

MetroWest

Center for Independent Living, Inc.

Budget Work Continues

Greetings!

Happy April! Was anyone else doubtful that the huge, long-lasting snowpack would actually disappear? Thank goodness the snow is gone without major flooding in MetroWest and the crocuses are up.



We'd like to thank everyone who participated in the annual Statewide Independent Living Education Day at the State House. We heard compelling testimony from consumers, elected officials, appointed officials, and IL staff and advocates. The discussions many people had with legislators will make a difference. Until the budget is finalized in late July, our thoughts and opinions (*and we are right!*) need to be heard.

Key Budget Dates:

- April 13 - House Ways and Means Budget released
- April 25 - Debate on the House Budget (amendments)
- May 25 - Senate Ways and Means Budget released
- June 6 - Debate on Senate Budget
- June 13 - Conference Committee between branches begins

Finally, our thoughts are with everyone affected by the disasters in Japan, and especially with people with disabilities.

from Paul W. Spooner,
Executive Director

Patrick Orders Examination of the RIDE

From the State House news service, April 6:
After Inspector General Greg Sullivan highlighted high per-trip costs and inefficient procurement processes, a new commission will examine transit services provided by the MBTA's RIDE program, which serves eligible seniors and people with disabilities.

Gov. Deval Patrick on Wednesday signed an executive order creating the commission, saying the panel would look at finding new efficiencies, ensuring quality services and "making sure that everyone who needs these services can access them."

Administration officials said the commission will include top officials from administration and finance, human services and transportation agencies, as well as members with backgrounds in veterans' services, civil rights, paratransit service delivery and operations, and



In This Issue

- [Examination of The RIDE](#)
- [Nationwide - State Budget Cuts](#)
- [2011 Statewide Independent Living Education Day](#)
- [IL Education Day - What next?](#)
- [Disasters in Japan](#)
- [New Health Care Models](#)
- [Cuts Delayed](#)
- [Effective Advocacy](#)
- [State Budget Process](#)
- [Wretches and Jabberers](#)
- [Equal Choice Law Oversight Hearing](#)
- [PCA Referral Webinar](#)
- [Dr. Jean McGuire](#)
- [MA PCA Program](#)
- [Effective Advocacy](#)



MWCIL attends 2011
Statewide Independent
Living Education Day

Wretches and Jabberers

This nationally acclaimed documentary is about two men with autism. The film is showing

paratransit service customers.

Recommendations are expected in late October. The RIDE provides door-to-door service in 60 cities and towns in and around Boston. Members of Sullivan's office met recently with Lt. Gov. Tim Murray,

Transportation Secretary Jeff Mullan and MBTA General Manager Richard Davey to review his office's findings, including the RIDE program's "lax eligibility rules" and its failure to seek Medicaid reimbursements. "I congratulate the Governor for taking the initiative to address these issues head on," Sullivan said in a statement Wednesday.

Jini Fairley, Director of Services at MWCIL, is being considered to serve on the commission.

Nationwide - State Budget Cuts

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities has released an enlightening [report](#) by Michael Leachman, Erica Williams and Nicholas Johnson on budget cut proposals to education, health and other essential services in 48 states. With few governors recommending offsetting increased revenues, these cuts will further erode the economy and undermine efforts to create jobs. While Massachusetts isn't the worst, we definitely have some short-sighted budget cuts on the agenda.

Thanks to [ADDP](#) for sharing this article in their newsletter.



2011 Statewide Independent Living Education Day at the State House

This year's event was especially important in light of the proposed \$550,000 cut to Independent Living Services from the MRC budget, and the relatively high number of new representatives. Over 250 consumers, IL staff and disability advocates attended. Speakers included Steven Higgins, Jean McGuire, Joe Bellil, MRC Commissioner Charles Carr, Representative Ellen Story, Janet Shaw from Stavros, Peter Ramos from Stavros, Bill Henning from Boston CIL, Mary Margaret Moore from ILCNSCA and Rep. Tom Sannicandro. After the presentations, attendees visited their

at the Framingham AMC 16 theatre on Saturday, April 9 at 12 noon. The showings are nationwide, and sponsored by the Autism Society and AMC Theatres.

[Wretches and Jabberers](#)

Equal Choice Law Oversight Hearing

The Joint Committee on Elder Affairs will be holding an Oversight Hearing relative to the Equal Choice law - Options Counseling program.

The hearing will take place on April 11th at 1:00 p.m. in room B-1 at the State House.

PCA Referral Webinar

The PCA Workforce Council and Rewarding Work are hosting a webinar on how to use the PCA referral directory. PCA consumers / employers are encouraged to participate in to learn how to best use the features of the directory. We have implemented several new features since December. To sign up for the webinar on Wednesday, April 13th (2-3:30 p.m.) please contact Michelle Byrd at Michelle.Byrd@state.ma.us or 617 210-5715.

Message from Dr. Jean McGuire

Thank you all for the many ways in which you have enriched my life in the work we have been doing



together over the course of the last four years. I am very

representatives and senators for personal meetings.



