



March 2012

Issue: 21

## MetroWest Center for Independent Living, Inc.

### Early Spring

Greetings!

On the calendar is the annual Statewide Independent Living Education Day on April 4 at the State House 11:00 a.m. Staff and Consumers from MWCIL will travel to the State House and join the other 10 Independent Living Centers and other advocates in educating our legislators. Contact us if you would like to attend.

from Paul W. Spooner, Executive Director

### March - National Disability Employment Awareness Month

By [Presidential Proclamation](#), March is National Disability Employment Awareness month. President Obama has stated his commitment to improving the dismal employment statistics for people with disabilities.

In July, 2010, President Obama signed an Executive Order to have the Federal government serve as a role model by increasing Federal employment of individuals with disabilities. He has improved educational opportunities, and created an [employment database](#) of recent graduates with disabilities to make it easier for the Federal government and the private sector to find candidates.

In December, 2011, the [US Labor Department](#) set historic 7 percent hiring goals for federal contractors and subcontractors for the employment of individuals with disabilities. The goal is also a benchmark for contractors to measure the effectiveness of their affirmative action efforts and inform their decision-making. The proposed rule also would enhance data collection and record-keeping requirements - including for documentation and processing of requests for reasonable accommodation - in order to improve accountability. Additionally, it would ensure annual self-reviews of employers' recruitment and outreach efforts, and add a new requirement for contractors to list job openings to increase their pools of qualified applicants.

No surprise, [the Wall Street Journal](#) writes about employers and business who are fighting this employment effort because of fears:

"... While the department says it wouldn't be an explicit requirement, companies that don't hit the target could have their contracts



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Spring already!

#### President Obama Speaks Sign Language!

The deaf community was "wowed" after responding to a deaf person signing "I'm

canceled or could be barred from winning future contracts until they show they are trying to meet the target."

MWCIL Opinion: If the corporations (who receive \$700 billion annually in federal funds) spent the same amount of money on hiring people with disabilities that they're spending on fighting the new rules... we would be closer to the goal of full employment for people with disabilities.

Scroll down for upcoming local workshops on employing people with disabilities.

## Transportation

### Mass. officials: No escaping cuts, fare hikes on T

While specifics are still not clear, the MBTA appears to have solidified their position on increasing fares and decreasing services in the near future. Even though 6000 people attended the 31 hearings, the MBTA and lawmakers have not indicated any movement towards a real solution, other than dipping into the unused snow budget. The original proposals are especially harsh on users of The RIDE. We suggest you speak to your legislators soon as the changes may be decided in April.

Read more at the [CBS News website](#).

### Business Group Seeks Legislative Intervention, 25 Percent MBTA Fare Hike Cap by Kyle Cheney

Recognizing the importance of a good transit system to the economy, "A Better City, a nonprofit group whose board includes Bank of America, Harvard University, MIT, Fidelity and John Hancock, called on the MBTA to limit fare hikes to no more than 25 percent and to piece together a solution to its budget deficit that features smaller, recurring fare hikes combined with limited service cuts and other sources of state funding."

[Read more](#) on this support for lower fares from the business community.

### Disabled Fear T's Plans for Changes in The RIDE

Recently the Disability Policy Consortium posted this Boston Globe article by Eric Moskowitz. The article describes the current system as a lifeline for many riders who use it to go to the doctors, the grocery store, and work. While some upcoming changes such as increased assessments for riders may save a little, most doubt that fraud has been a factor. Changes to coordination and processes may save a little money.

[Click here](#) to read the entire article.

## Opposition to Assisted Suicide

Members of Second Thoughts and MWCIL staff attended the March

proud of you" with a signed "Thank you". Read the article and see the video from the [MSN website](#).



## Donations

If you appreciate MWCIL and the support it provides you, please consider a year-end gift of any amount.

By showing your appreciation and giving back, MWCIL can provide more services for the community. We thank you! Go to [MWCIL Webpage](#) or click on the Donate button.

**Donate**



All online gifts are tax deductible. *We couldn't carry out our important mission without you!*

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(past issues are available at our website)

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6 Judiciary Committee Hearing and testified against H. 3884, "An Act Relative to Death with Dignity" which would legalize assisted suicide in Massachusetts. The testimony was chilling as some spoke about terminal diagnosis they received decades ago! They spoke of a system that may not consider all lives equal. You can read and view much of the testimony at the [Second-thoughts Testimony web page.](#)

The MWCIL Board of Directors voted unanimously to support Second Thoughts, and to oppose the legalization of assisted suicide.



Opponents of Death with Dignity wait to testify.

## Markey Introduces Prescription Labeling Law for People with Vision Impairments

"February 28, 2012, WASHINGTON, D.C. - With hundreds of advocates visiting Capitol Hill today to call on lawmakers to support his new legislation, Congressman Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) introduced H.R 4087 the Prescription Drug Labeling Promotion Act of 2012 to ensure that people who are blind or visually impaired have full access to the information included on their prescription drug labels. The legislation convenes a working group of pharmacy representatives, patient and consumer advocates, and federal regulators to develop guidance for pharmacists to ensure that the blind or visually impaired have safe, independent, and comprehensive access to their prescription drug information. ...

