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April 2015

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Monthly Support Groups

Heads Up Group

Contact Dave Munroe at 217-523-2587 v/tty

Stroke/Brain Injury Support Group

Contact Lisa Cline at: 217-788-3461 or email: cline.lisa@mhsil.com

Personal Assistant Employers Group

Contact Bradley Kinney at 217-523-2587 v/tty

Post-Polio Group

Contact Bradley Kinney at 217-523-2587 v/tty

BEST (Becoming Empowered and Successful Teens) and Parent Transition Support Group

Contact Carolyn Thorpe at 217-523-2587 v/tty

HAVING TROUBLE HEARING ON THE PHONE?

Call SCIL 217-523-2587 v/tty to find out how to receive a FREE amplified telephone!

On July 26, 2015 the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will turn 25! To celebrate the anniversary of the ADA, disability movement advocates will be convening celebrations all across the United States. SCIL is one of the organizations around the country to share the celebration.

The ADA Legacy Bus recently completed the first portion of the cross-country tour commemorating the 25th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Overseen by The ADA Legacy Project, the bus has partnered with many sponsors and organizations around the country to accomplish this extraordinary effort, which covered more than 11,000 miles with stops at city halls, disability organizations, public schools, universities, disability conferences and Abilities Expos, while driving through 18 states.

The ADA Legacy Tour will stop in Springfield on June 16, 2015 during the 25th ADA Celebration at the Old State Capitol in Springfield from 11:00 .m.—2:00 p.m.

To learn more about the ADA Legacy Project, check out the website link: <http://www.adalegacy.com/ada25>



THE SCIL ADVOCATE

APRIL 2015

“Increasing opportunities for persons with disabilities through advocacy, services, and public education.”

Devastating Results for People with Disabilities with Governor Rauner’s Proposed DHS Budget.

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The Fiscal Year 2016 budget for DHS proposed by Governor Rauner will cut and totally eliminate programs that provide essential services and supports for individuals with disabilities in Illinois. Solving the fiscal problems in Illinois should not sacrifice services to our states most vulnerable citizens.

The proposed change that is most alarming is the change in eligibility for the Home Services Program (HSP) by increasing the Determination of Need (DON) assessment score from 29 points to 37. The DON assessment measures the ability of individuals to carry out their activities of daily living and meet their physical needs without assistance. The DON score guides the development of a service plan for those individuals currently scoring a 29 or above. Changing the DON eligibility from 29 to 37 would mean that 10,000 people currently in the program would lose services and an unknown number of future applicants would be denied services.

The DON assessment is based

upon each person’s individual needs. It is not possible to predict how each person who loses services, or is denied services will manage. Some individuals may have adequate family support to meet their needs. However, the ongoing stress of depending on a family member to perform daily tasks – some very personal – can alter family relationships and possibly open the door to abuse or neglect.

Some individuals do not have family support or a network of friends to rely upon to provide services and assistance. These individuals are forced to try and get by on their own, often making poor decisions that could endanger their health, safety, and quality of life. Some will give up eating balanced meals, having a clean home, and even their own personal hygiene. Most, if not all, will feel a greater loss of their dignity, independence, and ability to be involved in their communities. For many individuals, their ability to work will be taken away and a significant number of individuals will have to return to nursing homes. The possibility exists that some lives will be in jeopardy.

Providing home services to people with disabilities in their homes costs the state less than what it costs to support them in a nursing home. Between 1999 and 2014 SCIL assisted 130 individuals with reintegration from a nursing home to live independently into community living. The final savings realized during each of these years is not easy to ascertain due to the fact that some individuals do not remain in the community for one year and the savings cannot be calculated to an exact amount. However, using a conservative estimate of a \$ 10,000 per year savings for each reintegration consumer from 1999 through 2014 would mean a savings of \$1,300,000 in government funding.

Nursing home care for all of these individuals is paid for with government funding. The Genworth 2014 Cost of Care Survey Illinois reports that:

- the median annual rate for nursing home care in a semi-private room in the Springfield area is \$66,430
- the median annual rate for home health aide services is \$42,328
- for the people with disabilities served by SCIL, these expenses are paid primarily by Medicaid and/or Medicare.

\$ 66,430.00	Cost of nursing home residency per year
<u>\$ 42,328.00</u>	Cost for home health aide services per year
\$ 24,102.00	Potential savings for

individual to live in community setting.

