

# Consumer~Caregiver Connections



Bridging Working Relationships

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Fall 2003

Sonoma County In-Home Supportive Services

## Public Authority

### Accessing the Public Authority Registry by Michael Humphrey, Manager

Finding a reliable in-home caregiver is often a challenging and frustrating experience. IHSS consumers (recipients) looking to hire a caregiver are encouraged to request assistance from the Public Authority. The Public Authority maintains a Registry of screened caregivers who are interested in working for IHSS consumers.

Screening for caregivers listed on the Registry include employment and personal reference checks, criminal background checks, and an interview by one of the Registry Coordinators. Registry caregivers also receive a general orientation related to different aspects of working as an IHSS provider. Although caregivers are initially screened by the Registry, it is strongly recommended that IHSS

consumers conduct their own interviews and reference checks before hiring a caregiver.

IHSS consumers interested in receiving assistance from the Registry, can call either the Public Authority directly or their IHSS social worker for a referral. The Registry staff must first obtain all necessary information about the specific needs (i.e., days and hours needed, required tasks, etc.) of the consumer. The staff then searches the Registry to find all caregivers that meet the specific requirements of the consumer request. Telephone calls are made to the caregivers who match the request to confirm availability and determine their interest in the assignment. Consumers can either receive a list of caregivers that match their request or have interested caregivers call them directly.

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## IMPORTANT NOTICE

The IHSS Public Authority Office is closing temporarily to reduce County costs as a result of State budget reductions.

**We will be closed from 12:00 noon Wednesday, December 24, 2003 until 8:00 a.m. Monday, January 5, 2004**

- The services that IHSS consumers (recipients) receive from their IHSS caregiver WILL NOT be affected.
- IHSS caregiver (provider) timesheets will be processed on January 2, 2004.
- There will be NO delay for caregiver (providers) enrolling in health and dental benefits.
- The Urgent Substitute Provider Program voice mail message box will be checked 2-3 times per day, except for December 25<sup>th</sup>, January 1<sup>st</sup>, and weekends.

## New Support Group for Caregivers

from CRI

Community Resources for  
Independence (CRI)

### Starts Caregiver Support Group

Providing a safe place to:

- Give Support for the Hard Work Caregivers do
- Share Ideas and Resources
- Share Struggles and Successes

Meetings will be facilitated by Penny Wolfsohn, Peer Support Advocate, on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of every Month from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the CRI office: 980 Hopper Ave., Santa Rosa. Call CRI (528-2745 x 222) for more information.

(Day and time may change according to the group.)

To ensure that CRI is fully accessible to all people with disabilities, please DO NOT wear scented products

## The IHSS Advisory Committee

The IHSS Advisory Committee provides the Board of Supervisors, the Public Authority and IHSS program with advice and recommendations on issues related to in-home supportive services delivery and program administration.

Members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors. If you are interested in filling a future vacancy, applications are available through the Public Authority office.

The IHSS Advisory Committee typically **meets the fourth Monday** of each month. Time is set aside for **Public Comment** at the beginning of each meeting. At least once a year they also hold a Public Hearing, a time for you to speak up and lend your ideas. Meetings are held at **2160 Northpoint Parkway**, Santa Rosa.

### Committee Members

**Stacy Daniels**

**Paulene Goddard**

**Diane Kaljian**  
*Ex-officio Member*

**Joann Keyston**  
**Maureen Latimer**  
*Secretary*

**Mary Raymond**

**M. Julia Regan**

**Marie White**  
*Chair*

**Herb Willsmore**  
*Vice-Chair*

## What is the Value for an IHSS Caregiver to be Listed on the IHSS Registry?

by John Chan, Registry Supervisor

**First**, being listed on the Registry means that you have met all the qualifications needed to be an IHSS Registry Caregiver. Qualifications include criminal and reference background checks and a personal interview. Even though you may already be serving an IHSS consumer or have done so in the past, all caregivers must go through a thorough screening process before being listed by the Registry. This process assures IHSS consumers that a high standard is being maintained in our Registry listing. Therefore, being listed on the Registry reflects well on your qualifications as an IHSS caregiver.

