



CID-NY

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Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY

January 2012

CIDNY Quick Take

**WELCOME TO CONSUMER SERVICE
DIRECTOR VAN LY**

“Since starting my new position at CIDNY, I have been very welcomed by the staff and consumers.

My professional background and interests have always been with non-profit agencies that assist individuals with various social services, so it was with much excitement that I was given the opportunity to work at CIDNY. I look forward to being part of a core direct service team that continues to assist New Yorkers with disabilities overcome barriers and receive access to services. In addition, I also hope to integrate our work with consumers into significant policy and advocacy initiatives. “

**NEW YORK’S COMMUNITY HEALTH
ADVOCATES PROGRAM (CHA)**

Finding affordable, quality health coverage

If you need health care, New York’s Community Health Advocates program (CHA) can help. With a network of 31 community-based organizations, CHA can help you find and use affordable, quality health coverage in your neighborhood.

You can get help from CHA whether you are privately insured, publicly insured, or uninsured. If you don’t have health insurance, we can help you get care through local health centers and hospital charity care programs. Over the past ten years, CHA has helped nearly 150,000 New Yorkers.

Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY (CIDNY) and the New York Association on Independent Living (NYAIL) are working together through CHA to help consumers with disabilities throughout New York State. CIDNY will offer workshops and help to individual consumers, NYAIL member Independent Living Centers, and other nonprofit staff who work with consumers.

You can reach us by phone or e-mail, or you may visit one of our offices:

CIDNY Manhattan
841 Broadway, Suite 301
New York, NY 10003

CIDNY Queens
137-02A Northern Blvd.
Flushing, Queens 11354

You can also reach us at:

646-442-4145 (New York City consumers)
877-228-1198 toll-free (upstate consumers)
Via e-mail at gotten@cidny.org.

You can learn more about CIDNY’s CHA services by clicking the CHA link at www.cidny.org.

We look forward to hearing from you!

**A NEW YEAR BRINGS
CHANGES IN BENEFITS.**



After two years without a Cost of Living Adjustment, Social Security beneficiaries will see an increase in their Social Security Disability and SSI income on January 1, 2012. In New York, SSI recipients living alone will see an increase from \$761 to \$785 per month. Couples will see an increase from \$1,115 to \$1,152. The majority of Medicare beneficiaries who pay a part B premium will see a \$3.50 increase in their premium from \$96.40 to \$99.90. For those who just started paying the premium in the past two years, when there had been a higher premium, the premium will go down to \$99.90. The COLA adjustment is considered additional income for food stamp recipients, but they do not have to report it. A mass rebudgeting is being done for all food stamp recipients with Social Security income to take into account the COLA increases. Notices started going out in November advising food stamp recipients of small decreases in their monthly food stamp benefits. The NYS nutrition improvement project which provides automatic food stamp

Happy New Year!



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benefits to people who receive SSI and live alone have also been slightly reduced.

Health Care for All New York (HCFANY) Gets Ready for A New Year

CIDNY is a founding member of HCFANY which will be holding its annual meeting in Albany on Thursday, January 5. The agenda is packed and includes:

What happened with Health Reform in 2011 (and what didn't)?

- The ups and downs of implementing health reform in New York State.
- Update on our 2009 premium rate review law: How "prior approval" of insurance rate hikes saved New Yorkers millions this year.
- Attacks on health reform: How Congress tried to weaken health reform and what's happening in the courts.
- Medicaid Redesign: What is it and what did it do?
- Addressing health disparities in NY: What the state and federal government has done to address disparities based on race, gender, disability, and more, in 2011.

Planning for 2012

- Make it personal: Best practices in gathering and using personal stories.
- Say it like you mean it!: Messaging research, strategies, and tips.
- Strategy and organizing: How can we make sure that legislation gets passed to fix New York's broken health insurance system

If you think you might be interested in attending, contact CIDNY's Health Policy Director, Heidi Siegfried at 646.442.4147 or hsiegfried@cidny.org.

Legal Aid Society & South Brooklyn Legal Services file lawsuit against NYCHA

The allegations were that:

- NYCHA wrongfully terminated Section 8 subsidies stating that the tenant failed to recertify;
- NYCHA failed to send yearly recertification packages or track return of packages;
- Consumers were not informed of termination or of their rights to challenge the termination in an administrative hearing;
- When hearings were requested, NYCHA failed to schedule them and subsidies were terminated.

NYCHA acknowledged problems with their computer system; claimed it ceased terminating Section 8 Vouchers based upon failure to recertify in July, 2011; said it would not resume terminating subsidies until the computer problem has been addressed; and that tenants whose subsidies were stopped in February 1, 2011 are deemed to be active and not terminated, thus should not be evicted.

NYCHA expects their computer problem to be resolved by December 5, 2011, and NYCHA and attorneys are to meet with a magistrate this month. NYCHA is also scheduled to appear before a judge on December 1, 2011. The expectation is that the judge will not allow terminations of Section 8 unless s/he is satisfied that NYCHA's computer problem is fully resolved. Calls are apparently coming in that NYCHA is still terminating Section 8 subsidies. For more information on this issue, please contact Lourdes Rosa Carrasquillo at 646-442-4148.

Happy New Year!