



County of Humboldt IHSS Advisory Committee and IHSS Public Authority Newsletter



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THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT / COVERED CALIFORNIA

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST :

- Medi-Cal (Medicaid) is being expanded to include most adults and their families who are income eligible.
- A1AA is now offering caregiver training specifically for family caregivers.
- "One provider said she had just started working for a woman who had been eating nothing but peanut butter the last week of the month because she runs out of money for food before the month is over."

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IHSS providers may benefit from the Affordable Care Act/Covered California! On January 1, 2014, the Affordable Care Act ("ACA" also called "Obamacare") goes into effect. The ACA provides that all Americans have access to affordable, comprehensive health insurance. The ACA provides that all Americans have access to affordable, comprehensive health insurance. In California, "Covered California" is coordinating access to ACA benefits.

If you are uninsured, or even if you have insurance, you may want to look into options or savings under the Affordable Care Act. Here are some benefits:

- Medi-Cal (Medicaid) is being expanded to include most adults and their families who are income eligible. Medi-Cal coverage has no co-payments or deductibles.
- Low-income individuals/families will be eligible for premium assistance to help pay the cost of insurance policies (to qualify for assistance, insurance must be purchased through Covered California).
- Insurance carriers will no longer be able to deny coverage for pre-existing conditions.
- All new policies must offer free preventive services (medical screenings, mammograms, colonoscopies, contraception, and more).

To find out what sort of insurance and subsidies might be available to you, the simplest starting point is: www.coveredca.com. Here you can enter basic information about you (and if applicable your family) to get information about insurance coverage and costs. If you are not a computer user, call (800)300-1506 to speak to a Covered California Representative.

There are a variety of plans available, some with high deductibles and some with no deductibles. Deductibles and co-pays cover a wide range, so it is important to determine what options are available to you. If you and/or your family currently have insurance coverage that meets the ACA requirements, you **do not**

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**PARTNERSHIP
HEALTH PLAN OF CALIFORNIA
REMINDER FOR IHSS RECIPIENTS AND
CARE PROVIDERS**

If you have Medi-Cal (Medicaid) as your insurance, you need to know about important changes:

- On September 1, 2013 Medi-Cal recipients in Humboldt County had their healthcare coverage switched to a managed-care agency, Partnership HealthPlan of California (PHC).
- There is no decrease to your benefits under this switch. All the benefits you used to receive under Medi-Cal will continue, and PHC offers other benefits not provided under state Medi-Cal coverage.
- Medi-Cal beneficiaries were notified of this change through a series of letters from both the State of California and PHC. Please read these letters carefully for the full details of the change in your Medi-Cal administration.
- These letters ask you to: *Choose a primary care provider (PCP) whom you will see for all of your basic medical services, *Expect to receive a new member packet from PHC, along with a member I.D. Card, and *Call PHC at 1-800-863-4155 or talk to your doctor if you have any questions.
- The change in your Medi-Cal coverage does not affect your other benefits such as Cal-Fresh, SSI, Social Security, Worker's Compensation or Unemployment in any way. There are many reasons for this change from State "fee-for-service" Medi-Cal to "managed-Care" Medi-Cal under PHC. First, as you deal with the same primary care provider for all your basic medical services, you will have a doctor who is familiar with your complete medical history and knows all of your treatments, therapies and medications.
- Your PCP acts as your referral source for any specialty services you may need. This way, your healthcare is coordinated between your PCP and your specialists, making it more efficient and organized, saving you time, as well as eliminating mistakes and duplication.
- Under PHC, there is also a focus on preventive care and health education. Vaccinations, screenings, and counsel from your doctor on healthy living strategies will result in better overall health for you and cost savings to the Medi-Cal Program. Find out more about this important change to your Medi-Cal coverage by going to the Partnership HealthPlan of California website at www.partnership.org or call 1-800-863-4155.

Voluntary Provider Training - Coordinated Care Initiative

On December 3, 2013, Charlie Bean took a final trip to Sacramento to participate in a panel discussion about "Voluntary Provider Training" under the Coordinated Care Initiative.

