

Disability Advocacy Collaborative Bulletin

Disability Rights is a Civil Rights Issue

June, 2005

Need this newsletter in an alternative format? Please let us know.

If you want something to appear in the next edition, or have an article you would like us to include, please send it to us - jayne@kleinmanconsulting.com or skoslosk03@comcast.net -- or Jayne Kleinman, 55 Corrigan Ave., Meriden, CT 06451, 203-238-9391.

ADDRESS CORRECTIONS AND REMOVALS: If you are not interested in receiving this Bulletin, or you would like this information sent to a different e-mail address, please e-mail Jayne Kleinman at jayne@kleinmanconsulting.com with your request.

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In This Issue

	<i>Page</i>
Calendar of Events	2
September 16, 2005 and 2006	3
State Legislative Update	3
Update on the Disability Advocacy Collaborative	4
Olmstead Coalition	5
Transportation	6
PAS Pool	7
Breast Cancer Awareness	8
Housing	8
Pilot Program Proposal	9
Living Wills and Health Care Proxies	10
What About Kids?	11
Medicaid Commission	11
Not Just for People with Spinal Cord Injuries	11
Medicare Guide	12
National Organization on Disability	12
Resources Available in Spanish	13
EEO Mediation Assistance	13

Calendar of Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Contact</u>
June 6 5:00-7:00 pm	Focus Group on Barriers to Mammograms (for women with hearing disabilities)	Hartford Room, New Park Conference Ctr, Hartford	CWDN and Qualidigm	860-613-3685 TDD/TT users call Relay CT at 711 or 1-800-842-9710.
June 8 6:00-8:00 pm	DCF and Court Support Services Strategic Planning Meeting	Quirk Middle School - Hartford	AFCAMP	860-297-4358
June 8 11:00 am- 2:00 pm	Hartford Job Corps Academy's 40th Anniversary	100 William Shorty Campbell St. Hartford	Hartford Job Corps Academy	860-952-0200
June 9 12 noon-2 pm	Olmstead Coalition meeting	Groton Town Hall Annex	Olmstead Coalition and the Groton Real Choice Task Force	Call Carrie at 860- 823-1898
June 14 6:30-9:30 pm	Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Coalition for Inclusive Education	Courtyard by Marriott – Cromwell	CCIE	860-953-8335 or e- mail arcct@aol.com
June 21 7:00-9:00 pm	4th Anniversary of LACASA (Litchfield County Autism Spectrum Association)	Trinity Episcopal Church – 220 Prospect Street Torrington	LACASA	lacasa@hartford.edu
June 22 5:30-8:30 pm	MS Research Night	Rocky Hill Marriott	Nat'l MS Society, Greater CT Chapter	860-953-0601, ext. 243
June 23 7:00 pm	WeCAHR Annual Meeting	Hatter's Park, Danbury	WeCAHR	advozealot@aol.com
June 23 4:00-7:00 pm	Training for Boards and Commissions	Bridgeport City Hall	Bridgeport Real Choices Task Force	Valerie Sorrentino 203-576-7110
June 28 5:00-7:00 pm	CT Women and Disability Network Annual Meeting	Newington Senior & Disabled Center	CWDN	1-800-842-7303 860-297-4375 860-566-2102 (TDD)
July 14	People First of CT Statewide Meeting	American Legion Hall, Willimantic	People First of CT	Advozealot@aol.com

July 26	15th Anniversary of the ADA – Watch for upcoming events!			
July 25-28	Youth Leadership Forum	UConn campus - Storrs	CT YLF	www.ctdol.state.ct.us/ylf/default.htm
Aug. 8-12	Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp	St. Joseph’s College, West Hartford	Hospital for Special Care	860-267-2457 860-832-6220
Sept. 16	“Creating Inclusive Communities for Everyone” Conference	Farmington Marriott Hotel	UConn Center on Disabilities	860-679-1500
October 22	People First of CT Annual Meeting	Bristol Clarion (formerly the Raddison)	People First of CT	Advozealot@aol.com
Oct. 23-26	White House Conference on Aging	Washington, D.C.		www.whcoa.gov
Nov. 4, 2005	“Children Who Can’t Be Cured...Continuing the Conversation of End-of-Life Care”	Four Points Sheraton Hotel, Meriden	CT Dept. of Soc. Services and CT Children’s Medical Center	ctceol@harthosp.org 860-545-7823
Sept. 16, 2006	Disability Advocacy Collaborative Convention	CT Expo Center Hartford	Disability Advocacy Collaborative	jjk1009@hotmail.com 203-238-9391

Save September 16, 2005 and September 16, 2006!

