

NCHSD

National Consortium for Health Systems Development

A project of Health & Disability Advocates

July 2008 eNews

WYOMING MIG COMPLETES STATEWIDE ACCESSIBILITY SURVEY OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Mobility and access are two critical issues facing people with disabilities when it comes to travel, whether for business or leisure. To address these issues, the Wyoming Medicaid Infrastructure Grant funded the Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND) and Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center (WYSAC) to conduct a statewide survey of all restaurants and lodging facilities in the state.

The survey's purpose was to assess accommodations available to travelers with disabilities at Wyoming businesses, both to generate a profile of the general level of availability of accommodations, and to gather information for production of an updated guidebook of Wyoming restaurants and lodging facilities. A total of 261 lodging businesses and 299 restaurants returned completed surveys, representing 31% and 21%, respectively, of those types of facilities in the state.

Using the survey data, and with assistance from several partners, WIND and WYSAC developed a guidebook that identifies specific accommodations for each facility that responded to the survey, listing the facilities by town. The guide was designed under Ameri-

cans with Disabilities Act guidelines for vision accessibility and will soon become available in large print, Braille, CD and Spanish, as well as a downloadable or viewable web format. Guides are being distributed to individuals via agencies who serve people with disabilities and are also available at highway information centers throughout the state as well as major public attractions like museums and parks.

Both the survey and the guide were developed in partnership with a panel of individuals with varying disabilities. The initial design was developed through a partnership between WIND and the Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center. Other partners who contributed to the effort include the Visual Communications group in University of Wyoming Public Relations, and the Rocky Mountain Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC) operated by Meeting the Challenge, Inc.

Download a [summary](#) of the survey findings or the [full survey report](#). For more information, contact Wyoming MIG Project Director Dave Schaad (dschaad@uwyo.edu).

MIG PLANNING CALENDAR

- July 31* 2nd Quarter 2008 MIG progress reports, work products and SF-269 forms are due.
- August 1, 2pm Eastern* CMS's quarterly MIG grantees call has been re-scheduled from August 11 to August 1. CMS Health Insurance Specialist Brenda Sheppard will be on hand to answer MBI and Medicaid eligibility questions. Email Christine Chalkley (cchalkley@ascellon.com) with agenda items by July 14.
- August 4* Reserve your hotel room for NCHSD's 2008 Fall Conference by this day to get the special conference rate of \$179/night. More information is available [here](#) and on p. 3.
- August 25* MIG Continuation Applications are due. [View the 2009 MIG Continuation Application Instructions](#).
- September 3-4* ***NCHSD's Annual Fall Conference! [Register here.](#)***

The **National Consortium for Health Systems Development**, a project of Health & Disability Advocates, is a state-to-state technical assistance partnership of Medicaid Infrastructure Grants across the country. E-News is published monthly and is available online at www.nchsd.org. For more information, contact Sara Salley at ssalley@hdadvocates.org.

STATE PARTNER NEWS

Massachusetts MIG Develops MassWorks.org

With funding from the Massachusetts Medicaid Infrastructure Comprehensive Employment Opportunities Grant, the Institute for Community Inclusion developed a new website, www.MassWorks.org. It serves as a resource for employment services providers who work with people who have disabilities. Although it was originally developed to serve Massachusetts, the site's resources are not all specific to the state and could be useful to a national audience. The site has easily accessible resources that employment services providers can download and use in their work, including "everyday" tools such as task analysis, job coaching guidelines, and community employment and natural supports resources. There is also a subscription feature for users to sign up to receive automatic email notifications when content is added to the front page, and an interactive discussion section called the "Massworks blog." Take advantage of this great resource at www.MassWorks.org.

State Models for Work Incentives Planning and Outreach Infrastructure

MIG states are devoting considerable effort and resources to develop sustainable work incentives planning and outreach infrastructure to expand access to services, improve quality, support providers and integrate service systems. Last month we profiled models from Indiana, Washington, Oregon and Montana; this month we feature North Dakota, Utah, Wisconsin and Connecticut.

North Dakota Benefits Planning Task Force

As part of a resource mapping initiative, North Dakota MIG staff contacted more than 100 provider agencies including services for people with developmental disabilities, mental illness, HIV/AIDS, and traumatic brain injury. Interviewers asked questions such as, Do you know what benefits planning is? Do you provide benefits planning? What kind of benefits planning services do you provide? Findings from the mapping process determined a serious lack of benefits planning services and lack of capacity among service providers. In response, the MIG partially funded a second Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) project for the state that has the added duty of increasing knowledge of work incentives among the service providers around the state. North Dakota MIG staff and WIPA are working with HDA to build a Work Incentive Support Center where service providers can get current information and assistance on work incentives.

Utah WorkAbility

The Utah MIG created a cadre of professional benefits planners in addition to the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance project funded by the Social Security Administration. The MIG also supports development of work incentive materials, information dissemination and outreach activities for benefits planning. MIG-funded trainings for benefits planning service providers and new Vocational Rehabilitation counselors are available yearly.

Wisconsin Disability Benefits Network

The Wisconsin MIG created the Wisconsin Disability Benefits Network by issuing a Request for Proposals. The RFP was to create a training and technical assistance center to coordinate of new and old benefit specialists statewide. Through the Network, the MIG funds materials for a standardized work incentives training program and is building an ongoing communications and updates network. The WDBN also provides extensive training of work incentives partners across the state and is establishing a membership organization for them.