**Secondly**, as a Registry caregiver you will have an orientation to the IHSS program and how it works. Once accepted onto the Registry, Registry Coordinators can provide you with referrals to IHSS consumers based upon

information provided on your application, such as your work requirements, skills, and preferred hours.

The Registry is only a referral service. You cannot be guaranteed work. When you are referred to an IHSS consumer, it is the consumer who makes the decision to hire or not hire you. Nevertheless, the Registry staff's knowledge of your work experience, special skills and/or qualities as a caregiver can and will be conveyed to the prospective employer.

**Thirdly**, the Registry staff can also support you in maintaining good working relationships with your IHSS consumer/employer and help you resolve difficulties on your job. Your Registry Coordinator will be available to help and support you.

Therefore, being an IHSS caregiver on the IHSS Registry can be of value for you. Call for an application to the Registry at 565-5700.

## An Invitation to All IHSS Caregivers

*Acknowledging **ALL** IHSS Caregivers  
during*

*National Family Caregiver Month*

*You are invited to attend a  
Reception in Your Honor*

*Monday*

*November 24, 2004*

*10:30 - 11:30 a.m.*

*Adult and Aging Conference Center  
2160 Northpoint Parkway  
Santa Rosa, California 95407*

*Fruit, pastries and beverages  
will be served.*

*If you are interested in attending and need a respite  
worker, please call 565-5700*

## Resources on the Web

### CAREGIVER WEB SITES

Caregiving.com

<http://www.caregiving.com/index.html>

National Alliance for Caregiving

<http://www.caregiving.org>

### CONSUMERS WEB SITES

Safety for Elders

<http://www.eldersafety.org/>

Disability Related Products/Services

<http://www.makoa.org/cmpyinfo.htm>

Disability Resources on the Internet

<http://www.disabilityresources.org/>

Disaster Preparedness for People with  
Disabilities

<http://www.jik.com/disaster.html>

## Criminal Background Checks Expanded

by John Chan, Registry Supervisor

The IHSS Public Authority recently began conducting statewide Department of Justice (DOJ) criminal background checks on all new Registry caregiver applicants. This is an expansion of the countywide criminal background checks that the Public Authority receives from the County Superior Court. The added DOJ criminal history information will improve the screening process of Registry applicants.

In the event that the Public Authority receives a criminal history report with a criminal violation that is determined to be a threat to the health, safety, or personal rights of a consumer, then the applicant will not be included on the Registry.

If an applicant is disqualified due to a criminal violation and is already working for an IHSS consumer, the Public Authority reserves the right to notify the IHSS consumer of the caregiver's criminal history. The consumer will be informed that it is their right to keep or dismiss the caregiver. If the consumer decides to dismiss the caregiver, the Registry is available to help find a replacement.

This new level of screening is the result of a strong recommendation by the IHSS Advisory Committee, supporting comments by IHSS consumers at public hearings, and final authorization by the IHSS Public Authority Board of Directors (the County Board of Supervisors serve as the Board of Directors for the Public Authority).

from "Who Cares" by Dee Marrella  
Reprinted with permission from author

## To ALL Caregivers

*[In recognition of Family Caregivers Month in November, the IHSS Public Authority dedicates this article to ALL IHSScaregivers. Your hard work, concern, caring and dedication are noticed and you are very important to us and your IHSS consumer!]*

I closed my eyes and tried to imagine what is going on in each of your heads. To do that, I tried to recall what was going on in my head when I was a caregiver for my mom. On that basis, let me make a few guesses as to what is going on in your mind. I'm almost certain it is a complicated mix of thoughts and emotions.

- How was I going to handle both my family and caregiving?
- Why do I feel so stressed?
- Where is the energy I used to have?
- Am I making the right decision?
- Will I be able to do all of what is expected of me?

Let's face it, caretakers have a huge responsibility - some take on the task out of love, others out of obligation. In either case, you are "IT". You are the one bearing the burden of having another human being's welfare in your hands, an awesome responsibility!