Two important dates to remember: on September 16, 2005 “Creating Inclusive Communities for Everyone”, a conference hosted by the UConn Center on Disabilities, will take place at the Marriott Hotel in Farmington. Funded under the Real Choice Systems Change Grant, the conference will help participants (i.e., community leaders, advocates, elected officials and ADA Coordinators) develop strategies and initiatives to use in their own towns and communities. Call Chris Gaynor or Stan Kosloski at 860-679-1500 for more information.

And on September 16, 2006, the Disability Advocacy Collaborative will host a Disability Convention at the CT Expo Center, Hartford, CT. Contact Jayne Kleinman at jjk1009@hotmail.com or 203-238-9391 for more information.

State Legislative Update

The 2005 version of the Connecticut General Assembly will finish business on Wednesday, June 8, provided there is a state budget in place by then. The last week of the legislative session is typically hectic and often confusing, and so the best we can say at this time is that “it ain’t over til it’s over”. The budget fight seems to include battles over

such issues as the millionaire's tax, the estate tax, the so-called "sin" taxes, and the property tax credit for middle income families.

It appears there is some agreement that there will be no increase on bus fares (as proposed by the Governor); an additional \$131 million will be appropriated to cities and towns; there will be reinstatement of the HUSKY plan for adults; and the \$3 co-pay for doctor visits and prescription drugs for Medicaid recipients, proposed by the Governor, will be dropped. In addition, it looks as if recipients of federal SSI payments will be able to keep their cost of living increases this year rather than having them deducted from their state supplemental payments, as has been the case for the last twelve years.

Among the bills passed this past week was HB 6286, An Act Concerning the Emergency Use of Cartridge Injectors. The vote was unanimous in both the House and the Senate. Now the bill will go to Governor Rell. The bill immunizes from civil liability certain people who provide emergency assistance by using an automatic pre-filled cartridge injector on someone who needs it. A "cartridge injector" is a pre-filled, automatic device for delivering a standard dose of epinephrine for emergency first aid in response to allergic reactions.

On Tuesday, May 31, the House of Representatives gave overwhelming final approval to legislation committing \$100 million to stem cell research in Connecticut. Gov. M. Jodi Rell pledged to sign the bill and make Connecticut the third state to finance embryonic research, which is opposed by President Bush and the Catholic Church.

Items still under consideration in the unfinished budgeting process are funding for the Mental Health Cabinet recommendations and the proposal of the MS Society to create a pilot home care program for disabled individuals under 65 who are inappropriately institutionalized in, or who are at risk for entering, a nursing home (see article on p.9).

The General Assembly produces a comprehensive Legislative Bulletin on its website at: www.cga.ct.gov. To find the bulletin just look under the "Calendar" and you will see "CGA Today." Under that heading you will find "Bulletin."

How to reach the Governor –1-800-406-1527

How to reach your state legislators:

Senate Democrats: 1-800-842-1420
House Democrats: 1-800-842-1902
Senate Republicans: 1-800-842-1421
House Republicans: 1-800-842-1423

Disability Advocacy Collaborative Announces Meeting Dates

The Disability Advocacy Collaborative has announced its plans for the development of six regional advocacy networks, as well as a Disability Convention set for September 16, 2006. The involvement of all disability advocacy groups, family organizations, and

individual advocates is sought. The meeting schedule outlined below identifies the dates, times, and places for six introductory meetings to be held in June and July.

During the fall of this year, and the winter and spring of 2006, regional coalition building and self-advocacy workshops will be held throughout the state to build the six regional networks. The Collaborative is looking for individuals who want to get involved in this initiative, including folks who want to take a leadership role at the regional level.

Here is the schedule of Introductory Meetings, each of which will run from 5:15 - 7:00 pm. Light refreshments will be provided.

<u>North Central Region – June 21</u> Office of Protection and Advocacy 60 B Weston Street Hartford	<u>South West Region – June 22</u> Saint Joseph’s Church 1300 Stratford Road Stratford
<u>North West Region - June 28</u> Education Connection 355 Goshen Road Litchfield	<u>North East Region – June 29</u> Mansfield Senior Center 303 Maple Road Mansfield
<u>South East Region – July 6</u> Groton Town Hall Annex Long Point Road Groton	<u>South Central Region – July 12</u> Senior Center Activity Room Miller Complex 2901 Dixwell Avenue Hamden

Sign language interpreters have been scheduled for all forums, but will be cancelled if we do not receive a request for an interpreter at least 72 hours before the event is scheduled. If you need an interpreter or need any other accommodation (e.g., materials in alternative format) please call Jayne Kleinman at 203-238-9391, or e-mail her at jjk1009@hotmail.com. Out of respect for those of us with chemical sensitivities, all meetings are fragrance free.

