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Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY

CIDNY Quick Take

March 2010

No matter what it's called, it's still a cap: CIDNY Rallies against 12-Hour Cap on Personal Care

On March 10, 2010, CIDNY consumers, Board members, and staff joined other disability advocates from across the state in Albany. We told the Governor and Legislature why we oppose the Governor's proposal to limit of 12 hours a day on personal care coverage under Medicaid. Personal care is a form of home care that helps people with non-medical tasks, such as getting dressed, cooking, or moving around at home. Most people who use more than 12 hours of care have disabilities that make it unsafe or unhealthy to be alone overnight, for example.



In his proposal, the Governor directs that anyone on Medicaid whose disability leads them to need more than 12 hours a day of personal care will have to go into a long-term managed-care program. There are only a few such managed care programs, and each has limitations that prevent it from meeting the needs of the approximately 3,000 New Yorkers who currently receive more than 12 hours a day of personal care.

Advocates from CIDNY visited about 20 legislator's offices, asking them to sign a pledge to oppose the 12-hour limit. They also gave out bright orange caps as reminders that the Governor's proposal, no matter how it is described, is still a "cap" on an essential service for people with disabilities.

"It's about our quality of life," said Board member Marla DeFex, pointing out that without adequate hours of care, most people using more than 12 hours a day will have to go into nursing homes. "We have a right to live in our own homes."

CIDNY's Executive Director, Susan Dooha held informal meetings with the Governor's staff and Legislative leaders outside the Senate Chamber.

She and other leaders made the case that managed long-term care plans are not ready, willing, and able to handle a massive increase in enrollment of people with high care needs. Dooha directed attention to high state spending on institutional care and the need to continue financing community care. By the end of the day, the Governor's office was ready to discuss alternatives to these cuts.

Dooha says, "We believe that these proposed cuts are penny-wise and pound-foolish. They are also a violation of the Supreme Court's Olmstead decision. The issue of cuts is still on the table, but thanks to CIDNY consumers, Board and staff and our allies, we're making headway. We need to keep up the pressure."

New Birth Certificates Required for Puerto Ricans

Anyone born in Puerto Rico prior to July 1, 2010 will have to request a new birth certificate from the Department of Health of Puerto Rico. The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico passed this new law last December in order to combat identity theft.

To obtain the new birth certificate, people will have to mail an application form with a \$5.00 money order to the Department of Health of Puerto Rico. They will also have to send a stamped, self-addressed return envelope and a copy of a passport or driver's license that has not expired. The \$5.00 fee is waived for people over 60 and veterans.

Anyone born in Puerto Rico who applies for benefits will need the new birth certificate as part of their application process as of July 1st. Old birth certificates will be voided and will not be accepted by many agencies in the USA.



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CIDNY has applications available. Contact Gisell Claudio at 646-442-1514 or gclaudio@cidny.org if you have questions or need an application.

Reminding Parents of their Rights

Step Up is looking for students and parents who are seeking advocacy services. With Step Up you can count on staff that will advocate on your behalf. We often hear of parents fearing retaliation from school administrators and that is why they put up with the lack of services their children are receiving in school. There are some steps that parents can take to better deal with school administrations and CIDNY counselors can help.



You can learn about your rights when you are advocating for your children. You can learn more about the Individual Education Plan (IEP) that is developed to meet the needs of students in District 75. Step Up's factsheet, [Help Your Child STEP UP](#), tells you how to protect the rights of your child with an IEP.

If you are a parent requesting new evaluations, or inquiring about an incident, put it in writing. School administrators are more likely to respond to parents when there is a paper trail. If you need help developing your letter to the school, CIDNY counselors can work with you. If you are still being ignored and your children's needs are not being met we can help. We also work closely with other agencies that have resources for children in District 75. STEP UP gives parents access to counselors who understand how to work in the schools and resources available to make sure children's needs are met. For more information, contact Alida Rodriguez at arodriguez@cidny.org or 646-442-1516.

Take Control of Your Housing Search: Searching for Housing Online

Are you looking for housing? Then join us for a workshop that will teach you the basics of

searching for housing using the internet. It takes place on Wednesday, March 31st at 4:00pm at CIDNY's office, 841 Broadway (between 13th and 14th Streets), Suite 301, New York, NY 10003.

We live in an information driven environment and looking for housing, especially affordable housing, is no easy feat. This workshop will give you the necessary skills to access the most up to date information on available housing. Join us for this workshop and take control of your housing search! To RSVP contact Bianca Neumann

at 646-442-1788 or bneumann@cidny.org. Please let us know in **advance** if you need an accommodation.

Deaf Adults - Make Your Ideas Count!

Participate in a Deaf focus group on voting, and earn \$25. Express your thoughts on your voting experiences (good or bad), or why you don't vote, though you are eligible. You will also learn about the new voting system and what it will mean for you.

The dates are: Wednesday, April 14, 4:00-5:30PM and Wednesday, April 28, 3:00-4:30PM. They will be held on the campus of LaGuardia Community College, which is located minutes from mid-town Manhattan on the E, V and 7 trains.

Space is limited! The first 12 people to RSVP for either session are guaranteed a seat and will receive a confirmation and the location. To RSVP and reserve your spot, email Jim Pope at japope@lagcc.cuny.edu or call (718) 482-5324 (voice via relay). In order to participate, you must be eligible to vote in New York.

The focus groups are hosted by Program for Deaf Adults/LaGuardia Community College and The Center for Independence of the Disabled NY (CIDNY), as part of LaGuardia's Electoral Assistance Program (LEAP) Grant. Refreshments will be provided.

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