a packet in the mail with forms and detailed instructions about the new enrollment process. When you receive the enrollment packet, **BE SURE TO FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY** to avoid a chance of having your pay checks interrupted.

NEW IHSS PROVIDERS

All new IHSS providers (individuals who did not provide services before November 1, 2009) must complete a different enrollment process than the one mentioned above. New providers must attend an IHSS New Provider Orientation, during which they will receive all of the provider enrollment forms specific to new providers, as well as information about the enrollment process.

For more information about provider enrollment in Yolo County, or to sign up for a New Provider Orientation, call the Yolo County Public Authority at (530) 661-2676 or the Yolo County IHSS Provider line at (530)661-2750 x9781.

DO YOU DROP OFF YOUR TIMESHEET AT THE DESS/IHSS OFFICE?

If you are one of the hundreds of IHSS providers who drop off your timesheet at the IHSS office, **please keep reading!**

In September 2010, a new system will be in place that changes the way your timesheets are processed. All providers will need to mail their timesheets to a central location in Chico, CA.

In order to get ready for this change, **YOU WILL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO DROP OFF YOUR TIMESHEET AT THE LOCAL DESS/IHSS OFFICE IN WOODLAND OR WEST SACRAMENTO** after July 1, 2010. If you do, it will be returned to you so that you may send it to the correct location. This will slow down the time it takes to process your check.

But don't worry! We will be sending you information sometime early this summer about the change. For now, you may continue to drop off or mail in your timesheets to DESS.

Health Matters

When you live on a fixed, low, income what do you do when you face unexpected expenses for medical treatment, tests or medications?

We know some people try to cut down on their medications, or even do without them because they can't afford their prescriptions and still buy food, pay for heat and other living costs. We have heard that some people don't go for tests prescribed by their doctor because they think they can't pay for the tests. Failure to take the medications prescribed for you, as they are prescribed by your doctor, can seriously affect your health.

Two members of the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Advisory Committee agreed to share their recent stories as encouragement to others to reach out to find help when faced with problems.

Winnie deAnda

I take lots of medications that would cost me over \$1,400 a month if I didn't have health coverage. My income is not enough to cover the cost of all my prescriptions. In early January I went to my pharmacy to pick up two of my regular prescriptions and was told I had to pay \$110 for them. I was told I had no coverage since the first of the year. I was frantic because I didn't know what had happened to my health coverage. I also knew I would never be able to pay for all the prescriptions I needed. I went home and contacted a county employee who had worked with until very recently. She tracked down the problem and learned that my HMO had "cleared" their computers at the end of the year to get ready for the new decade. When I went to the pharmacy my records were not showing. Since then all records have been restored to the computer.

I am just an ordinary person and knew I could never find my way through a bureaucracy. I

Marcelo "Nunie" Matta

I have medical coverage. I went for routine blood tests and was told my plan didn't cover blood test and I would have to go to another clinic. I went to that clinic and later received a bill for the tests.

I had never been billed for blood tests before. My wife called about the bill and was told, "Maybe there is a deductible." She then called Medicare and was told by the person at Medicare that she would launch an investigation and would get back to me. Then my wife called my health plan and talked to the person in charge. My wife was assured that I did not have a deductible, had never had to pay for blood tests, and the problem would be solved. I don't know if the person at Medicare, or the person in charge of my health plan solved the problem, but I didn't have to pay for the blood tests.

Both of these stories illustrate how important it is to look for someone to help with an unexpected situation and not accept the first explanation you are given. Your health matters.

Please see a list of resources and contact numbers elsewhere in this issue.



The 2010 U.S. Census Notice

Every 10 years the U.S. Census counts every resident in the United States. Census questionnaires should arrive in your mail box in mid-March 2010. The data collected from every resident of the county helps local communities receive federal funds for things like:

- Hospitals,
 - Schools,
 - Public health,
 - Transportation,
 - Senior centers,
 - Public works projects, and
- Emergency services.

When you receive your census form just answer the 10 short questions and then mail the form back in the postage-paid envelope. If you don't return your form, you may receive a visit from a census taker, who will ask you the questions on the form.

For more information about the 2010 Census, go to: <http://2010.census.gov/2010census>.



Home Care NOW

Do you need a provider when your regular provider unexpectedly is unable to come to work?

Do you know who to call for a provider to come immediately when your regular provider is unable to come to work?