Each of us has a different set of circumstances. In my case, I left my family in Pennsylvania and traveled to New Jersey to be with my mother three days a week. For a short time, I tried to schedule days so that either one of my two sisters or I was with my mom each day of the week. I was told, in no uncertain terms, that I should not force my desires on others. You know what? - I was wrong. From that point on, I never asked what they were doing. I tried to make out I was an only child. I would do as much as I could for my mom. What I did, I did with love and caring. My siblings, whom I love, dealt in their own ways with helping out mom. I finally found peace within - No more comparing and measuring.

When I was caring for my mom, I did find ways of helping to make her life more comfortable (I was always so happy when she seemed pleased about something.) Here are some of those ways:

- Instead of taking my mom to a restaurant, where we were relatively rushed and space restricted with her wheelchair, I took her to a pleasant

- food court in a Mall. This way, we were never rushed, a large restroom was nearby, and she loved watching all the activity going on.
- I always carried an extra set of clothing and underwear for her, in my car trunk. (It was needed on a day when we were out and she suddenly became ill.)
- I arranged for my mom's friends to come to the Mall and visit with us. Mom always looked forward to this. (I would call one week in advance and arrange with Mom's friends' daughters or granddaughters to drive.)
- When I would leave my mom to go back to my family in Pennsylvania, I would always give her a big hug and kiss and tell her with whom we would be visiting the following week. (I truly believe we all need something to look forward to.) I would also hand her a magazine she enjoyed reading and "treats" to snack on during the week.
- I purchased a phone with very large numbers. I also took her telephone book and rewrote her important telephone numbers and names in very dark, large print. Her telephone was her lifeline to friends and family.
- I purchased a radio and put it on the one AM station she always listened to. (I taped a little note on top of the radio telling anyone who might change the station where to put it back.)
- When my sister and I found it necessary to find a nursing home for my mom, we tried to make her room as comfortable as possible.
  1. I made a collage of pictures of her from her younger years through her 90's. She was so proud of that. I put it right over her bed. From her wheelchair, she would stare at it and be ready to reminisce whenever anyone commented on her beauty in the photos.
  2. We purchased a large clock with numbers she could easily see.
  3. There was a notebook I put near her bed. I asked visitors to sign their names when they visited. That way, we could see who was kind enough to spend some time with mom. I tied a pen to the book so one would always be handy.

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4. My mom always complained of feeling cold. I found a cozy, soft scarf. I folded each end up to make two pockets. She wore this scarf around her neck most of the time. When her hands got cold, she would stick them in the pockets.
5. I found a cute decal that said, "Have wheels, will travel," and put it on the back of her wheelchair. People would pass by, comment and laugh. She loved the attention. (Remember - humor almost always works!)
6. When her eyesight deteriorated, I purchased a man's watch with an expandable band (some links had to be removed) and very large numbers. She always liked to have a watch.

It is amazing what unique ideas caregivers come up with to help make their loved ones more comfortable and at peace. As I said before, when I felt my mom was comfortable and at peace, my life seemed calmer. *Perhaps there can be an exchange of unique, helpful ideas you caregivers out there would like to share.*

*Remember, you are only one person. You cannot control your loved one's aging process or happiness. Be loving and caring. Don't expect accolades. If you truly are doing your best, be at peace. That peace will grow even stronger after your loved one is gone. Then, you will have little reason to feel guilty about doing your part during a very hard time. Please remember as you fall asleep tonight to save one big hug for yourself. Only a fellow caregiver knows how much you need it and deserve it.*

Dee Marrella has experienced life as a military wife and a corporate wife and as a result has seen much of the world and experienced many varied cultures. Born in Paterson, New Jersey, Dee spent twenty plus years in the field of education in both Europe and the United States. Experiencing these different cultures afforded her the opportunity to observe vast differences in the ways caregivers interact with older individuals within societies

"Who Cares" was written for Dee's daughters after the death of her mother. She did not want her daughters to experience the pain and stress she did as a caregiver.



## IHSS Program Information

by Diane Kaljian, Section Manager

### The Intake Unit

"How do people find out about services for older adults and people with disabilities in Sonoma County?" is a question easily answered by the Intake Unit staff.

