



Manhattan
841 Broadway
Suite 301
New York, NY 10003
212/674-2300 Tel
212/254-5953 Fax
646/350-2681 VP

Queens
80-02 Kew Gardens Rd
Suite 107
Kew Gardens, NY 11415
646/442-1520 Tel
718/886-0428 Fax
866/948-1064 VP

www.CIDNY.org

Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY

May 2016

How We Voted on Primary Day 2016

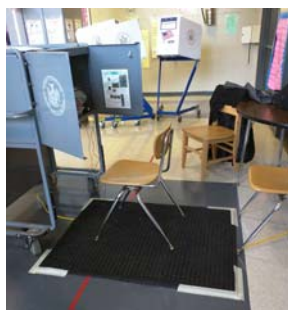
A number of CIDNY consumers who voted in the primary also filled out our individual voter survey. We've learned a lot. Most of you who filled out the survey said you had a positive experience; some of you were neutral about your experience. But you helped to pinpoint some issues we will address with the New York City Board of Elections.



Picture: Narrow accessible voting path

Many of you told us that missing or confusing signs outside the polling site made it difficult to know where to go. A number of you noted that it was hard to find the accessible entrance. Once inside your polling site, many of you said that that path to the voting area was confusing and that doorways were too narrow. So, here we go again! In New York City, it seems as if just getting in to vote can be a challenge.

When we asked you about using the Ballot Marking Device (the accessible voting machines), you told us about machine batteries that were low; audio in Spanish only; machines that were not fully set up; poll workers who didn't know how to run the machine or help voters who wanted to use it; and poll workers who watched people fill out their ballots – as one voter told us, **NO PRIVACY!**



Picture: A chair blocks the Ballot Marking Device

So, before the November presidential election, we will be telling the New York City Board of Elections about our findings – the results of our poll site ADA surveys as well as what you've told us in the individual voter survey. We will tell them that they have to fix the poll sites so every New Yorker who wants to vote can – privately and independently – as the law provides. We will also tell our elected officials that, as they review the performance of the Board of Elections, they need to take in to account the experiences of voters with disabilities in the City.

If you would like to add your voice to our conversations with the Board of Elections, you can still fill out the individual voter survey online at www.surveymonkey.com/r/G6KL55V. You can also contact Monica Bartley at mbartley@cidny.org to find out what you can do to help.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Certification Training

The first class of Ombudsmen for 2016 was held on Tuesday, March 22, at the Red Cross building on West 49th street. The training was created by Richard Danford, the Director of the Long-Term Care Ombudsmen Program for New York City, with contributions from the Assistant New York State Ombudsman. The training was spread out over three weeks with two days of classroom training each week. We'd like to thank the Red Cross for hosting our six days of training.

After the new ombudsmen complete their post shadowing (8 hours with a ombudsman mentor), they will be assigned their own facility. This new class of ombudsmen will be assigned facilities that have been without an ombudsman or that have been undeserved (for example, a large facility requiring more than one ombudsman). Ombudsmen are the advocates for the residents of long term care and nursing home facilities.

We are actively recruiting for our next training class in August or early September. For the entire month of May, we are traveling to every borough to give presentations and to participate at tabling events, to educate and encourage people to become volunteer ombudsmen.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer ombudsmen or would like more information, please call Mary Jane Wolper at 646-442-2913. You can find some information about the program at: <http://www.cidny.org/long-term-care-ombudsman-program.php>.



Picture: Staff with the first class of Ombudsmen for 2016 on their Graduation Day

Quick Takes

CIDNY CONSUMER ACTION NETWORK MEETING—Wednesday, May 18 — 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
841 Broadway, Suite 301, between 13th and 14th Streets

Subways: 4, 5, 6, L, N, Q, R to **14th Street Union Square**. Station is accessible for the L, N, Q and R lines

Legislative Disability Awareness Day is Monday, May 16, 2016. Let us prepare to go to Albany to meet with our legislators to discuss our issues and share our stories.

This is important: You **MUST** attend one of the training sessions to go to Albany!

Training will be held from 1:00pm -3:00 pm on:

Wednesday, May 4 - Queens Office - 80-02 Kew Gardens Road, Suite 107, NY 11415

Wednesday, May 11 -Manhattan Office - 841 Broadway, Suite 301, NY 10003

For information about this training, please contact Monica Bartley at 646-442-4152.

RSVP to the CAN meeting by Wednesday, May 11 to Eva Eason at 212-674-2300 and let her know if you need an accommodation like large print, Braille, or an interpreter, including ASL. Please be considerate to people dealing with chemical sensitivity disorders and refrain from wearing cologne or perfume at our meetings and events.

Are You Getting the Right Wheelchair or Other Durable Medical Equipment?

Do you use a customized wheelchair or other durable medical equipment to maintain your independence and health?

CIDNY has been supporting legislation that would require Medicaid Managed Care Plans to use wheelchair clinics that employ licensed, trained professionals to customize and fit patients who need complex rehabilitation technology in person. The supplier would need to have a store front in the state and be able to provide service and repair.

Over 160,000 people using Medicaid are now enrolled in Managed Long Term Care Plans, which are supposed to provide their durable medical equipment. When CIDNY's benefit counselors, who are helping consumers enroll in Plans, ask the Plan if they work with a wheelchair seating clinic, we're told that the enrollee should go to their nurse care manager for approval of durable medical equipment. This tells us about the approval process, but does not tell us about assessments and fitting of complex equipment.

If you have had problems getting the equipment you need from you Plan or getting it repaired, we need to hear your stories so that we can explain to legislators why the right wheelchair or other equipment is so important. Contact Heidi at 646-442-4147 or hsiegfried@cidny.org, or better yet—join us for Legislative Disabilities Awareness Day in Albany on May 16th, so that you can tell them yourself.

Join CIDNY in Albany for Legislative Disabilities Awareness Day on May 16

We go to Albany on Monday, May 16 to meet with legislators and advocate on issues important to us. If you'd like to join us



on this important trip, you must attend a training on either May 4 (in Queens) or May 11 (in Manhattan). The training starts at 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm. If you have any questions, contact Monica Bartley at 646-442-4152.

Wins on the NYS Budget

A number of issues CIDNY advocated on were included in the final New York State Budget, which was signed into law in April.

New York will be the fourth state in the country to guarantee paid family leave to care for a seriously ill family member or bond with a new child. The State's paid family leave program, which will take effect January 1, 2018, will begin with up to 8 weeks a year and will reach 12 weeks a year. The worker will receive 50% of their average weekly wage up to a cap of 50% of the statewide average weekly wage to start. This amount will increase to 67% of the average weekly wage over three years. The law provides job protections and maintains health benefits.

We once again defeated a proposal to eliminate prescriber prevails for certain classes of drugs and preserved spousal impoverishment protections for married couples and children with chronic illnesses, as well as spousal/parental refusal. The Community Health Advocates program, which helps people with their health coverage, did suffer a cut, but got some restoration from the original proposal. As well, Independent Living Centers received flat funding.

Exciting News on Workshops

Our popular writers' workshop has returned! We share our experiences and works and praise each others' strengths. Join us every Thursday afternoon from 3:30 to 5:30 pm.

CIDNY-Queens is kicking off monthly workshops for consumers. In April, we shared information on housing. On May 25th at 10 a.m., we will discuss benefits. CIDNY counselors will be there to help after the workshop. Space is limited so you do have to RSVP!