

Link2Care

Fall 2007

A Publication of the Stanislaus County
Public Authority

Planning your Dr. Visits

Tips from a doctor for getting the most out of a visit

The typical doctor's visit usually isn't very pleasant, even when things go extremely well. On those days when things don't go well, it can be frustrating, and even dangerous. It is important for ourselves and our loved ones that we communicate to the doctor any changes in a medical condition, and that we understand what medication or treatment has been prescribed.

In March 2007, Dr. Norman Schmidt presented the following information to participants of a caregiver seminar. He presented these tips for caregivers to help the doctor help you:



A Doctor is at Work: As nice as it may be to chat about the weather before launching into your mother's recent bowel problems, the doctor is not able to treat your visit as a social call. Your loved one's medical issues are important to the doctor, but so are the medical issues of all the other patients in his waiting room. The sooner you can communicate your needs, the more time he will have to help you solve them and understand the treatment options before seeing his next patient.

Be Prepared - the History of the Patient: Reviewing the history of the patient is usually the most enjoyable part of the process for the caregiver, and one that can be shortened the easiest. By being prepared, you can provide a detailed and helpful history and even anticipate some of the questions

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EXTRA! EXTRA!

**Wage Increase
Coming for IHSS
Providers!**

Turn to Page
4 for details.



IHSS Intake Team: Your 1st step to services

If you have a friend or family member interested in applying for IHSS, here are some things to keep in mind:

- ◆ IHSS is a Medi-cal linked program, so eligibility requirements are very similar. If you were denied for Medi-cal, you may be denied for IHSS. These requirements currently include income limits of \$856 per month for a single person, and \$1502 for a married couple living in the same home. Assets may not equal more than \$2000, although certain property is exempt, such as your residence.
- ◆ The IHSS program was created for individuals who are "at risk of placement" and "unable to remain safely in their own homes without help". Meeting the income and asset requirements are

(Continued on page 6)

Message from the Director

I am pleased to announce a new four year agreement with the United Domestic Workers of America (see page 4 for the details of the agreement). For me this was quite a learning experience; I had participated in the previous negotiations that lead to the first contract, but it seemed like a lifetime ago. This negotiation session was my first as the team leader for the County. As Executive Director of Link2Care (the In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority) the employer of record duty fell squarely on my shoulders. I felt an enormous responsibility to reach agreement, not only for the County but for all the Consumers and Providers in the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program. The negotiations started in September of 2006 and concluded in June of 2007. I could not have done it without the help of my fine staff.

I would also like to thank the Union team, ably lead by Curt Ostrander and his team of dedicated members: Marguerite Morrison, Madelyn Amaral, Jose Astorga, Roxanne Chackos, Henry Dill, Samuel Jordan, Anita Magana, Claudia Parks, and Steve Salais. Special thanks to Seth François and Jackie Galiyano, who brought a wealth of skills to the negotiation process.

Assisting on the County side, we had the wise counsel of Dr. Kenneth W. Caves, labor expert, Egon Stammer, Assistant Director – Adult Services Division of the Community Services Agency (CSA), Maria Childers, Manager of the IHSS Program, and Robert Taylor, Manager of IHSS Quality Assurance and Medi-Cal Programs. I would also like to recognize the efforts of Doreen Ott, Accountant for Link2Care, who produced countless wage scenarios and who's knowledge of IHSS Program financing provided key information that allowed me to present true and accurate costs to the Chief Executive Officer and the Board of Supervisors.

Special thanks to Patrice Dietrich, Assistant Director –Finance & Operations CSA who's knowledge about realignment funding proved invaluable, and Ken Patterson, Director CSA, who provided moral support and wise counsel for me during the dark days of negotiations; Jody Hayes, Deputy Executive Officer- Human Resources, Patty Hill Thomas Assistant Executive Officer, who has been a friend, supervisor and teacher to me and many others in the Chief Executive Office, and Rick Robinson, CEO who provided decisive leadership and flexibility that ultimately led to the current agreement, and finally a big thanks to the Board of Supervisors, who provided clear guidance and most of all support when things were not going well. It made all the difference.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey M. Lambaren". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jeffrey M. Lambaren
Executive Director

November is...

National Caregivers Month!

**10 Ways to Say
“Thanks”**

Whether you are a Recipient or Provider, we all know someone that helps to care for others. This November, please take the time to offer encouragement to these generous caregivers.