Call the Adult and Aging Division of the Sonoma County Human Services Department at **707-565-5900** and ask to speak with an **Intake Worker**. The Intake Social Worker will be able to tell you about In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), Adult Protective Services (APS), Linkages, and the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP). If you cannot be helped with one or a combination of these programs, the Intake Worker will refer you to other agencies and give you information and phone numbers for other county and community services that may be of assistance to you.

The Intake Workers recognize the challenges of needing services and of being a caregiver. There are many resources that may make your work as a caregiver or consumer easier.

**The Area Agency on Aging** just published it's 2003-2004 **Senior Resource Guide**. To request a copy, call 707-565-5900 or visit their website at [www.socoaaa.org](http://www.socoaaa.org).

### **Senior Information and Assistance programs**

- ◆ Petaluma - Petaluma People Services Center at 707-765-8488
- ◆ Guerneville / River area - Russian River Community Senior Center at 707-896-0618
- ◆ All other areas in Sonoma County - Council on Aging at 707-525-0143
- ◆ All other areas outside of Sonoma County - Elder Care Locator at 800-677-1116

## Questions Caregivers Should Ask

### Consumers During the Interview Process

by Angelina Byrne

- 1 What hours have been authorized by the social workers for your chores?
- 2 What is on the *Notice of Action* letter you received from your social worker?
  - How many hours per month?
  - What chores are to be done?
- 3 Do you smoke?
  - Do you mind if I smoke?
- 4 Do you have pets?
- 5 What are your medical problems?
- 6 Do you have an infectious disease?
- 7 What schedule are you looking for?
  - What days and times do you want help?
- 8 Do you live with anyone else?



- 9 Do you need me to drive you?
- 10 Do you expect me to use my car?
  - Do you pay mileage? If so, how much?
- 11 Are other caregivers working for you?

**Remember:** Do not bring your family or friends to a consumer's home without their permission. All information about the consumer is confidential.

Do not wear fragrances while at a consumer's home.

**Suggestions for this column are welcome.** This newsletter can be your voice. Please contact a Registry Coordinator with your suggestions and comments (707) 565-5700.

## Know Your Medical and Dental Benefits

The Benefits Department

### Common Questions Regarding Benefits...

#### What is the **\*NEW\*** timesheet deadline?

Timesheets must be received by Payroll on the 15th of each month for hours worked in the prior month.

**How long do I have to wait for benefits to begin if I'm on the wait list?** The approximate wait on the wait list is 4-5 months for Kaiser and 6-7 months for Delta Dental

**I'm working but lost my benefits because of late timesheets, now what?** If you've lost your IHSS benefits, you can begin eligibility for re-enrollment after you have met a 6-month disqualifying period. However, loss of coverage for late timesheets does not qualify you for COBRA.

It is your responsibility to keep current on the requirements of eligibility. If you feel you qualify for benefits but have not received a packet, call 565-5703. When leaving your message, say your first and last name slowly, spell your last name, and leave your mailing address. If your hours meet the work requirement, a benefit packet will be mailed with the next mailing.

Do not cancel any current coverage until you receive a confirmation of benefits letter.

If you do not have health insurance and need assistance while waiting to be enrolled, contact the Economic Assistance Division through Human Services Department. This department has programs for individuals who economically qualify for care under Medi-Cal and the County Medical Services Program (CMSP). To learn about these programs, call 707-565-5200.

#### **Work Safely and Be Well**

#### **KEEP ELIGIBLE**

#### **MEET MINIMUM WORK REQUIREMENT**

**65 hours per month for two consecutive months**

#### **SUBMIT TIMESHEETS BY DEADLINE**

**15th of each month**

#### **Important Numbers**

<b>(707) 565-5703</b>	IHSS Public Authority Benefits & Enrollment & Eligibility
<b>(888) 838-5370</b>	Employees'/Employers' Dental & Medical Trust
<b>(800) 585-4250</b>	SEIU, Local 250, Oakland
<b>(707) 526-4825</b>	SEIU, Local 250, Santa Rosa
<b>(707) 565-5900</b>	IHSS Payroll

## Caregiver Training Classes (IHSS Consumers are welcome too!)

The IHSS Public Authority provides training opportunities to IHSS caregivers and consumers. Monthly classes are held at the Adult and Aging Services Conference Center (2160 Northpoint Parkway). There is generally a \$10 incentive given to IHSS caregivers who complete each class and Continuing Education Credits (CEU's) are available for most classes. Ask about CEU's when you register for classes. Due to holiday schedules only two classes will be held in the next three months.

