

The Source of information for providers of community-based services for people with differing abilities.

A member service of NYSRA.

DOB BUDGET HEARING



The Division of the Budget late recently convened a hearing on budget issues involving the health and mental health fields. The session was held as part of Governor Spitzer's effort to accelerate the state budget process and help ensure timely passage by April 1 of next year.

NYSRA attended the hearing, which consisted of DOB staff listening to presentations of the Commissioners of the Department of Health; OMRDD; OMH, and OASAS. Also appearing was Dennis Whalen, the governor's Deputy Secretary for Health & Human Services.

Although the presentations were quite general in most respects, there were highlights that we think should be noted as themes we can expect to hear more about. Among the themes repeated by virtually everyone were: Medicaid must be reformed to be more efficient, cross-agency collaboration is essential to ensure appropriate individualized services, and outcomes must be measurable to ensure that the systems are going in the right direction.

Some highlights of the testimony that we noted:

OMRDD Commissioner Ritter:

As did Secretary Whalen, the commissioner spoke of a more heavily emphasized "people first" approach to services and service delivery. She cited the need to continue program "trends" to providers and to work on ensuring a quality workforce if quality services are to be maintained.

Individualized at-home supports were also a theme of Commissioner Ritter as she spoke of the need to continue to move the remaining 500 New Yorkers in Developmental Centers.

She spoke of "reforming Medicaid" to seek efficiencies from the system and also talked of cross-agency collaboration to address people with multiple disabilities.

The commissioner said that immediate issues also include stepping up school-to-work transition matters, expanding the NYS CARES program, and working on new employment internship concepts for people with MR/DD conditions. It is interesting to note that she did not mention OPTS in her presentation.

OMH Commissioner Hogan:

The commissioner spoke of accentuating two themes: "effectively sustaining" state operations and community services to some 500,000 individuals, and cross-agency collaborations for those with multiple diagnoses.

He reiterate a theme he has expressed before and said that "the costs of providing care are not as great as the costs of not providing care," noting that budget expenditures in this area are investments that reduce system costs down the road.

Commissioner Hogan commented that, in his view, New York has at times expended too much time and energy chasing federal dollars – this has resulted in what he called "skewed priorities" and "over-Medicaiding" the system. It appeared he was voicing concern over the prevalence of designing systems Medicaid will fund, rather than systems that individuals will need.

DOH Commissioner Daines:

The commissioner noted three critical issues with regard to services of all types in New York – quality, efficiency and accessibility. His comments suggested that the health care system, and Medicaid, are sufficiently funded. "The money is in the system if we spend it wisely and efficiently," he said.

Commissioner Daines also emphasized the cross-agency collaboration as a key priority, saying that "cross-agency cases involve the sickest patients." He also specifically noted that, in looking at system design, he is looking to recommendations of the Citizens Budget Commission (a not-for-profit group that monitors state budget issues) and the United Hospital Fund. It should be noted that the United Hospital Fund is the source of the Medicaid reform paper, "The Administration of Medicaid in New York State" that we and others have been giving close scrutiny since its release in late 2006. That paper was principally written for UHF by Deborah Bachrach, who is now the State Medicaid Director. It speaks of the inefficiencies of the current NYS system in which all Medicaid operations are not consolidated within one agency, but scattered throughout service delivery systems.

Inside Edition

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NYSRA MEMBER RECEIVES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSINESS AWARD

The Greater Olean Area Chamber of Commerce presented the ReHAbilitation Center in Olean, New York with one of its two Enterprising Business Award. The award honors those who exemplify the enterprising spirit of community and commercial growth in the greater Olean community.

The Enterprising Business Award is the highest distinction for a business given by the Chamber's 733 members. It is given annually to privately owned businesses in the greater Olean area which demonstrates a well-

planned, thorough and serious approach to business development and exemplifies the unique "hometown" charm of the area in manners of administration, customer service and quality of product.



Pictured from L to R: Jim Bellanca, President & CEO of The ReHAbilitation Center; John Sayegh, Chair, The ReHAbilitation Center board of directors; and Ledge DeRose, Chair, The Rehabilitation Foundation board of directors.