1. Offer a few hours of respite time to a family caregiver so they spend time with friends, or simply relax.
2. Secure a donation from your local beauty salon or spa for a massage or manicure.
3. Cut flowers from your garden or buy a bouquet to show them how much they mean.
4. Help a caregiver decorate their home for the holidays or offer to address envelopes for their holiday cards.
5. Offer comic relief! Purchase tickets to a local comedy club, give them your favorite funny



6. Find 12 different photos and have a copy center create a calendar the caregiver can use to keep track of hours, appointments & events.
7. Take a moment to write a letter to Link2Care, telling us what a great job your provider does. (Our address is on the back page.)
8. Buy or create a card telling the caregiver how much you appreciate them. Be specific about how their help improves your quality of life.
9. Share a favorite family recipe with your provider.
10. Offer to prepare Thanksgiving dinner for a care giving family in your community, so they can just relax and enjoy the holiday.

Excerpts of this article were taken from the National Family Caregivers Association at www.thefamilycaregiver.org

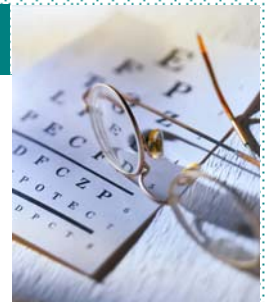
Seniors are “Looking Good”!

The Seniors EyeCare Program ensures that every senior has access to medical eye care and promotes annual, dilated eye exams. The program raises awareness about age-related eye disease, including cataracts, provides free eye care educational materials and facilitates access to eye care—all at no out-of-pocket cost.

The Seniors Eye Care Program is designed for people who are US citizens or legal residents, are age 65 and older, have not seen an ophthalmologist in three or more years, and do not belong to an HMO or the VA. If this sounds like you or someone you care for, call the toll free helpline at 800-222-EYES to request free eye care materials and determine if you qualify for care from one of the EyeCare America volunteer ophthalmologists.

While the program cannot help with eyeglasses, prescription drugs or hospital fees, they can receive the medical examination at no cost if they qualify. Seniors who are at increased risk for glaucoma may be eligible for a glaucoma eye exam if they have not had an exam in the past 12 months.


People eligible for referral receive a comprehensive, medical eye exam and up to one year of treatment—at no out of pocket cost—for any disease diagnosed during the initial exam. Volunteer ophthalmologists accept Medicare and/or other insurance re-imbusement as payment in full; patients without insurance receive care at no charge.





Caregiver's Corner

Wage increase coming for IHSS Providers!



Stanislaus County and the United Domestic Workers have reached an agreement and ratified a contract through 2010. The four-year agreement, from October 1, 2006 through September 30, 2010, provides for three wage increases, the first wage increase will be effective October 1, 2007, with providers receiving a 7% wage increase from \$8.25 to \$8.84 per hour. The next increase goes into effect October 1, 2008, with wages rising to \$9.11 per hour. The final increase goes into effect October 1, 2009, with wages rising to \$9.38 per hour.

PacifiCare Medical, and Safe Guard Dental and Vision Insurance continues to be available to IHSS Providers who work 75 or more hours per month. The new agreement provides for the reduction of co-payment for generic drugs from twenty dollars (\$20) to fifteen dollars (\$15) per prescription.

New to this agreement is the provision of cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid training for Registry and non-Registry Providers (see page 7 for schedule). If you are an In-Home Supportive Services Provider in Stanislaus County you can get free CPR training. Finally, the agreement provided that the fees for background checks be eliminated for IHSS Providers who wished to be on the Registry.



Link2Care Insurance

Link2Care staff frequently receive questions regarding the health insurance available for IHSS providers. Insurance is available for IHSS Providers only. Family coverage is not available.

Medical, dental and vision insurance is available to eligible providers working for Stanislaus County IHSS. Providers who have worked an average of 75 hours per month for three consecutive months are eligible for insurance, and must call our office to be placed on the waiting list.

Why a waiting list? Insurance for providers costs over \$400 per month, per person. Link2Care receives money from the State to buy this insurance, and we purchase as much as we are able, but it is not enough to cover every eligible provider.

Currently, we have close to 200 providers on the wait list, and wait times for enrollment are over eight months. The waiting list is set up on a first come, first served policy, so if you are an eligible provider interested in receiving insurance, call us at 558-4787 to be put on the list.

Ask Maria

Are you Airing your Dirty Laundry?

“My son was caught dealing drugs and now he is doing time. He won’t be out for three years, and now his wife has been dumping the kids with me every Friday night and going out on the town.”



This is an example of some of the stories our Recipients have heard from our IHSS Providers. I recently received a letter from a Recipient who mentioned her providers frequently talked about their personal problems. She said she wished they would just come in, and begin to work. She was not against having a nice chat about nice things, but she didn’t want to be scared or get depressed from listening to her provider’s problems.