Connecticut Connect to Work Center

The Connect to Work Center is a MIG-funded resource that provides training, technical assistance and direct services around work incentives planning and outreach. Housed in the state's Vocational Rehabilitation agency, the Connect to Work Center supports other state agency partners on both state and federal work incentives. The MIG is currently building an array of training and TA resources for providers and consumer advocates.

PLANS UNDER WAY FOR ANNUAL FALL MIG CONFERENCE

NCHSD is hosting the 8th Annual National Fall Technical Assistance Conference September 3-4 in Chicago. The theme for this year's conference is *Sustaining Innovation: A Strategy Conference for Medicaid Infrastructure Grantees*.

Plenary and breakout sessions will include strategies for creating sustainable systems change, developing work incentives infrastructure, measuring what works, maximizing new funding opportunities and more. Special events include a Cubs game (versus

the Astros) for NCHSD members on September 2, and an evening reception for all attendees on September 3.

Hotel rooms at the conference site—the [Hyatt Regency McCormick Place](#)—are available until August 4 at the special rate of \$179 per night. Online registration is available using [this link](#). For more information, [view the conference flyer](#) or contact Melissa Turner (mwturner@hdadvocates.org).

RESOURCE EXCHANGE

The latest technical assistance opportunities, information and news

Interactive Database Available on "Caregiving Across the States"

The National Center on Caregiving at Family Caregiver Alliance (FCA) has announced the addition of new and updated data in its on-line resource, "Caregiving Across the States." The database includes State Profiles with data on average costs for personal care, home health and adult day services, in addition to extensive information about the extent and economic value of caregiving and the direct care workforce. For more information, contact Amy Friedrich-Karnik at 800-445-8106 or email afriedrich@caregiver.org. Access the database [here](#).

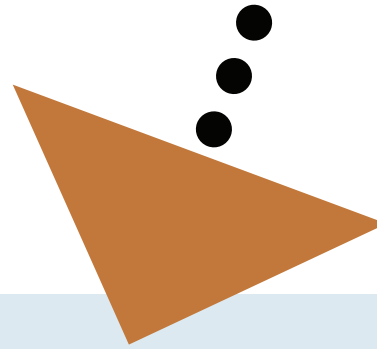
ADA Restoration Act Passes House

"The ADA Restoration Act" passed the House in a 402 - 17 vote on in late June. This bill, now referred to as the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (H.R. 3195) redefines the legal definition of "disabled" under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) from an impairment that "substantially limits" one or more life activities to an impairment that "materially restricts" these activities. Changing this definition broadens it, so more American workers are included in the ADA's protected class, even those who have disabilities that are not apparent. It now goes to the Senate where it is expected to have bipartisan support. Predictions indicate that it will likely be signed into law before the July 26th anniversary of the ADA. (Summary provided by The Sierra Group, www.thesierragroup.com.)

Technology-Based Learning Grants Announced

The Employment and Training Administration has approximately \$10 million in grant funds available under the Technology-Based Learning (TBL) Initiative. Desired grant outcomes include an increased amount of workforce training available online and/or enhanced with TBL, and an increased number of people trained in high-growth jobs through the use of TBL methods. Public, private for-profit, and private non-profit organizations, including educational institutions and registered apprenticeship sponsors, are eligible. Partnership with the publicly-funded workforce investment system is required. ETA will award about twenty (20) grants ranging from \$100,000 up to \$500,000. Applications are due August 19; a webinar for prospective applicants will be July 29. [View the full announcement](#); [learn more about the webinar](#).

Visit NCHSD's online [Resource Exchange](#) for more MIG news and materials.



July 2008 Ticket to Work Training Sessions

In preparation for implementation of the New Ticket to Work Program regulations on July 21, 2008, the Social Security Administration and its partners will be conducting a series of national training sessions this month to review changes to the program.

SSA is also holding Work Incentive Seminar Events (WISE Events) in each state. You can find local events by visiting www.cessi.net/WISE.

Basics for Beneficiaries

Teleconference July 9, 2008 2:00-3:30pm EST

This teleconference will provide an overview of the new regulations and information on changes and how those changes will positively impact beneficiaries. You can submit questions via email to ticketprogram@ssa.gov. To participate, call 1-800-779-1514 and use 7905458 for the participant passcode.

Ticket Payment Process for Prospective & Existing Employment Networks Webinar July 11, 2008 2:00-3:00pm EST

This first Ticket to Work webinar will provide details on the payment process for Employment Networks (ENs). SSA and MAXIMUS Ticket to Work staff members will review the changes and establish new expectations for the new system. To participate, register at: <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/edi/register/TicketToWork1.cfm>.

Ticket to Work 101

Webinar July 21, 2008 2:00-3:00pm EST

This webinar will provide an introduction for prospective ENs and other interested parties, particularly for beginners. Similar to the first Ticket to Work Teleconference call on May 22, 2008, this webinar will enhance the general overview by providing supporting training materials in an online format. To participate in this webinar, register at: <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/edi/register/TicketToWork2.cfm>.

Existing ENs: Learn About the Benefits of the New Ticket to Work Program Teleconference July 24, 2008 2:00-3:00pm EST

This teleconference training session will provide information about important changes in the Ticket to Work regulations and will be oriented to ENs that have not been actively working with the program. Email questions to ticketprogram@ssa.gov. To participate, call 1-800-779-1514 and use passcode 8181584.

For background information download the SSA publication, [Overview of NEW Ticket to Work Regulations](#), or visit [SSA's webpage](#) on the new Ticket regulations.

Stay tuned—NCHSD is planning a Fall Conference session for MIG staff to talk about the new Ticket regs and what they mean to YOUR state!