The ReHAbilitation Center, which will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2008, is a values-based organization providing services to adults and children with developmental disabilities, autism, and mental health issues, as well as services

to the elderly, to improve their quality of life and maximize their independence. At the Chamber's awards dinner ReHAbilitation Center President & CEO spoke of the importance of services offered stating "We live by our values every day."

The ReHAbilitation Center has 43 sites throughout Cattaraugus County and serves more than 700 people every day including providing services to 13 area school districts. It is the fifth largest employer in Olean with more than 550 employees.

INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS WEEK

NYSRA annually asks members to consider the recognition of schools that support children with disabilities throughout their academic career, especially as they begin their transition years from school to the world of work. This year's application should be released soon. In anticipation of working closely with schools, NYS Education and the students and families themselves, NYSRA suggests that agencies consider checking out this resource which speaks to a celebration in December. See article that follows...



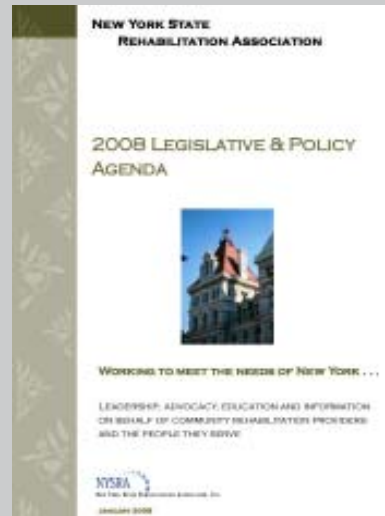
The 7th Annual Inclusive Schools Week will be held December 3-7, 2007, to highlight the accomplishments of families, schools, and communities that have dedicated time, labor, and resources to promoting inclusive education for all of the world's children. This year's theme, "Lessons from the World: Including All Children," provides an opportunity to focus on both international accomplishments and ongoing challenges associated with changing global attitudes, practices, and policies toward better educational outcomes for students around the globe. Participants will read stories, learn facts, discover resources, and make connections with families and professionals around the world who are on a similar journey toward building more inclusive schools and communities for all children and youth. More information can be found at www.inclusiveschools.org.



Cornell University CORNELL'S EDI ONLINE - NYSRA MEMBERS RECEIVE DISCOUNT

Through collaborative efforts with Cornell, NYSRA is able to offer its members discounted Trainings at Cornell's ediOnline - Cornell's Employment and Disability Institute. This benefit is available to NYSRA Agency and Allied members! Take advantage of this offer by visiting ediOnline at www.edi.cornell.edu. When you register, be sure to click the box that says "NYSRA MEMBER".

If you have any questions please contact Pat Dowse at NYSRA at pat@nyrehab.org



**NYSRA's 2008
Legislative &
Policy Agenda is
available online
at
www.nyrehab.org**

NYSRA Legislative Forum
February 4-5, 2008
Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York



NYSRA's telephone system has been upgraded to provide better service to our members. Staff now have new phone extensions that are listed below: Our phone number **(518) 449-2976** and fax number **(518) 426-4239** remain unchanged.

Scott Booth
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Ext. 102

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Administrative Assistant
Ext. 107

Jennifer Ivery
Manager of Operations
Ext. 105

Jeff Wise
President & CEO
Ext. 106

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Program Assistant
Ext. 101

FEDERAL UPDATE

On November 8 the House passed (274-141) the \$150 billion Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill, falling short of the votes required to override a likely presidential veto. HR 3043 exceeds President Bush's request by \$9.8 billion, which would cut \$3.6 billion from last year's levels. Appropriations Chair David Obey (D-WI) said that if the bill is vetoed and the President declines to negotiate, health care and other spending priorities in the legislation will not have "a snowball's chance in Hades" of passage.

A new CMS study shows that the boomer population will have a small affect on the growth of health care spending. The study cites technology use and other factors for increased health care spending, rather than growth in the aging population. The study projects a small increase in health care costs of 0.4 percent per year through 2050-possibly allaying the worry that the baby boomer population could create a strain on the health care system.

