



June 2013

Issue: 33

MetroWest Center for Independent Living, Inc.

June

On a day like today - 75 degrees, dry and sunny, it's hard to imagine the rainfall of the past couple of weeks. But the rainfall should remind us, hurricane season has begun, and we should all review our Emergency Preparedness plans and supplies. Some communities have developed procedures for people with disabilities - consider contacting Town Hall or City Hall and registering. Visit our [Emergency Preparedness web page](#) for more ideas.

The new symbol is not yet official, but we like it!



from Paul W. Spooner,
Executive Director of MWCIL

OneCare Forum (Duals Demonstration)

Sponsored by DAAHR - Disability Advocates Advancing Our
Healthcare Rights

When:

Wednesday, June 19, 2013, 1 - 3:30 p.m.

Where:

SEIU Local 615
26 West Street
Boston

Contact - RSVP and Accommodations:

Allegra Stout
(617)338-6665

astout@bostoncil.org

The Demonstration, which MassHealth recently renamed One Care, has changed quickly in recent weeks. MassHealth has announced new start dates for the program:



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Donations

If you appreciate MWCIL and the support it provides you, please consider a 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!*

About Us:
[MWCIL website](#)

(past issues are available at our website)

[Email](#)

- October 1, 2013: One Care start date, self-selection enrollments only
- November 1, 2013: 60-day notice sent to first auto-assignment (passive/automatic enrollment) group
- January 1, 2014: Services start for first auto-assignment group
- 2nd wave of auto-assignment effective tentatively April 1, 2014
- Possible 3rd wave of auto-assignment tentatively July 1, 2014

Meanwhile, 2 of the original 6 Integrated Care Organizations (now called One Care Plans) have dropped out of the Demonstration/One Care because the payment rates are too low. More may drop out before contracts are signed in July. We do not know how this will affect the program as a whole.

The coming weeks may determine the success of this new healthcare system for 110,000 Massachusetts residents with disabilities. Now, while so much is changing, is a crucial time to make our voices heard. Please attend on June 19th, and spread the word to your networks.

Thanks to Allegra Stout and MNIP Support Conference for this news.

Phone: 508-875-7853
280 Irving Street
Framingham, MA
01702

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Spinal Cord Injury Lecture and Webcast

New Advances in Research for Recovery after SCI
Knowledge in Motion Lecture Series

Presenters:

Jeffrey D. Macklis, MD - Harvard Stem Cell Institute, Harvard U., Harvard Medical school.

Frank Reynolds - Invivo Therapeutics

Lisa McKerracher, Ph.D. - BioAxone BioSciences, Inc.

Angus McQuilken - Massachusetts Life Sciences Center

- Understand how the corticospinal nerve injury contributes to SCI disabilities, and how it might be repaired.
- Understand what new treatment options based on biomaterials will be available for SCI patients in the near future.
- Learn about the 10-year, \$1-billion MA Life Sciences Initiative and its relevance to the SCI community.
- Learn about the current state of drug development to treat SCI.

For more information about each presentation or to register, go to <http://www.bu.edu/nerscic/new-advances-in-research/>. Lecture is geared towards individuals living with spinal cord injury, their caregivers and healthcare professionals.

When:

Thursday, June 30, 6:30 p.m. - 8

Dinner and Evening Lecture

Where:

Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital
300 First Avenue
Charlestown

Contact:

Helen Stott
(617)952-6173

hstott@partners.org

Cost:

\$10 before 6/3, \$20 at the door

Free Online Webcast and Live Chat

Register:

[Online Registration](#)

or

Judy Zazula

(617)638-7314 or toll free: (866)607-1804

judiz@bu.edu

Letter from Rep. Joe Kennedy III

Representative Joe Kennedy III wrote to congratulate Jini Fairley and MWCIL on their awards from the Carroll Society.

To the Carroll Society:

Though I am unable to join in today's celebration, I write to congratulate the recipients of the 29th Annual Carroll Society Awards.

I would like to commend Jini Fairley, Director of Independent Living Services at the MetroWest Center for Independent Living, as she receives the 2013 Blind Employee of the Year Award. Her story is an extraordinary one. A true "hero among us", as she has been called, Ms. Fairley has been a leader in her profession, raced for charity, and raised five children - all in spite of adversity. I am pleased to see Ms. Fairley being honored for her lifetime of inspiring achievements and important contributions to our community.