To take a more current look at this formula, during FY 2014, SCIL staff assisted 5 people with disabilities in reintegrating from nursing homes into community living. By providing support and assistance needed to enable these 5 individuals to successfully transition from nursing home care to independent community living with home health care, and assuming that each of these individuals remains in the community for one year, SCIL facilitated a substantial savings. **Using the above formula: \$24,102.00 x 5 = \$120,510.00**

Should a high number of the individuals who are facing possible loss of services have to leave their homes and return to a nursing home, the cost of care per person will increase. Over time, the financial cost to move individuals into nursing facilities will be very high. Not to mention the very real loss to the individuals who will no longer be allowed to make choices about their own lives and face segregation from their jobs, communities, friends, and family.

It is critical that our legislators are provided this information and they understand how important it is to continue the DON assessment as it stands today.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Join the Advocacy Efforts at SCIL

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much”

-Helen Keller

The need for strong voices will never end. Today we consider the DHS Budget and how possible cuts will affect individuals with disabilities. Tomorrow may bring a new issue and another call for individuals with disabilities to unite and advocate for independence and equality. We need strong advocates and individuals willing to share their stories.

Interested? Please contact Melissa Norman at SCIL: (217)523-2587 v/tty

Do you have a disability and live in Christian County?

Springfield Center for Independent Living (SCIL) will be in Taylorville every Wednesday!

The Independent Living Advocate will be available to meet with you:

WHERE: The CEFS office —311 S. Main, Taylorville, IL

TIME: From 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

(please ask for MaryJane) Walk-Ins Welcome!

In addition to meeting with consumers in Christian County, a location is being considered in Menard County to provide the Independent Living Advocate a space to meet with potential consumers in Petersburg. Please contact MaryJane Logan at SCIL for more information about services in Christian or Menard County.

The Independent Living Advocate will meet the needs of consumers in any of our rural areas by providing services at the location most convenient for

each person, such as a space provided by a local agency, business establishment such as a restaurant, or at the consumer’s home. SCIL services are free to people of all ages, with all types of disabilities.

Should you or someone you know need assistance in rural Sangamon County, Christian, Montgomery, Menard or Logan County, contact Christina Bormida or MaryJane Logan at SCIL: (217)523-2587 v/tty or (800)447-4221.

Program Targeted for Elimination

A program targeted for elimination in FY 2016 is a training program the Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living in Illinois (INCIL) has conducted under contract with the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS). The 3 hour training was designed for new enrollees in the Home Services Program (HSP) to be implemented by staff of centers for independent living throughout the state.

Most individuals who are approved for the Home Services Program are eligible to hire personal assistants (PA’s). The PA’s go to the consumer’s home and provide services that can include housekeeping, cooking, and tasks related to personal hygiene and care. The consumer is the employer and is responsible for approving and signing the timesheet that their PA (employee) will submit to the Department of Human Services (DHS) for payment. Very often this is the first time the consumer has been an employer and due to their lack of experience, they know very little about supervising and managing their PA. The training was developed by INCIL to teach the necessary skills for hiring and supervising PA’s including understanding the service plan and how to allocate hours for the tasks included in their individualized plan.

Another part of the training focuses on how to recognize and respond to fraud, neglect and abuse, and teaches the consumer how to recog-

nize these potentially serious situations, and what to do in these situations. The center for independent living serving the area where the consumer resides remains the consumer’s contact and a source of support.

The training was developed for new HSP enrollees in response to a series of indictments of both consumers and PA’s in various parts of the state for fraud, and extensive media coverage of serious, sometimes fatal incidents of abuse and/or neglect. Elimination of this training contract takes an important tool away from the consumer and opens the door to potential fraud, abuse and neglect.

This contract has already allowed CIL staff members throughout the state to successfully train more than 700 people with disabilities on how to be an effective employer of their personal assistant. The reasoning for the elimination of this contract is the idea that Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) counselors can add this training program to their schedules. This seems very unrealistic because DRS counselors carry overwhelming caseloads. Many centers for independent living provide PA trainings and assist consumers by offering support through the PA hiring process and continue support for addressing future issues or concerns. Centers seem a logical place to provide this training as it aligns with services currently provided to consumers.