I am not saying that life does not “happen” to us out there. But when working, let go of the bad things for a while and bring some cheer to your Recipient. In the letter I received, the author stated she felt IHSS Recipients were “more fragile, vulnerable, and needy” and could use some cheering up. Sharing a joke, a fun adventure you may have had, or something you have in common like the love of music, a hobby, a favorite TV show or book, or dancing would be great. One of my favorite memories is of my grandmother dancing.

Some examples of things Providers should not discuss are:

Religion & Politics—Some Recipients are uncomfortable being confronted with the views of others,

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Spotlight on Caregivers:

Valla Crumbley Shines

Shirley Archer was very excited to share with me about her care provider. Valla Crumbley started working for Shirley June 2006, and she has been with her ever since. “God has really blessed me,” she said. When I asked her what she liked about Valla, she said, “She has a very kind heart, she is very thoughtful, and she has an upbeat personality.”



Provider Valla (L) with Recipient, Shirley (R)

Shirley has had diabetes since she was a child, and sometimes gets depressed and grumpy. Valla has a way of teasing her out of those moods. When I asked how Valla teases her, she said she calls her a name that only a friend can call another friend and get away with, and they both laugh.

Valla is always checking to see if Shirley has remembered to test her blood sugar levels and to

eat regularly. This type of diabetes causes extreme pain in Shirley’s hands, fingers, feet, and toes. Valla helps her out by running hot soapy dishwater, and Shirley does the dishes. This soothes her pain in her hands and fingers. Valla also gives her foot massages to ease the pain in her feet! Can you believe it? “I am so lucky to have her!” Shirley said.

When I asked what they had in common, Shirley replied that they both love gardens, flowers and her cat, Hazel, who has been with her for 11 years. Valla showed her love for Hazel last year when Hazel had to go to the vet. The cat would not stay in her cardboard carrier, so Valla suggested she put her in a pillow case. Valla took them to the vet on her own time, (as In-Home Supportive Services does not pay for taking care of pets) with Hazel riding comfortably on Shirley’s lap in a pillow case. In closing, Shirley said that, “Valla has become a very good friend.”

A Day in the Life... Advice from our IHSS Intake Team

(Continued from page 1)

- only one qualification for the program. If you do not have a medical or safety need, you may not be eligible.
- ◆ IHSS Intake Social Workers cannot tell you how many hours you will receive, or even if you are medically eligible for the program. They can refer you for an assessment, where a Social Worker will determine hours and eligibility based on your need.
 - ◆ You are encouraged to call 558-2637 to apply. Driving to IHSS offices will not speed up the application process. The Intake Team stresses that IHSS is designed for people who have difficulty getting around in the community, and the phone application process was designed to help these individuals so they don't have to come into the office.
 - ◆ When calling, be sure to have the Social Security number of the person needing care. Generally you never want to give a SSN over the phone, but keep in mind you are contacting IHSS; this is not a situation where a stranger is calling and asking for personal

information.

- ◆ Intake Social Workers take phone applications for all the applicants in Stanislaus County, as well as all the Adult Protective Services (APS) calls. I was amazed to find there are only three Social Workers handling all these calls!

Since APS calls take priority, sometimes applicants for IHSS are directed to leave a voice mail for staff. These messages are returned as soon as possible, usually within 24 hours. If you find you have to leave a message, please be patient—these staff handle over 550 APS calls and almost 900 IHSS calls each month! When leaving a message, be sure to clearly leave your name and number, and the name and social security number of the person needing services.

IHSS Intake Staff are happy to help you find assistance for your loved ones, whether it be through IHSS or another county program. If you are unsure if you qualify, give them a call!

Airing Your Dirty Laundry

(Continued from page 5)

but are not bold enough to request that you stop. Help them by not placing them in the position to have to ask.

Family problems—We all have our own set of personal struggles. Difficulty finding child care, marital problems and other issues are not the Recipient's concern, so don't burden them.

Money—Recipients are struggling to make it day to day themselves. They do not need the additional stress of trying to help with your money issues, so leave them at home.

Drugs or Alcohol—For many Recipients, hearing about drug or alcohol related problems your friends or family members have produces fear and anxiety. These issues do not belong at work.

In addition to providing valuable care for our elderly and disabled, you are also in a position to influence them in a positive way. Your job is what you make it. I am very proud to say that the majority of our providers are wonderful and caring. Keep up the good work!



Maria Osuna-Baldwin, Registry Specialist

Link2Care is offering a free CPR class for IHSS Providers on Saturday, November 10th.

This class is available to all IHSS Providers (even if you are not on the registry). Space is limited, so if you are interested in completing a CPR class, please call our office at 558-4787.