"No one should have to sacrifice their independence or safety to take their medication," said Rep. Markey... It is another important step to ensure that individuals who are blind can fully participate in 21st century society."

Read more at [Representative Markey's web site.](#)

## New Dental Facilities

Tufts has moved the Tufts Dental Facilities from the Fernald Developmental Center in Waltham to the Massachusetts Hospital School in Canton.

This newly constructed seven chair dental clinic is open Monday-Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm, and is currently accepting new patients.

The Tufts Dental Facilities Program serves individuals with developmental and acquired disabilities, accepts commercial insurance as well as self pay clients, and is a Mass Health provider.

[Download the flyer](#) for more information on all TDF locations.

Contacts:

Darren Drag, DMD Director, Clinical Operations  
[darren.drag@tufts.edu](mailto:darren.drag@tufts.edu), (508) 823-7323

Adrian Gillard, Program Manager  
[adrian.gillard@tufts.edu](mailto:adrian.gillard@tufts.edu), (781) 562-0631

Tufts Dental Facility at the Massachusetts Hospital School  
3 Randolph St. Bradford Building, 2nd Floor Canton, MA 02021  
(p) (781) 562-0349, (f) (781) 562-1058

## Spinal Cord Injury News

Thanks to the National Spinal Cord Injury Association for the [UsersFirst Mobility Map](#) - a web-based tool for finding the best wheelchair for your needs.

June 25-26 is a call to action in Washington: "Roll on Capitol Hill". This important gathering brings disability leaders from United Spinal Association and National Spinal Cord Injury Association to Capitol Hill to create an army of informed, educated advocates that can achieve the changes most sought after by the disability community. Visit the [National Spinal Cord Injury Association website](#) for informative advocacy webinars on the issues.

## Power Chair Soccer in Sudbury

The Sudbury Sharp Shooters Power Soccer Team is always looking for new players! Athletes use their own power chair and attach a plastic guard used to maneuver, kick, and pass a 13" soccer ball around the court. This team sport teaches skills while fostering camaraderie, teamwork, sportsmanship, leadership, and communication amongst players of all ages.



Sudbury Sharp Shooters  
Spring Season: March 21-May 9  
Wednesdays 4:00-5:30pm  
22 Pratts Mill Road Sudbury, MA 01776  
Ages 5+ that use a power wheelchair  
\$100 per player (all equipment provided)

If you or someone you know is interested, please contact Anna Wood, CTRS/L at the Sudbury, MA Park and Recreation Department today! 978-639-3257 or [wooda@sudbury.ma.us](mailto:wooda@sudbury.ma.us)

## Public Hearing for MassHealth PCA Consumers

Consumers of MassHealth PCA services are invited to share their concerns and thoughts about the PCA program with members of the PCA Workforce Council. After the open forum, the public is invited to stay and attend the Council meeting from 2-3 p.m.

Topics of interest are:

- PCA workforce development efforts
- The council's mission statement and work
- Development of the PCA Directory

Where:

Easter Seals Massachusetts  
484 Main Street  
Denholm Building, sixth Floor Conference Room  
Worcester

When:

Tuesday, April 10 from 1:30 - 2

For Accommodations:

Call 617-210-5715 ten days before the event.

Information:

1-800-244-2756

[Council website](#)

[pcacouncil@state.ma.us](mailto:pcacouncil@state.ma.us)

If you are unable to attend and wish to share your comments with the Council, please contact them at:

PCA Workforce Council  
600 Washington Street, 7th Floor  
Boston, MA 02111

or e-mail [pcacouncil@state.ma.us](mailto:pcacouncil@state.ma.us)

## Turning 22 - Transition Resource Fair

Who should attend? Young adults with disabilities ages 14 to 21 and their parents/guardians/family members. Families from all communities are welcome.

Who will be there?

State and local agencies and organizations that can help support you and your family, now and in the future, such as MA State Agencies, college readiness organizations, financial planning resources, social organizations, & career/employment resources

Why should I attend?

To gather important information and tools to help plan for your future after high school!

Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Brockton High School (Inside the Red House Cafeteria)  
470 Forest Avenue  
Brockton, MA

Register for this event by visiting the  
[Brockton Public Schools SEPAC website](#)

Or call: (508) 580-7525.

Admission is free. Light refreshments will be available.

## Medicaid and the Unemployment Rate 3-11-12

Choice Centered Medicaid is now at work in Connecticut. Joe Stango, in his blog entitled "[Dora's Hope](#)", describes a win-win program.

"Under Money Follows the Person (MFP), the program created because of my mom, the state is now bringing home 5000 people from institutional care facilities creating a savings to the state of \$55M.

The state also announced that allowing 5000 people to come home is creating 6000 new private sector jobs. If we take those numbers and transpose them onto the national economy that means we could create, conservatively, 1.2 million new jobs assuming we allow 1 million patients to go home to their families."

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