

**MetroWest  
Center For  
Independent Living**

# People with Disabilities Living in the Community

June 2015



2010 ADA March in Boston

The turnout for the June 12 MassHealth Listening Session on Behavioral Health and Long-Term Supports and Services was impressive! An overwhelming group of consumers, advocates, providers and administration staff attended, causing some chaos due to the overflow. The message was loud and clear - Consumer Rights, Consumer Choice, and Do Not Make Any Changes to the Current System Without Including Us in the Decision Process. **Nothing about us without us.** We no longer want an advisory role, we want a seat at the table as full participants in the decision process about our long term services and supports. Hopefully this was a wake up call for MassHealth to create a better integrated process of inclusion and participatory planning for *all major changes* in the programs.

Please attend the remaining MassHealth Listening Session (see schedule below) and make your voices be heard. *Change is coming with or without us - we need to take charge of the direction of our long term services and supports.* If you cannot attend, send your input to: [Masshealth.innovations@state.ma.us](mailto:Masshealth.innovations@state.ma.us)



## In This Issue

[Picket for Living Wage](#)  
[DCR Summer Events](#)  
[Baker Opioid Plan](#)  
[ADA Primer](#)  
[AmTrak](#)  
[Transportation Update](#)  
[AHVP](#)  
[MassHealth Stakeholder](#)  
[Sesisons](#)  
[Got News](#)

## MWCIL



MetroWest Center  
for Independent  
Living

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Sincerely,

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MetroWest Center for Independent  
Living

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## Join Picket for Real Living Wage

### 15 Hour Picket for \$15 per Hour

When:

Tuesday, June 30

Picket:

7 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Rally:

4 p.m.

Where:

The State House  
Boston

Join Personal Care Attendants, Seniors and People with Disabilities in the campaign for a fair contract and real living wage of \$15/hour. PCAs provide dignity and independence to people with disabilities and seniors but are forced to live in poverty and on government assistance. We are calling on Governor Baker to respect caregivers by agreeing to a *fair contract with a real living wage!* Stop by the picket line and/or attend the 4 p.m. rally.

Call Governor Baker at (617) 725-4005!



[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

DCR Summer Events

The Universal Access Program (Department of Conservation and Recreation) is looking forward to another season of fun in MassParks, and hopes you'll join us this summer to help us celebrate their 20th anniversary.

Come explore the parks and all we have to offer, whether it's on the water with rowing, kayaking, canoeing, or sailing, or on the trails with horseback riding, cycling, or hiking.

The summer newsletter and schedule of events is linked in MS Word and txt formats. Alternate formats are available.

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dcr/universal-access/access-newsletter.docx>

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dcr/universal-access/access-newsletter.txt>

Or download the [DCR-Newsletter.pdf](#).



## Governor Baker Announces \$27 Million Plan for Opioid Crisis

The [Boston Herald](#) reports that the Governor's Opioid Working Group has released their recommendations. The proposed strategies are a mixed bag of short and long term solutions aimed at saving lives, increasing education, and improving available treatment. Pharmacies and physicians also will be asked to change their prescription policies. The recommendations included some disturbing but fixable items such as the fact that only 36% of doctors in MA discussed the addiction risks when prescribing strong

painkillers. Also disturbing is the inadequate treatment options in MA.

The report does not address any changes to law enforcement of drug trafficking.

Download the Working Group's documents:

[Recommendations of the Governor's Opioid Working Group](#) - June 11, 2015

[Action Plan to Address the Opioid Epidemic in the Commonwealth](#) - June 22, 2015

Thanks to the Boston Herald for the news and the documents.

## ADA Update: A Primer for State and Local Governments

The Department of Justice has published a new technical assistance guide, "[ADA Update: A Primer for State and Local Governments](#)," to help State and local government officials understand how title II of the ADA applies to their programs, activities, and services. The 16-page illustrated document addresses general nondiscrimination requirements, such as provisions relating to program accessibility, service animals, communicating with people with disabilities, other power-driven mobility devices, and policies and procedures. The guide also addresses how the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design apply to the built environment, including existing buildings and facilities, new construction, and alterations.