I would also like to take a moment to recognize the MetroWest Center for Independent Living, recipient of the 2013 Employer of the Year Award. By empowering persons with disabilities to become fully integrated within their communities, you genuinely strengthen our society. Please always continue such remarkable service, dedication and leadership.

Finally, I extend my most sincere gratitude to the Carroll Society for the Blind. Your commitment to providing rehabilitation, skills training and educational opportunities to the blind and visually impaired are so appreciated by the city, state, and country.

Supporting the blind, impaired, and disabled is - and should always be - an important priority for this nation. As advocates and allies, you have all played vital roles in this cause. Together, let's keep making a difference.

Sincerely,
Joe Kennedy
Member of Congress

[Click Here](#) to download the letter.

Disability, Social Security, and the missing context

A recent NPR piece on *Planet Money/This American Life*, titled "Unfit for

Work-the startling rise of disability in America" (by Chana Joffe-Walt) implied that the Social Security Disability program has become the new welfare system, and that it is being exploited by out of work people. Trudy Lieberman, in the [Columbia Journalism Review](#), has uncovered serious issues with the NPR report and slams it as "an unfortunate example of incomplete reporting".

Missing from Ms. Joffe-Walt's NPR piece is

- Qualifying for Social Security Disability benefits is difficult.
- In 2010, out of the 29.5 million adult Americans who reported having a disability, only 8.8 million received disability benefits at the beginning of the year.
- The NPR report used Hale County, Alabama which is one of the poorest counties in the U.S., and is not representative of an average county. "...the country has an older, less-educated workforce, and an economy based on forestry, mining, and manufacturing, which tend to spawn more work-related disabilities than service industries."

The push back has been significant and from unexpected sources. "In an [open letter](#), eight former Social Security commissioners said "Unfit for Work" failed to tell the whole story and perpetuated dangerous myths about the Social Security disability programs and the people helped by this vital system." In their letter, they acknowledged that disability claims had risen significantly, but noted that growth had been predicted as early as 1994-the result of more women in the workforce and baby boomers reaching the years when disability sets in."

Trudy Lieberman concludes: "After rereading "Unfit for Work," I agree with the critics. The piece did a disservice to an important safety net crucial to the survival of some of the sickest people around. It could have been a useful service had it explained what disability benefits are -social insurance, not welfare."

We agree! We expect more from NPR.

And here's another article from the June 14 Wall Street Journal, also questioning NPR's conclusions entitled "[Are Long-Term Unemployed Taking Refuge in Disability?](#)" The author, Ben Casselman, examines the data and concludes that fears of increasing fraudulent claims are unfounded.

Ticket to Work

[AARP](#) provides a good overview of this Social Security program "which encourages people with disabilities, ages 18 to 64, to try to return to work and become more financially independent. Ticket to Work arranges free vocational training, rehabilitation, job referrals and employment assistance. Services are provided through private employment networks and state vocational rehabilitation agencies that partner with Social Security". People receiving benefits from SSDI are eligible.

The program offers a 9 month trial working period when benefits will not be reduced.

"The SSI program has no trial work period, but beneficiaries are encouraged to develop a Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS) and submit it to SSA. Although additional earnings often reduce SSI benefits, an SSA-approved PASS plan can let you set aside income or assets to achieve goals, such as training for a new job or starting a business"

Government web pages:

[Ticket to Work](#)

[PASS - Plan for Achieving Self Support](#)

Deaf Motorcycle Rider Course

The nation's first Deaf Motorcycle Riding class was recently held in Framingham. Rick Sigel, owner of Training Wheels (a motorcycle rider training school in MA), and his staff, the MA RMV and interpreter Jessica Winiacki researched and developed the program. 10 local students attended the first class. For information, visit their website: www.trainingwheelsonline.com or call (508) 247-9595.

Visit the [Patch](#) for more details.

Pet Peeves of the Blind and Visually Impaired

This article from Hub Pages has common sense advice for sighted people. For example, #2 of 10 is below.

"2. Being afraid of the "S" word. Someone can be talking to a VI person and say something like, "Let's go see what's for lunch." Then they gasp and think, oh no, I shouldn't have said "see"! Lighten up. Everyone uses "see" and "look" and "watch out!" Even the VI person."

Read the whole [article](#) by "mycheesegrits". Thanks to the DPC for the link.

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