Olmstead Coalition Reconvenes

The Connecticut Olmstead Coalition, in partnership with the Groton Real Choice Task Force, will host an informational meeting on June 9, 2005 from 12 noon to 2 p.m. at the Groton Town Hall Annex. Speakers will include May Terry from the Keep the Promise Coalition, Paul Ford from the Nursing Facilities Transition Grant, and Jan VanTassel from the Connecticut Legal Rights Project. For more information (and to ensure adequate refreshments) call Carrie at (860) 823-1898.

TRANSPORTATION

Update on P.A.T.H.S.

(Plan for the Achievement of Transportation Coordination in Human Services)

As reported in last month's issue of "The Bulletin," the University of Connecticut Center on Disabilities, under a grant from the Council on Developmental Disabilities, is sponsoring a series of forums on transportation. Two successful forums were held Groton and Manchester. There will be four more forums in July and August in Bridgeport, Torrington, Greater Hartford and Greater New Haven. Please watch for future postings.

Jayne Kleinman, Project Coordinator, is interested in hearing from people with disabilities who use various local bus services and specialized transportation services, in order to help shape the DOT State Action Plan for a coordinated human service transportation system. Interested parties are invited to contact Jayne at jkleinman@uchc.edu, or call her at 860-670-1575.

A Personal Perspective

"My Lift Story: A Disabled Commuter's Day has its Ups and Downs," by Connecticut resident Geoffrey Matesky appeared in the June issue of Connecticut Magazine. An account of his own experience taking a commuter bus (to save money on gas) Geoff writes "I realize I've become something I never wanted to be, the unapologetic disabled guy. While it always seemed more admirable and heroic to live a life of total independence, where none of your needs impacted anyone else, I must admit that holding my ground feels more liberating than humiliating. It's a step closer to belonging in this world, rather than experiencing it vicariously" (p. 49).

Travel Training: The Road to Independence

Travel training is a service the Kennedy Center in Bridgeport first offered its consumers in 1991 under a demonstration grant from Project ACTION to develop and implement a program to teach people with disabilities to use regular public buses. Since that initial project, the travel training program has grown in size and scope and is now available to people with disabilities and senior citizens through four field offices around Connecticut, making training available throughout the state where there is fixed route bus service.

Travel training is a free service; the only cost to the consumer is the bus or train fare. People of all ages and with any type of disability other than blindness are eligible for the Kennedy Center's program. (See the article below for travel training for people who are legally blind.) For more information or to make a referral to the program, call the Mobility Services Coordinator at (203) 332-4535 Ext. 247 or e-mail: jrubell@kennedyctr.org.

Orientation and Mobility Training

The Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) offers an education program to teach individuals who are legally blind how to travel safely and independently. The goal of the program is for individuals to achieve the maximum safety and independence in mobility that is possible according to their needs and capabilities. Components include sensory training, development of good spatial and environmental concepts, confidence building, assessment and training of an individual's functional travel vision (if any), instruction in self-protection techniques, instruction in the use of a white cane for independent travel, familiarization with specific areas or routes in the individual's environment, and instruction in the use of public transportation. All lessons are taught on a one-to-one basis by an orientation and mobility specialist.

For more information contact, BESB at 860-602-4000, TDD at 860-602-4020 or e-mail besb@po.state.ct.us.

Rural Transportation Bill

The Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living reports that the U.S. House of Representatives has passed a \$284 billion highway and transit bill called TEA-LU, and the Senate passed its version of the bill, funded at \$295 billion. While neither bill on its own is ideal for individuals from rural communities, both have elements that advocates need to push for as the bill moves forward into a Conference Committee. Both bills significantly increase funding for Section 5310 (elderly and persons with disabilities) and Section 5311 (rural) programs.

A Pool of Personal Assistants Now Available

A new resource is being made available to individuals with disabilities and their families. Rewardingwork.org, a joint venture of the University of Massachusetts Medical School of Health Policy and the New England Systems Change Organization, is designed to allow individuals and families regardless of age or disability to access a pool of individuals willing to provide personal assistance or direct support.