The Yolo County IHSS Public Authority is pleased to announce the start up of **Home Care NOW**, a service to provide short term back-up providers for existing IHSS consumers who are unexpectedly without a provider. The Public Authority has recruited a pool of well screened, experienced IHSS providers who have agreed to respond to calls from consumers as soon as possible. All **Home Care NOW** providers have successfully passed a DOJ background check and have received First Aid and CPR certificates. They have attended an orientation session to learn the policies and procedures for this important service.

Requests for back up providers will be taken by your IHSS Adult Service Worker or the IHSS Office Support Specialist at 530-661-2955 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Your call will be referred to the **Home Care NOW** coordinator, a Public Authority Registry Specialist, and she will talk to you about your needs, search the computerized data base and refer someone to you.

Remember, when you need someone right away, call **530-661-2955**.

If you need a replacement for your regular provider, call the Public Authority Registry at 530-661-2676. You will be sent a list of pre-screened care givers who are available for work. You will interview the applicants and decide who you want to hire. In addition, a registry specialist can assist you with understanding how to interview a provider, employer/employee roles and responsibilities and developing a schedule of tasks so you and provider will know what will be done on the days the provider comes to work. There is no charge for Registry services.

H1N1 Update for Yolo County

The 2009 H1N1 is a new influenza virus that was first detected in the United States in April 2009. Since that time the virus has continued to spread from person-to-person not just in the United States, but around the world. A flu virus is passed by exposure to infected droplets by coughing or sneezing that can be inhaled, or that can contaminate hands or surfaces. After exposure most people will develop flu symptoms within 4 days. Dr. Joseph Iser, MD, DrPH, Yolo County Health Officer advises whether or not you have already received your Novel H1N1 flu vaccine, take the following precautions to protect yourself from becoming ill:

- Cough or sneeze into your sleeve or a tissue which is then disposed of.
 - Wash your hands with soap and hot water to get rid of germs and prevent the spread of disease. If you do not have soap and water, use a waterless hand gel with an alcohol base of at least 60%.
 - Avoid kissing or shaking hands with people and do not share food, drinks or utensils.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Germs spread this way.
Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
For more information about H1N2, contact the California Department of Public Health Hotline 1 (800) 232-4636.

IHSS Providers Need to Update

When an IHSS consumer calls the Registry for a provider, the Registry Specialists search the data base to generate a list of providers who are available and willing to accept referrals. Your name will not appear on a list of providers unless you update your availability and contact information every three months. Let the Registry know of changes in your availability, phone number(s), work preferences and tasks or if there are no changes.

Call the Registry at 530-661-2676.

Continued from Page 1— Mariko Yamada

Current caregivers and consumers can play an important role in “putting a face on the IHSS story”. Take a few minutes to write down what the IHSS program means to you, and what would result if services were reduced or eliminated.

Send these stories to your elected representatives, and to the local newspapers. Seek out allies that might not be so obvious, such as employers who already understand the benefit of services such as adult day health, caregiver respite, and IHSS to support employees who would otherwise need to take time away from the job to care for an older or other dependent adult. Public safety personnel, such as the sheriff, police, firefighters, and emergency medical personnel who are often first on the scene when a frail elder calls for help might also be a part of the discussion about the benefits of an in-home supportive services program to keep seniors safe at home.

Are there problems with the IHSS program? Sure, just like any other program, there will be instances in which unscrupulous individuals take advantage or outright cheat. Such abuses should not be tolerated, and those involved should face appropriate consequences.

But the best of the IHSS program should be protected, strengthened, and preserved. I will continue to keep IHSS among my top priorities as we face the 2010-2011 budget ahead.

Mariko Yamada represents California's 8th Assembly District, which includes portions of Solano and Yolo Counties and the cities of Benicia, Davis, Dixon, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun City, Vacaville, West Sacramento, Winters and Woodland. In her freshman year in the Assembly she served on several committees including Aging and Long-Term Care, Veterans, Rules, Water, Parks and Wildlife, and Agriculture. Prior to becoming an Assemblymember, Mariko served for five years on the Yolo County Board of Supervisors representing a portion of the City of Davis and surrounding unincorporated county lands.

Continued from Page 2— Nancy Seyden

Out of the Advisory Committees arose a need to network with other Advisory Committees/Boards' members throughout California. The California In-Home-Support Services Consumer Alliance (CICA) is now a 501C3 non-profit agency that represents the consumer voice. It is made up of Advisory Committee members.