From his participation in this panel discussion there was a lot of discussion about what was needed for training that could be used by the Recipient and Care Provider. From the discussion that actually began six months prior to this meeting, Staff of the California Department of Social Services did a lot of research and found generic resources in 15 categories to provide starting points in meeting various needs a Recipient may have and Care Provider can meet. The following is a brief description of the 15 topics:

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1. **Introduction to In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS):** The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program provides services and support to income-eligible people over the age of 65, the blind, and/or persons with disabilities. The goal of the IHSS program is to allow consumers to live safely in their own homes and avoid the need for out-of-home care. Services almost always need to be provided in the consumer's home. This could be a house, apartment, hotel, or the home of a relative. Those who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or meet all Medi-Cal income eligibility requirements may be able to receive IHSS program services and supports. IHSS is a Medi-Cal program and is funded by Federal, State, and County dollars.
2. **Working with the IHSS Consumer:** IHSS consumers have a right to direct their own care; rights to personal, family, medical, and financial privacy; a right to be informed about their health status, their legal rights, and services that are available to them; a right to freedom from abuse and restraint; and a right to personal care that promotes maintaining an independent life.
3. **Communication Skills:** IHSS providers should take time to learn more about their consumers, discover their favorite foods, clothes, games, music, animals, recipes, and memories; learn what they like to be called and use that name, listen and show respect for their consumers' concerns; and take time to understand how their consumers interpret communication (for example, ways of greeting, expressing emotions, using humor, perceiving time and punctuality, and interpreting body language).
4. **Care for the Caregiver:** The work of a care provider frequently requires physically lifting objects, equipment, and helping people move from one place or position to another. This lifting and assistance requires the use of proper body mechanics in order to avoid injuring oneself. Caregivers who learn to take care of themselves; reduce stress; reduce guilt, anger, and depression; problem solve; assist safely; and communicate effectively with doctors, family members, and paid attendants in order to better handle the challenges they face each day.
5. **Injury/Fall Prevention:** Many factors make transferring a consumer an area for easy injury. Using proper transfer techniques and applying proper body mechanics creates a safer environment for caregiving. Providers should use the right tools for the job (carts with wheels, transfer chairs); good body mechanics (proper bending, lifting); and fall-prevention awareness.
6. **Universal Precautions:** Individual providers should use universal precautions – washing hands, disinfecting surfaces, using protective barriers – against infectious disease in all cases, whether or not there is disclosure of a medical condition.
7. **Personal Care:** IHSS non-medical personal care services can include respiration assistance; bowel, bladder, and menstrual care; feeding; routine bed baths; dressing; ambulation and getting in and out of vehicles; transferring in and out of bed and on and off seats; bathing, oral hygiene, and grooming; rubbing skin and repositioning; care of and assistance with a prosthesis; and help setting up medications. Learning the proper techniques for providing this type of care can help individual providers be more effective and safer in their jobs.
8. **Paramedical Services:** Paramedical services are activities which, due to the consumer's physical or mental condition, are necessary to maintain their health, and which they would perform for themselves if they were not functionally impaired.
9. **Food Nutrition and Preparation:** Knowing how to safely handle and prepare foods; meet nutritional needs; make eating enjoyable; properly modify recipes for special diets; watch for danger signs; and consider special medical conditions will keep consumers healthier longer.
10. **Medication Management:** It is important for an individual provider to properly manage a consumer's medication and understand his or her role in medication management, including proper storage of medication, understanding medication and nutrition, and having awareness of the effects of medication as consumers age.
11. **Use of Durable Medical Equipment (DME) in the Home:** A range of medical devices can help seniors, people with disabilities, and their caregivers overcome limitations.

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12. Working with Consumers with Physical and Mental Health Disabilities: Working with consumers who have physical and mental health disabilities can be very challenging for caregivers, particularly due to common societal misconceptions. Learning about these disabilities, what causes them, and how they affect consumers and their families can help providers overcome stereotypes and develop awareness and understanding.

13. Emergency Procedures: To prevent or minimize accidents, discuss a plan for handling emergencies, keep a list of consumers' medications and emergency phone numbers, and prepare an emergency kit.

14. Recognizing, Preventing, and Reporting Abuse and Neglect: Types of abuse include physical, financial, abduction, abandonment, isolation, mental suffering, and neglect/self-neglect. Providers who see or suspect abuse should report it as soon as possible by calling their county office. The county is responsible to investigate the suspected abuse; it is not the provider's job to conduct the investigation. The report is confidential – neither the abused person nor the abuser will be told who made the report. Abuse can be reported any time. The phone line is answered 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

15. Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid Certification – Layperson Responders: Providers can benefit from a combined CPR and First Aid course training designed specifically for layperson first-aid providers. The course includes a skill guide, booklet, and completion guide certifying providers with CPR/First Aid. A list of state-wide locations will help Care Providers access information and pre-register for this training. **NOTE:** *Your Humboldt County Public Authority and IHSS Advisory are currently working to bring CPR and First Aid training to Care Providers locally—watch for more information.*

There are sub-topics that support each above mentioned topic and it is hoped to provide these in future Newsletters. In the meantime you can view them here: <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/agedblinddisabled/PG3366.htm>

**Public Authority/In-Home Supportive
Services
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