Unlike other similar registries that are program specific, rewardingwork.org can be used by anyone who hires their own direct support regardless of program or funding source. Rewardingwork.org can be accessed by visiting www.rewardingwork.org. Currently, over 300 potential employees are registered in Connecticut, and the number is growing monthly. A 24-hour free trial of the site is available, so that you can "try before you buy". A small fee is charged up to \$90 a year in order to access the site. All funds generated are used for the continuing support and maintenance of rewardingwork.org.

Please feel free to call Andrew Bate at the UConn Center on Disabilities at (860) 679-1564 with any questions.

Focus Groups on Barriers to Getting a Mammogram

On Monday, June 6 at the Hartford Room at the New Park Conference Center, 151 New Park Avenue, Hartford, the Connecticut Women and Disabilities Network will host a focus group for women who are deaf, hearing impaired or hard of hearing. The purpose of the focus group is to identify the barriers women with disabilities who are over the age of forty have to getting a mammogram. The initiative is being funded by a grant from the Susan G. Komen Foundation, and is being co-sponsored with Qualidigm. Pre-registration is requested. Contact Qualidigm at 860-613-3685. TDD/TT users may call Relay CT at 711 or 800-842-9710.

Racial Inequalities in U.S. Cancer Treatment

In a related matter, a study by the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), published Sunday, May 15, found Black women in the United States often wait longer than other women to be diagnosed with breast cancer and begin treatment. This research, the most extensive to date on this subject, shows that close to 27% of Black women wait as long as three months between their first visit to a doctor and the beginning of treatment. This percentage is only 17% among Hispanic women and 15% among white women, noted Columbia University Professor Sherri Sheinfeld Gorin, who directed this study. "A two month delay can reduce the chance of survival for five years by 10-15%," estimated Dr. David Johnson, ASCO president.

HOUSING

The Renters' Rebate Program for the Elderly and People with Disabilities

The Renters' Rebate Program is a program for Connecticut renters (tenants) who are elderly or totally disabled and whose incomes do not exceed certain limits. If you qualify, the Renters' Rebate Program may give you a rebate check. The amount of the check is based on income, the amount of your rent, and any utility bills paid. Apply at your town's Assessor's Office or Social Services Department. Applications will be accepted until September 15, 2005. There is no application fee or asset limits. For more information, call: Infoline at 2-1-1 or your Town Hall (the number can be found in the Blue Pages of your local telephone book). Still have questions? Contact Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-453-3320.

Section 8 Housing

The Section 8 housing program includes tenant subsidies for affordable housing and project funding to private developers to build affordable housing. With the Section 8 voucher program, a voucher recipient can rent from any landlord who accepts the

voucher, and the voucher can be moved from town to town or state to state. Section 8 housing is subject to the Fair Housing Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. To be eligible for the Section 8 program, you must have a household income at or below 50 percent of the area's median income, as determined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), be a citizen (or a non-citizen with "eligible immigration" status), and be in good standing with federal housing programs.

To obtain a Section 8 voucher application, contact the public housing authority (PHA) where you wish to live. If asked, public housing authorities must assist people with disabilities in completing a Section 8 application. You may request accommodations in understanding deadlines, obtaining help with the process, and completing the application if your difficulty is related to your disability.

A public housing authority or HUD may approve a higher payment standard for a person with a disability in order to locate suitable housing, including barrier-free or accessible housing close to public transportation or support services. A PHA may approve an exception payment up to 110 percent of the Fair Market Rent (FMR) without obtaining HUD approval.

Be aware that almost all PHAs have extensive waiting lists, and the Bush administration has proposed further cuts in this very necessary program.

Changes to Security Deposit Guarantee Program

Because of budgetary concerns, the state Department of Social Services has recently made changes to who can apply for the Security Deposit Guarantee Program (SDGP). This program saves renters from having to pay security deposits by guaranteeing landlords that DSS will pay for damages. As of April 1, 2005, DSS has not been accepting applications for the program from people with Section 8 vouchers or people with Rental Assistance Program certificates. But the program remains open to other people that DSS has determined are "homeless or are in danger of homelessness".

Creating a Pilot Home Care Program for Individuals with Disabilities Under Age 65

The Connecticut Chapter of the National MS Society has worked very hard this legislative session to obtain funding for a pilot home care program for individuals who are disabled and under age 65 who are inappropriately institutionalized or who are at risk for entering a nursing home.

Many individuals with disabilities between the ages of 18–64 are not covered by current Medicaid waivers or state-funded programs. They need help with activities of daily living and may have limited family support, have cognitive impairment, and/or have

needs that change and progress over time. The Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders is only available to those 65 and older. The Medicaid Personal Care Assistance (PCA) Waiver requires that individuals have the strength and ability to self-direct their care. The initiative proposed by the MS Society focuses on creating a state-funded pilot program for not more than 50 adults with disabilities aged 18 to 64 that is similar to the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders.