The principle of consumer direction in the IHSS program is highly valued by consumers with disabilities and the elderly. Consumer direction is a unique component of the IHSS program and is a successful requirement for providing long-term care in the community. The principle of consumer direction in IHSS means that anyone with a disability has the right and the responsibility to direct his/her own care such as who to hire, when and how needed, and whether to terminate a provider. These decisions are generally made by the consumer.

What is there you can do? Please get involved and join us in our efforts to save the IHSS program without more cuts. We need you to tell your story of how the cuts and changes are affecting you or someone you work for. You can talk with friends, people you know, State representatives, the media, write letters, or join groups that sponsor events at the Capitol such as Capitol Action Day.

In conclusion, this is 2010, not the stone age. We need to preserve IHSS, a program that is already working. We need to realize California is growing and we are all getting older so that the need for the services provided by IHSS can be expected to increase. As a taxpayer for many years, I want to see the needed support provided so people with disabilities and the elderly will get the services they need in order to safely remain in their own homes and to live with dignity.



IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS FOR SENIORS

Information & Assistance (Located inside the three largest area Senior Centers)	Davis (530) 757-5696 West Sacramento (916) 373-5819 Woodland (530) 661-5890	Call for FREE information and referrals about ALL social, health & community services.
Adult Protective Services (APS)	(888) 675-11115	Call APS to report cases of elder abuse or suspected elder abuse.
Caregiver Support Program	(530) 666-8828	Call for information about services for family caregivers.
Elderly Nutrition Program	(530) 662-7085	Call for information about senior lunch sites and home delivered meals.
Health Insurance Counseling & Advocacy (HICAP)	(530) 661-5890	Call for answers to questions about Medicare, prescription drugs or other insurance issues.
Resources for Independent Living (RIL)	(916) 446-3074	Call for assistance with housing, transit, IHSS, etc.
Senior Legal Hotline	(800) 222-1753	Call for information about legal assistance and legal representation for those who qualify.
Yolo County Older Adult Program	(530) 757-5534	Call for support with social or emotional problems that make life difficult.

Transportation Services:

Community Care Car (Woodland) (530) 662-7800
 Davis Community Transit (530) 757-4408
 W Sacramento Senior Center Van (916) 373-5819
 Broderick Christina Center (916) 372-2000, ext. 101
 Port of Sacramento (916) 371-8000
 Winters Medical Appointments Van (530) 795-4910
 YoloBus Special (800) 371-2877

Government Officials:

Senator Lois Wolk
 (916) 651-4005
 Assemblymember Mariko Yamada
 (916) 319-2008
 Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
 (916) 445-2841

* Training notices *

The following page contains information on when/where trainings will take place for IHSS providers. Please tear off the last sheet and tack it up next to your calendar!

Reminders will be going out for the trainings, but they will only reiterate the information presented to you here. Please make an effort to register **EARLY** for trainings if you will be attending, as we only have a limited number of spaces.

YOLO COUNTY IHSS PUBLIC AUTHORITY

2010 TRAINING SCHEDULE

Class	Date	Time	Location
Fall Prevention	Wednesday, February 17	3 pm – 4:30 pm	500 A Jefferson Blvd. Suite 100, <i>River City Room</i> W. Sacramento, CA 95605
Fall Prevention	Thursday, February 18	3 pm – 4:30 pm	Social Services Building <i>Clarksburg Room</i> 25 N. Cottonwood Street Woodland, CA 95695
Adult CPR/ First Aid	Saturday, March 13	9 am – 4 pm	American Red Cross 120 Court Street Woodland, CA 95695
Nutrition	Wednesday, April 14	10 am – 11:30 am	Social Services Building <i>Clarksburg Room</i> 25 N. Cottonwood Street Woodland, CA 95695
Nutrition	Wednesday, April 21	1:30 pm - 3 pm	500 A Jefferson Blvd. Suite 100, <i>River City Room</i> W. Sacramento, CA 95605
Adult CPR/ First Aid	Saturday, May 15	9 am – 4 pm	American Red Cross 120 Court Street Woodland, CA 95695
Keeping Cool in the Heat	Wednesday, June 16	3 pm – 4:30 pm	500 A Jefferson Blvd. Suite 100, <i>River City Room</i> W. Sacramento, CA 95605
Keeping Cool in the Heat	Thursday, June 17	3 pm – 4:30 pm	Social Services Building <i>Clarksburg Room</i> 25 N. Cottonwood Street Woodland, CA 95695