Further information is available on DOJ's website at [ada.gov](http://ada.gov) or its toll-free ADA hotline at (800) 514-0301 (v), or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).

## Amtrak Inaccessible

On June 9, 2015, the U.S. Department of Justice issued a letter finding that Amtrak, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, is in violation of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by failing to make stations for which it is responsible physically accessible to persons with mobility disabilities by the deadline in the ADA of July 26, 2010. That is, currently only 18 out

of nearly 400 Amtrak stations are accessible.

[Download The Letter of Findings.](#)

## Transportation Update: Where We've Gone and What We've Learned by the National Council on Disability

[NCD Transportation Update](#)

Twenty-five years ago the Americans with Disabilities Act mandated a more accessible landscape for individuals with disabilities in this country, as well as a more accessible transit system to help them traverse that landscape. Fifteen years later, in 2005, the National Council on Disability published *The Current State of Transportation For People With Disabilities in the United States*, a major transportation overview report. That highly acclaimed report contributed to major developments in the field of transportation. In this report, *Transportation Update: Where We've Gone and What We've Learned*, NCD examines what has changed since the writing of our previous report. This update describes the last ten years' numerous advances in the field of transportation for people with disabilities and recommends public policy to address new and persistent problems.

The focus of this report is surface transportation. The findings address accessibility-related progress as well as problems associated with fixed route and deviation bus and rail transit (including AMTRAK); paratransit; public right of way; enforcement of existing laws; and other issues for all modes of public transit. The report also addresses concerns with rural, coordinated, and privately funded transportation, and commercial driver license rules. Finally, the report makes recommendations to Congress and the Executive Branch designed to improve federal collaborative efforts and to close gaps in transportation access in ways which benefit people with disabilities and families.

Alternative Housing Voucher

## Program

The final Senate budget included a \$1,200,000 increase for AHVP and the removal of the word "transitional" from the line item language. If this funding is in the final budget, up to 140 more low income people with disabilities will get housing. Please continue to advocate for this funding and language in the conference committee budget.

## MassHealth Stakeholder Sessions

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) will host a series of [public stakeholder sessions](#) as a follow-up to the stakeholder engagement kick-off meeting on April 6, 2015. This series of focused conversations will be an opportunity for MassHealth to seek input on its efforts to enhance the health care experience for MassHealth members, improve health outcomes and discuss reforms to make the MassHealth program more sustainable. Please note that these sessions are open to all members of the public.

Topic	Date	Time	Location
Payment Reform	May 22, 2015	2:00-4:00	Transportation Building 10 Park Plaza Boston
Behavioral Health, and Long Term Services and Supports	June 12, 2015	2:00-4:00	Ashburton Place 21 <sup>st</sup> Floor One Ashburton Place Boston
Customer Service Experience, Payment Reform, Behavioral Health, and Long Term Services and Supports	June 23, 2015	10:00-12:00	North Shore location TBD

Customer Service Experience, Payment Reform, Behavioral Health, and Long Term Services and Supports	June 25, 2015	10:00-12:00	New Bedford Free Library 613 Pleasant St. New Bedford
Customer Service Experience, Payment Reform, Behavioral Health, and Long Term Services and Supports	June 29, 2015	2:00-4:00	Springfield Public Library - Mason Branch 765 State Street Springfield
Customer Service Experience, Payment Reform, Behavioral Health, and Long Term Services and Supports	July 7, 2015	10:00-12:00	Worcester Public Library 3 Salem Square Worcester

## Got News?

### Send us your ideas!

This monthly section is for news and comments from our readers. You can suggest something for us to research, give your opinion on a topic (relevant to people with disabilities of course), or let us know of what is working and what needs improvement in the community. Please email Sue at [srorke@mwcil.org](mailto:srorke@mwcil.org).  
Thanks!

[www.mwcil.org](http://www.mwcil.org)

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