Registry Orientation Classes

Call 558-4881 for class times & registration

August	2nd and 23rd
September	6th and 18th
October	2nd and 25th
November	1st and 15th
December	13th

Registry Caregiver & CPR Class

You must register for these classes. Come to our Registry Orientation Class to learn more!

August	6-8th
September	10-12th and 24-26th
October	8-10th and 29-31st
November	5-7th
December	3-5th

Link2Care está ofreciendo una clase de CPR en español a proveedores de IHSS el viernes, 12 de octubre.

Esta clase es disponible para todos los proveedores de IHSS (no tiene que estar en el registro). El espacio está limitado, si está interesado(a) en completar una clase de CPR, por favor llámenos a nuestra oficina a 558-4881.

Link2Care welcomes a new staff member!

Jonathan Oushan



Link2Care recently hired Jonathan Oushan as the Administrative Assistant for our office. Jonathan joined the Air Force straight out of high school, and served for two years before being Honorably Discharged. He then moved back to Connecticut, where he worked as an Administrative Assistant for a Pharmaceutical Research Company. His heart was in California though, so he recently moved to Stanislaus County, and started work for Link2Care on June 18th. Sitting at the front desk, Jonathan is the first point of contact most people will have with our office. He is excited about working for Link2Care, and is eager to help our Providers and Recipients find the information and services they need. We are pleased to have Jonathan as part of our team.

Disability Resource Agency for Independent Living



The article below was provided by Alexandra Queen, an Independent Living Specialist with DRAIL—the Disability Resource Agency for Independent Living. DRAIL offers information and referrals for:

- ◆ Disability Services
- ◆ Personal Assistants
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Peer advising and support
- ◆ Workshops
- ◆ Benefits Advising
- ◆ Assistive Technology
- ◆ And much, much more!

DRAIL also assists Link2Care by providing Disability Sensitivity training at our Registry Provider Trainings.

If you would like to know more about DRAIL and the services they offer, you can contact them at 521-7260.

Did You Know?

There are over 500 known disabilities.

⇒ Common types of disabilities include:

- Sensory impairments such as loss of vision, hearing or touch
- Physical impairments such as amputation or loss of mobility
- Communication impairments that affect one’s ability to speak or write
- Mental health issues like depression or bipolar disorders
- Cognitive disabilities such as traumatic brain injuries or dyslexia
- Intellectual and developmental disabilities such as autism or Down syndrome

⇒ **Don’t feel alone** -- according to the 2000 California Census, two people out of ten have a disability. (That’s not including people in rehab hospitals, nursing homes or other facilities!)

⇒ Stanislaus County has a higher percentage of residents with disabilities than California as a whole.

⇒ Nationwide, about 9 million people age 15 and over required personal assistance; a little more than 4 million of those people were under age 65.

Planning your Dr Visits

(Continued from page 1)

you will be asked. Always *bring a list of current medications* so they can be reviewed.

Keep a calendar of basic functions. All humans have some basic needs: eating, eliminating and sleeping. Calendar how well the patient eats at each meal, document if they are having difficulty urinating or with bowel movements, and whether or not sleeping patterns have changed.



Report additional physical symptoms, such as headaches, complaints of pain, or use of “as needed” medications. This is also a good time to report occurrences such as falls, difficulty in walking, confusion, or any change from the patient’s normal status.

Emotional changes are also noteworthy. A decrease in the amount or quality of communication, lack of interest in activities, or behavioral changes should all be reported. These should be written down when they occur to be sure they are not related to other events, and that they are not increasing in frequency or severity.

Other special concerns should also be noted. All of this should be WRITTEN DOWN. It’s tempting to try to just remember everything, but then key points are missed. Once you begin this process, you can look at your notes from the previous doctor visit to remind yourself of additional changes.

Dress appropriately for the visit. Generally there will be a physical examination of the patient. Try to wear loose fitting clothes that make it easy to expose the limbs, no pantyhose or stockings, shoes that are easy to remove, and bring glasses, hearing aides, dentures, canes, or any other prosthetics the patient may use—these may need to be evaluated by the physician as well.



How the patient answers is important. It is tempting to answer yourself, but if the doctor is speaking directly to the patient, allow them to answer. If the doctor looks to you, feel free to answer any questions the doctor may have.

By being prepared for your visit, your doctor will have ample time and opportunity to provide you with answers, resulting in better care for your recipient and a higher level of respect towards you as the care provider.

www.StanLink2Care.org

IHSS Information

Contact Information and Maps

Resources and Web Links

Newsletters

Insurance Information

Registry Information

The place to connect!



The Water Cooler

A place to hear about current events, local news, and other issues ...