Debbie, a consumer at MWCIL, educates her newly elected State Representative, Steven Levy (left) on IL.

Visit the [MWCIL photo page](#) for more pictures from the event.

Independent Living Education Day What Next?

Steve Higgins, one of the key organizers for the Statewide Independent Living Education Day at the State House, stated: "Remember the Advocacy did not end on Monday, IT HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN! If we are not actively involved in the political process then Shame On Us! It is important that you follow up regularly with your legislators especially in this season to be sure cuts do not happen. Lives and Independence are at stake, Monday was not just a feel good thing to do."

Great ideas from Steve! Now that your legislator knows you - either from a letter, phone call, or a face-to-face meeting, your message will be heard. Check in with them, and remind them of the importance of Independent Living Services!

For more facts and figures, download this document: [MA Consumers served by Centers for Independent Living](#)

appreciative of the challenges, support, and fun you have brought my way. It is good work we are all doing and I look forward to continuing to see you on my new path.

I will be joining the Center for Social Policy at UMass Boston on May 1. Rosalie Edes is assuming the role of Acting Assistant Secretary.

Take care,
Jean

Jean Flatley McGuire, PhD
Assistant Secretary

MA PCAs

MWCIL has partnered with other organizations to create the [PCAForever](#) website devoted to providing information about the Massachusetts Personal Care Attendant program as well as publicizing advocacy opportunities and needs.

We are actively seeking stories from consumers.

[Email us](#)

Effective Advocacy

Find your legislators at [WhereDoIVoteMA.com](#)

Communication
Personal contact: Most of our legislators visit our communities and are anxious to talk to their constituents. You also may be able to schedule a visit to their office.

Handwritten letters are a very effective way to make sure your message is understood. In today's digital world, a handwritten letter will stand out.

Phone calls and emails are quick and easy ways to contact your legislator. Letters to the Editor, and discussing your issues



Steve Higgins Starts the Presentation

Disasters in Japan

Japan's shortages include manpower, fuel, food and medical supplies. For people with disabilities, these items are lifelines, not extras. We are providing some links below including current information and where to donate.

DPI - Disabled People International - sponsors this [blog](#) with updated information on the relief activities for people with disabilities.

Donations to support people with disabilities can be made with a credit card on this [DPI page](#).

FYI - Donations are in Yen, so we recommend you first visit this [conversion page](#) when you're ready to donate (the exchange rate is constantly changing), and determine how many yen you would like to donate.

Japan has Centers for Independent Living which were first modeled on the U.S. movement. To read more about their history and programs, visit the [Japan Council on Independent Living Centers](#).

New Health Care Models

Accountable Care Organizations (ACO) and the Primary Care Medical Home are two new models for health care reform. With goals of cutting costs while improving care, both models are getting serious attention from advocates and legislators. Both models move away from traditional fee-for-service*. Instead, the ACO and Primary Care Medical Home models accept a Global Budget (or Global Payment) for each patient. A Global Budget is fixed payment per patient for a set time period. Money left over from the annual payment is shared by the insurance company and the doctors. Organizations that are over budget do not incur penalties. Global Budgets encourage pro-active and thoughtful care to avoid expensive (and painful) re-active issues. Actual implementations of these new models incorporate extensive

with your friends and neighbors can also bring additional support to your cause.

Join political groups and/or attend rallies. More people mean a louder voice. Make sure your legislators know the rally is occurring, and that you attended.

What to say
Tell the legislator that you are a constituent and provide your name, address and contact information.

Identify the issue which you are advocating for or against. Be very clear.

Tell your story. *You are the expert!* How does this program help you? How could this budget cut hurt you? *Why do you care? Why should the legislator care?*

FAQ

Q: Is it worthwhile to speak with a staff member instead of my legislator? Yes, but ask for the staff member who specializes in your particular topic instead of the person who answers the phone.

Q: Where can I find information about disability issues? Many of your favorite organizations have newsletters with advance notice about rallies, and ongoing updates on budgeting. MWCIL has several Advocacy web links on our [Resources page](#).

performance measurements to ensure that *outcomes are improved*.

The Accountable Care Organization unites doctors, clinics and hospitals in vertically integrated organizations of care. In MA, Atrius Health is successfully working as an ACO. Atrius Health is an alliance of 5 medical groups, 800 doctors, 700,000 patients and 30+ care centers in eastern MA. Most insurers for Atrius set global budgets. The large size of Atrius allowed them to also accept some patients using the traditional fee-for-service model and remain solvent.

From the patients' point of view, a key component of the ACO is the addition of the Care Coordinators or Case Managers to help patients navigate multiple doctors and medications.

