

66 Action Needed for Obama Transition Team, Chili's Restaurant Event and Misc.

Dearest Advocates:

The National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC) just put out an action alert regarding ALL of us taking action bringing the wait list issue for community and home based services to the attention of the Obama-Biden Transition Team. Please take a moment to get involved. We have a new President taking office in January and he needs to hear from ALL of us in the disability community!

Great News- Go to Chili's Restaurants across Georgia on January 14, 2009 and 10% of the proceeds benefits Special Olympics of Georgia. More information below and the flyer is posted on my website under "events". Let's support this wonderful cause!

Below is information published by The Arc of Tennessee regarding a position paper on the Division of Mental Retardation's efforts to reduce Medicaid waiver costs for individuals with developmental disabilities in Tennessee. Interesting information that we need to watch here in Georgia-

I know many of you continue to have issues regarding the implementation of the NOW/COMP disability waivers. I am continuing to work through many of the issues and will report back to you regarding how these issues are being resolved in the coming weeks. I know this is a stressful time for many families and my heart goes out to you. Please refer back to previous newsletters regarding information distributed on the NOW and COMP waivers. Go to my website and click on "newsletters" to find out more. I hope you find this information helpful as we continue to go through this transition process and help all the families impacted.

Please note: I will have very limited e-mail for the next two weeks. I am going to try to focus on spending quality time with my family over the holidays. Therefore, please be understanding if I do not respond quickly to your e-mail requests. Thanks for understanding.

May all of you have a wonderful holiday season and happy new year!

"UNITED – WE WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE!"

Sincerely,

Heidi

(Proud Mother to Jacob - 8 yrs old with Down syndrome and Jared - 7 yrs old)

"Help the Children Now, So They Can Help Themselves Later!"

www.heidijmoore.com

###

From NDSC- Obama needs to hear from you regarding waiting lists for Adult Services in the USA:

**Bring the Urgent Issues of the Wait List for Adult Services
to the Attention of the Obama-Biden Transition Team**

In 2006, there were over 280,000 individuals with disabilities on waiting lists for community living services also know as Medicaid Home and Community Based Services in 31 states. Other states do not keep official waiting lists so the true number of individuals with unmet needs is much higher and growing with the aging of the U.S. population. There is no entitlement to adult services as in education through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) so many individuals with Down syndrome and other disabilities leave school with no job opportunities or supports to live in the community independently.

A group of parents have been conducting a national campaign to end the waiting list. They are asking people to vote for Medicaid waivers for individuals with disabilities as a top health care issue. You can read about this group at <http://www.noewait.net>.

It is very important to shed light on the critical problem to the new Administration. We encourage members to vote on this health care initiative and if you have a personal story about an individual you know who is on the waiting list, please follow the directions received given below by the no wait organization.

1. *VOTE on the issue at the Obama Transition team site.*

http://www.change.org/ideas/view/fully_fund_medicaid_waivers_for_the_developmentally_disabled

We need over 900 votes to get to the top of the Health Care list of ideas.

2. *Send a message to every listserv you are on and ask others to vote. Then, if you have a web site or blog, create a widget to put on your site or blog to get others to vote. Put it on your Myspace or Facebook page.*
3. *go to:*
http://change.gov/agenda/disabilities_agenda/

PLEASE HELP GET THIS ISSUE TO THE ATTENTION OF THE OBAMA TRANSITION TEAM.

###

Special Olympics GA Day at Chili's Restaurants across GA on Jan. 14th 2009:

Please forward this email to your contacts especially if you are a member of a church group perhaps they would put it in their bulletin. Since this is a 1st time event, we want it to be a great success! Mark your calendars to go to **Chili's** for Special Olympics Georgia day **Wednesday, Jan. 14**. Bring the flyer attached from 11 a.m. until 9 p.m. and Special Olympics Georgia will receive 10 percent of the sale. This fundraiser benefits the athletes of Special Olympics Georgia. There are 32 Chili's participating from Athens to Woodstock, from Gainesville to Peachtree City to see if the Chili's near you is participating, visit www.specialolympicga.org

Please take your family and friends for a lunch or dinner at **Chili's** for the athletes **Wednesday, Jan. 14**.

Also please note that the flyer has been posted on my website under "Events".

#

From the Arc of Tennessee- Reduction in Medicaid Waiver costs:

The Arc of Tennessee has published a position paper on the Division of Mental Retardation's efforts to reduce Medicaid waiver costs for individuals with developmental disabilities in Tennessee.

There are three methods being implemented to reduce service costs

1. The first action involves the review by the Regional Office of each Individual Support Plan (ISP) to evaluate what services can be reduced or eliminated entirely.

Is there sufficient evidence in the ISP that the service recipient requires or continues to need the identified service?

Is there sufficient evidence in the ISP that the service recipient's needs cannot be met without the service?

Is there sufficient information to demonstrate that progress can be made in terms of measurable functional gains?

Are there clearly defined measurable goals based on the person's current age and health status?

Is the requested service the least costly adequate option?

2. The second action involves the redoing of all Client Assessment Scores

The person administering the ICAP usually wants to talk primarily to the key support staff and often ask other agency personnel to leave the room. Family members should alert the provider and ISC that they demand to be present when the ICAP is being administered. If the score is lower than in the past you should ask for a review of the results and to be informed of the changes that caused the lowering (change in) of the score.

3. The third action involves an across the board reduction in rates paid to the providers of services, limits on travel for community involvement, and limits of therapy services.

All providers in the Statewide Waiver had their payments reduced by 6.1%. The effect of the payment reductions can affect the intensity, duration, and frequency of the services provided to your family member.

If this occurs and the services are not what your family member needs then you should immediately file an appeal. All appeals must be filed within ten days.

For a full report, visit: http://www.thearctn.org/Assets/docs/Protocol_Position_Final.pdf