Local Events

It's not too late! There are still some summer events you can catch before the brisk fall weather appears. Here are some ideas for the end of summer, as well as those brisk fall nights:

Family Night Films - Family friendly movies can be seen for free at Modesto's Graceada Park on Friday evenings through September 28th. The fun starts at 7pm with games and activities, and the movie is shown at dusk at the Mancini bowl. Bring your own blanket and popcorn!



Riverbank Wine and Cheese Festival: As always, the annual festival will be coming to Riverbank on October 13th & 14th. Tickets are \$30, which includes entry into the Wine & Cheese tasting areas and a commemorative wine glass. If wine tasting isn't your forte, you can just go to enjoy the family activities, such as kiddie rides and a giant slide, as well as live music and shows on the Riverbank Community Stage.

Web Sites

The Stanislaus County website is getting a new look! October is the target deadline for launching the new website design. The new site will be easier to navigate, have cleaner lines and graphics, and is designed to be more user-friendly. In addition, it will be easier to find. The old website, at www.co.stanislaus.ca.us was nearly impossible to remember. The new web address is www.StanCounty.com. Much easier!

Look for website updates and design changes at www.StanLink2Care.org in October!

The Link2Care website has also undergone a design change, so be sure to check us out at www.StanLink2Care.org, where you can view past newsletters, get information about payroll, registry and insurance, and "meet" our staff!

Healthy Aging Summit



Sponsored by the Healthy Aging Association and Area Agency on Aging, the Healthy Aging Summit is a free event for veterans or those 50 years of age or older. Free Health screenings will be available, including a bone density testing, diabetes screening, cholesterol testing, stroke screening and much more... Flu shots are available for \$20.

This years event is planned for Friday, October 13th from 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at the downtown Modesto Center Plaza. For more information, please call Starr Carson-Cleary at 827-1960. See you there!



Who you gonna call???

Below are the numbers most frequently requested from our office:

IHSS Payroll & General Information: 558-3976

This number is answered from 8:30 to 4:30pm Monday through Friday. They can help you identify your social worker, transfer you to a support coordinator (who helps with questions about paychecks and timecards), and answer general questions regarding IHSS.

IHSS Intake: 558-2637

Do you know someone who needs IHSS or would you like to sign up for the program? Call this number to apply for benefits. Be sure to have the applicants social security number handy, since applications are taken over the phone.

United Domestic Workers Union: 526-5274

This is the Union that represents IHSS Providers. Contact them for questions regarding dues and other questions requiring representation.

Link2Care, the Public Authority: 558-4787

Call our office with any questions about insurance, working for more recipients, and training classes.

Remember!



**November 4th
is Daylight
Saving time
again.
Turn clocks
back one hour
that weekend.**

Chicken Fajita Salad with Chili-Lime Dressing



1/2 cup low-fat sour cream
2 1/2 Tbs. lime juice
1 tsp. sugar
1/4 tsp. chili powder
1/4 tsp. ground cumin
4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves, cut into thin strips
1 cup sliced green bell peppers
1 cup sliced red bell peppers
1 small red onion, thinly sliced
1/2 cup salsa
2 Tbs. chopped cilantro or parsley
8 cups shredded romaine lettuce
1/2 cup shredded, reduced fat cheddar cheese

- ◆ In a small bowl, combine sour cream, 1 1/2 Tbs. of the lime juice, sugar, chili powder, and cumin. Refrigerate dressing until ready to use.
- ◆ Spray a large, nonstick skillet with nonstick spray. Add chicken. Cook and stir over medium heat until chicken is no longer pink and lightly browned. Add peppers and onions. Cook for three more minutes. Stir in remaining 1 Tbs of lime juice and cilantro (or parsley). Mix well. Remove from heat.



- ◆ To assemble salad, divide lettuce among four serving plates. Top with warm chicken mixture. Spoon dressing over salad. Sprinkle with cheese. Serve immediately.

NUTRITION INFORMATION:

Per serving: 223 calories, 10 g fat, 6 g saturated fat, 0 cholesterol, 14g carbohydrates, 4g fiber, 34g protein, 418mg sodium.

Maria's Corner

Maria's Corner has been moved to the Caregiver's Corner. This month's topic is "Are You Airing Your Dirty Laundry?" Check it out on page five!



Link2Care está ofreciendo una clase de CPR en español a proveedores de IHSS el viernes, 12 de octubre.

Esta clase es disponible para todos los proveedores de IHSS (no tiene que estar en el registro).

El espacio está limitado, si está interesado(a) en completar una clase de CPR, por favor llámenos a nuestra oficina a 558-4881.



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