ACOs are committed to reducing costs and improving the quality of their health care. For example, at Atrius, committees of doctors and other employees review operations looking for efficiencies. The 10 minute turnover of MRI exam rooms was shortened to 5 minutes by adjustments as simple as removing cabinet doors. Results - 2 more MRI patients per day, 700 more scans per year, and \$3.5 million of savings last year. Other changes are more focused on quality such as case managers for patients with multiple doctors and medications, and monthly patient record reviews among physicians. Some results: 88 % patients are now screened for cholesterol (was 80%), and 79% of diabetics get a certain blood test (was 68%).

The Primary Care Medical Home model is for patients with chronic conditions such as diabetes. Groups of doctors, led by a primary care physician, are responsible for a specific group of patients with chronic conditions. The team devises treatment plans for each patient. Insurers set global budgets for each patient. Each patient has an active role in their own care. Presumably, these actions will to prevent or minimize complications and hospitalizations and keep patients at home. The Medical Home team has to be reachable 24/7.

A patient with diabetes would benefit from a Medical Home practice. The primary care physician is the team leader. Regular appointments and in-depth take home instructions keep the attention on the patient's taking good care of his or her self. The physician augments these with specialists as needed. This diligent approach presumably will mitigate many of the complications that can arise from diabetes that is not carefully controlled.

Medical Homes are similar to Accountable Care Organizations in that they consolidate multiple levels of care for patients. However, medical homes take the approach of having the primary physician lead the care delivery "team." Simplistically, an ACO consists of many coordinated practices while a medical home is a single practice. Medical Homes may be part of an ACO. Both seem to be a smart way to go, with more face-time with doctors and health care professionals and more focus on prevention.

*fee-for-service: The traditional fee-for-service model is broken. Providers are paid for individual services. Not all services are paid for, and fees are often not aligned with actual costs. Fee-for-service rewards service volume and complexity, and does not reward outcomes, quality and efficiency.

About Us:

MWCIL website

(past issues are available at our website)

Email

Phone: 508-875-7853

280 Irving Street

Framingham, MA 01702

[Find us on Facebook](#) 

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)



Cuts Delayed

Kyle Cheney of the State House News Service reported on March 31 that the House's top budget writer, Rep. Brian Dempsey, is in talks with Patrick administration budget officials to forestall, at least for the next three months, cuts to programs for disabled and elderly residents for FY '11. These talks led "Representative John Rogers to withdraw an amendment to force the Patrick administration to cancel proposed cuts for adult day health, adult foster care and other programs aimed at some of the most vulnerable Massachusetts residents."

"Al Norman, executive director of Mass Home Care, an advocacy organization for the elderly, said the decision to delay the cuts was welcome but has kept the participants in those programs in limbo, unsure whether the governor will ultimately cancel or implement them."

The final decision remains in limbo as Rep. Patricia Jehlen stated "The administration has put the rate cut on hold. But that doesn't mean those rates won't be cut later in the fiscal year. This amendment would just ensure that those rates remain stable for the rest of fiscal 2011."

Thanks to the [DPC Weekly Newsletter](#) for this story.

Between negotiating behind closed doors, and making cuts to last year's budget... finances in MA feel very slippery. Let's hope the governor does the right thing, and does not cut these critical programs.

It's Easy to Leave a Legacy

Many people think you have to be wealthy to donate to charities or to have an estate. Not true! An estate is any property, money or personal belongings you have at the time of your death, and you can leave a charitable gift from your estate, regardless of its size.

The most common way to leave a gift is through a will. You might want to donate personal property, such as land, a car or a valuable collection. Sometimes people leave a life insurance policy or investments like an IRA.

Think of how others have helped you. Think of the difference other people or organizations have made in your life. By leaving a charitable gift from your estate, you can do the same for your neighbors and community.

Your first step is to evaluate your financial situation and decide what your charitable goals are. Choose the organization(s) that have made a difference in your life.

Ways to leave a legacy:

- 1) Specify a dollar amount or percentage of your assets to go to the charity of your choice in a will.
- 2) Research (accountants, financial advisors and attorneys can help) tax-friendly options for making a planned gift to the charity of your choice.
- 3) Name the charity as the beneficiary of your pension or life insurance policy.

If you are interested in speaking with MWCIL about a bequest or planned gift, please contact us at 508-875-7853.

FYI: State Budget Process

The first step in the annual budgeting process, the Governor's Budget, was released in January. This budget now goes to the House (via the House Ways and Means Committee). Ways and Means will hold hearings and discussions, sometimes including the Senate, and reissue their own version of the budget in early April. In other words, right now is an important time for citizens to let their legislators know of any problems with the Patrick budget, and also let them know which existing programs are important to them. After this, the Senate will come up with their own changes, and the two legislative branches will agree on a combined budget.

Once the House and Senate have submitted their budget to the Governor in early June, the governor may sign it or send it back. It may take until July 31 before we know all the details in next year's budget.

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

and visit our website

[MetroWest Center for Independent Living](#)

[Forward email](#)



Try it FREE today.

This email was sent to srorke@mwil.org by srorke@mwil.org | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

MetroWest Center for Independent Living | 280 Irving Street | Framingham | MA | 01702