SMOKING RATES HIGHEST AMONG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Health Disparities Persist Among People with Disabilities From Department of Health and Human Services Smoking prevalence among people with disabilities is nearly 50 percent higher than among people without disabilities (29.9 percent vs. 19.8 percent), according to a new study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Preventing Chronic Disease. The study found that in 2004, smoking prevalence for people with disabilities is highest in Delaware (39.4 percent) and lowest in Puerto Rico (16.5 percent).

The study found that about 70 percent of people with disabilities who smoke and had visited a doctor in the last year had been advised to quit smoking. However, more than 40 percent of those advised to quit reported not being told about the types of tobacco-cessation treatment available.

"About 50 million Americans are living with a disability and most Americans will experience a disability some time during the course of their lives," said Dr. Edwin Trevathan, director of CDC's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities. "The release of these findings during Disability Awareness Month reminds us that disparities persist in the health and health care of people with disabilities."

People who stop smoking greatly reduce their risk of dying prematurely. Benefits are greater for people who stop at earlier ages, but cessation is beneficial at all ages. Smoking cessation lowers the risk for lung and other types of cancer. The risk for developing cancer declines with the number of years of smoking cessation.

Quitting smoking is the most important step smokers can take to improve their overall health and reduce their risk for disease. Approximately 10 percent of smokers have a smoking-related chronic disease, primarily heart disease or emphysema. Smokers who quit will, on average, live longer and have fewer years living with disability.

Disparities in smoking prevalence, in addition to barriers to the use of preventive services (such as traveling to a doctor's appointment) put people with disabilities at risk for declining health. Researchers are unsure why the smoking prevalence is higher in people with disabilities, but it is an area for further examination. However, research confirms that people with disabilities are less likely than people without disabilities to receive preventive health care and therefore are more subject to illness and disease. As per the 2005 Surgeon General's Call to Improve the Health and Wellness of Persons with Disabilities, the resulting higher health care expenditure costs and productivity losses for people with disabilities, which exceeds

\$300 billion, can be understood as a result of too little attention to the other health needs of these individuals by health providers.

This data were collected from the 2004 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) from the 50 states, the District of Columbia and the two U.S. territories for which data were available-Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The BRFSS is an ongoing, state-based, random-digit-dialed telephone survey of the civilian, non-institutionalized U.S. population aged 18 years or older. It is designed to collect information on demographics, health status, behavioral health risk factors and preventive health behaviors.

The 2004 BRFSS questionnaire included two questions on disability screening: "Are you limited in any way in any activities because of physical, mental, or emotional problems?" and "Do you now have any health problem that requires you to use special equipment, such as a cane, a wheelchair, a special bed, or a special telephone?" Respondents were defined as having a disability if they answered yes to either of these questions.

People with and without disabilities who smoke can call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) (TTY 1-800-332-8615) or visit www.smokefree.gov for quitting assistance. The toll-free number is a single access point to the National Network of Tobacco Cessation Quit lines. Callers are automatically routed to their state's quit line services.

WORLD AIDS DAY WEBCAST NOVEMBER 16

Alive Webcast on the state of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the United States will be presented on Friday, November 16 from 2-3:00 P.M. Dr. Deborah Parham Hopson, HRSA's Associate Administrator for HIV/AIDS, will participate along with several other key Federal officials.

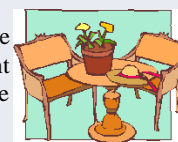


The Webcast is presented by www.AIDS.gov, the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) information gateway to Federal domestic HIV/AIDS information and resources. It will focus on the latest developments in HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, research, mental health and substance abuse.

To take part in the free Webcast, visit http://www.aids.gov/webcast_information.html or send an email to contact@AIDS.gov.