### CALL 565-5700 to Register for Classes

October 31 1:00—4:00 p.m.	Elimination (Bowel and Bladder Care)	\$30.00 Cash Incentive (given to IHSS caregivers)
December 5 1:00—4:00 p.m.	Understanding and Caring for Someone with Alzheimer's Disease	\$10.00 Cash Incentive (given to IHSS caregivers)



## Caregiver Training Videos and Discussions

Registry staff facilitate a discussion for caregivers after viewing the video which is shown in our office at 2280 Northpoint Parkway. These programs are free. Due to holiday schedules only two video programs will be held in the next three months.

### CALL 565-5700 to Register for Videos/Discussion



October 30 1:30—2:30	Double Feature: <i>“Ten Commandments of Communicating with People with Disabilities”</i> and <i>“Life Line - Recognizing Elder Abuse”</i>
December 4 1:30—2:30	Double Feature: <i>“The Grit and Grace of Being a Caregiver”</i> and <i>“Stress Proofing”</i>

## IHSS Payroll Information

by Diane Kaljian, Section Manager

Please be aware that Payroll is processing timesheets the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of each month and also on on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Response to your calls may be delayed during payroll processing days.

### Turn in Timesheets on Time

- ◆ Paulin Building at lobby or drop box
- ◆ Northpoint at drop box
- ◆ U.S. Mail

### Payroll Phone Numbers

(707) 565-5900	Ask for payroll
(707) 545-3172	Español
(707) 565-3154	Report work injury
(707) 565-2896	Employment verification

### Timesheets - Helpful Hints

- ◆ Always fill out your timesheet and sign it with a pen. Pencil is not allowed.
- ◆ Check for errors. Do not fix mistakes with correction fluid. Write in the correct information and ask the consumer to initial the correction.
- ◆ Make sure you and the consumer sign and date the timesheet.
- ◆ You can leave the total blank if you want Payroll to write in the total.

Sonoma County  
In-Home Supportive Services  
**Public Authority**

2280 Northpoint Parkway  
P. O. Box 1949  
Santa Rosa, CA 95402-1949

Phone: 707-565-5700  
Fax: 707-565-5720



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[www.sonomacounty-ihsspa.org](http://www.sonomacounty-ihsspa.org)



## Mark your calendar

October	November	December
13 IHSS Executive Committee Meeting	<b>Family Caregiver Month!</b>	04 Video & Discussion Double Feature: <i>"The Grit and Grace of Being a Caregiver"</i> and <i>"Stress Proofing"</i>
27 Advisory Committee Meeting	10 IHSS Executive Committee Meeting	05 Class: <i>Understanding and Caring for someone with Alzheimer's Disease</i>
30 Video & Discussion Double Feature: <i>"Ten Commandments of Communicating with People with Disabilities"</i> and <i>"Life Line - Recognizing Elder Abuse"</i>	24 Caregiver Reception	24 Office Closed until January 5, 2004
31 Class: <i>Elimination (Bowel and Bladder Care)</i>	24 Advisory Committee Meeting	
	27 Thanksgiving Day Office Closed	<b>Note:</b> The IHSS Advisory Committee does not meet in December
	28 Day after Thanksgiving Office Closed	

## Resources

- IHSS Public Authority & Registry**  
(707) 565-5700  
(707) 565-5720 (fax)
- IHSS Program, Social Workers, and Payroll**  
(707) 565-5900  
(800) 938-9501
- IHSS Advisory Committee**  
(707) 565-5700
- Benefits Enrollment & Eligibility**  
(707) 565-5703
- Español**  
(707) 565-5707
- Urgent Substitute Provider Program (USPP)**  
(707) 565-5719  
(800) 601-4222