NEW YORK STATE RESOURCE: PARENT TO PARENT OF NYS LINKS DIGEST

As a part of the Family to Family Health Care Information and Education Center, Parent to Parent of NYS has established the Links Digest to provide links relevant to the issues of health care.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Director of Employment Services:

Dynamic visionary with proven track record needed to supervise an Integrated Employment Program and a Vocational Training Program in a Sheltered Workshop in a 25 million dollar diverse organization serving disabled individuals. Must be able to guide departments in attaining the highest quality goals of the organization, forecast needs and trends, provide leadership in the expansion/development of services, enhance bottom line performance and efficiency, and supervise management of multi-site facilities. Position requires a bachelors degree with a minimum of 10 years senior management level experience in a broad array of human service programs dealing primarily with people with disabilities. (or Masters degree in a relevant field or MBA plus 5 years experience). The successful candidate must be highly motivated, strong team leader/team player, demonstrate a successful track record in communication and problem-solving and be committed to ensuring the successes of our participants through dedication and perseverance. We offer an excellent salary and benefit package including health, dental, four weeks paid vacation per year. Send resume with cover letter and salary requirements to: Human Resources Department, REHAB Programs, Inc., 70 Overocker Rd., Poughkeepsie NY 12603, fax: 845-473-1270, e-mail: karensimon@rehabprograms.org AA/EOE.

Director of Facilities Management & Purchasing:

Strong administrator needed to oversee facilities management and purchasing including oversight of agency property, asset management/procurement, maintenance operations, and long-range facilities planning. The successful candidate will be responsible for coordinating facility leasing, acquisition, expansion, improvements, renovations, as well as purchasing with emphasis on activities that avoid redundancy, waste, and non-value-added activities and expenses. REHAB Programs, Inc. encompass a wide variety of buildings located throughout Dutchess County, including residential, day programs, offices, etc. Position requires Bachelors degree in related field plus a minimum of 7 years related senior-level management experience including general contracting and construction management. Strong analytical ability essential. A combination of education and experience will be accepted. REHAB Programs offers an excellent salary and benefit package including health, dental, four weeks vacation. Send application or resume to: Human Resources Dept., REHAB Programs, Inc. 70 Overocker Road, Poughkeepsie New York 12603, fax: 845-743-1270 or email ksimon@rehabprograms.org. AA/EOE.

Director, Quality Assurance & Corporate Compliance:

This position will be responsible for establishing and implementing effective programs to ensure compliance with applicable quality standards and relevant industry regulatory requirements as well as administrative guidelines. In addition, this position will be responsible for developing and implementing programs that monitor and promote quality of services throughout the organization. **Qualifications:** Minimum of a Bachelor's degree including course work in QA practices and/or Compliance. A minimum of 10 years experience in organization compliance and quality assurance areas; plus prior supervisory experience are required. Knowledge of and experience with quality standards (CARF, ISO 90001, JCAHO) and knowledge of AbilityOne (formerly JWOD) and NYSID regulations and guidelines preferred. Please submit resume w/cover letter indicating salary requirements to employment@fedcap.org and indicate Director QA & CC in the subject line of the email. EOE/M/F/D/V. Detailed job announcement available at www.nyrehab.org.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

One of the largest Nonprofit Organizations, providing a continuum of services to both the Children and Adult population in Orange County, NY, is recruiting for an Executive Director who has the vision, knowledge and discipline to meet the unmet needs of all our program recipients. Working with the Board of Directors, the successful candidate must have an excellent track record of effective leadership, coupled with an exemplary educational background in overseeing that Individual Service or Educational Plans are successfully delivered to the population being served in a multi-program/multi-funded operation requiring OMRDD, SED and MEDICAID regulatory compliance. Please send resume and salary requirements in strict confidence to PO Box 589, Newburgh, NY 12551.



Saratoga Bridges offers the following employment opportunities:

- Assistant Residential Manager**
- Behavior Specialist**
- Bus Driver CDL - Class B**
- Day Hab Assistants II**
- Development & Foundation Coordinator**
- Physical Therapy Assistant**
- Individual Support Aides**
- Registered Professional Nurse**
- Residential Counselors**

Saratoga Bridges offer a pleasant work environment, paid training, and excellent full-time/part-time benefits (health/dental insurance, generous time off, retirement plan, and more). For more information, visit www.saratogabridges.org or contact Human Resources at 518-587-0723.



February 4-5, 2008

Legislative Forum
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York

June 5-6, 2008

Executive Team Management
The Gideon Putnam
Saratoga Springs, New York

September 15-17 2008

Leadership Training Summit
The Desmond
Albany, New York