During state fiscal year 2003, 7,436 people under age 65 received care in a Connecticut nursing facility. Currently 10% of nursing home residents in Connecticut are younger than age 65. People with chronic illnesses and disabilities caused by such diseases as Huntington's Disease, Parkinson's Disease, ongoing strokes, Alzheimer's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis and HIV/AIDS are likely to be helped by this legislation. Contact Susan Raimondo at www.ctnmss.org for more information.

E-News On-Line

E-News from the National MS Society, Greater CT Chapter is now on-line. Go to www.ctnmss.org or call 860-953-0601 to sign up.

Living Wills and Health Care Proxies—What Are they?

A living will is designed to allow a person to list the specific types of treatment he or she does or does not want once they no longer possess the ability to convey those wishes. The provisions of a living will are not effective until and when an individual loses the capacity to make decisions, and there is no chance of regaining those abilities. In that instance, a health care provider is obligated by state law to abide by the terms of the living will. Once a living will is properly executed by an individual it should be stored in a safe place, and shared with family members as well as with treating physicians. This will ensure that it will be readily available and adhered to when its use becomes necessary.

A health care proxy is designed to allow an individual to appoint a health care agent, who is presumed to know the wishes of the person who executed it with regard to end-of-life health care decisions. An individual should appoint a person who is most trusted in his or her life to serve as his or her agent. Similar to a living will, a health care proxy becomes effective when an individual no longer possesses the capacity to make health care decisions, and there is no chance of regaining that ability. Once this occurs, the agent appointed as the individual's proxy is designated to make decisions on behalf of the incapacitated individual and is presumed to know what that person's wishes are. A health care proxy should be stored safely by both the individual executing it and by his or her agent. A copy should be provided to other family members, and the individual's treating physician.

WHAT ABOUT KIDS WITH DISABILITIES?

CT KASA

CT KASA (Kids as Self Advocates) is a youth leadership organization for individuals with developmental disabilities between the ages of 12 and 22. The four main areas of interest for the group are: education, health care, helping parents let go and equal respect for youth with disabilities. CT KASA is looking for new members to attend meetings which are held at various locations throughout the state. Heather Northrop has recently been name adult advisor for the group. Contact Youth Organizer John Curtain at JWC0423@sbcglobal.net or 860-646-5221 for more information.

“A Road to Services—Teen Resource and Address Book.”

Students with disabilities from the mentoring program at Central High School in Bridgeport have published a resource guide “A Road to Services—Teen Resource and Address Book.” The guide was a product of the Resource Gap Sub-Committee of the city’s Real Choice Task Force. To get a copy call Valerie Sorrentino at 203-576-7110.

HHS Secretary Leavitt Establishes Commission to Work on Strengthening and Sustaining Medicaid

On May 20, Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt established an advisory commission that will help identify the reforms necessary to stabilize and strengthen Medicaid. As expected, advocates are concerned that funding will be cut and services weakened under the guise of “updating” and “streamlining” the program. The National Governors’ Association and Congressional Democrats have indicated they will not participate on the commission, citing concerns about the \$10 billion targeted for cuts.

The Medicaid commission must submit two reports to Secretary Leavitt. The first, due Sept. 1, will outline recommendations for Medicaid to achieve \$10 billion in savings during the next five years as well as ways to begin meaningful long-term enhancements that can better serve beneficiaries. The second report, due Dec. 31, 2006, will provide recommendations to help ensure the long-term sustainability of Medicaid. A full copy of the commission's charter is available at www.cms.hhs.gov/faca/mc/default.asp .

Not Just for People with Spinal Cord Injuries

A number of resources that have been created for people with a specific type of disability are also applicable to individuals with other forms of disability. The National Spinal Cord Injury Association has on-line public forums that address such generic topics as: peer support, pregnancy, equipment, public policy (pending legislation), preventing secondary conditions, financial planning, research (supporting quality of life), new injuries, personal assistance services, working/employment, disability culture and women and disabilities. Go to www.spinalcord.org for more information.

The Rehabilitation and Research and Training Center (RRTC) on Spinal Cord Injury has a new web site: www.sci-health.org. The site provides ongoing information about research and training efforts with a focus on the prevention of secondary conditions through an active and healthy lifestyle.

Medicare Will Revise Guide to New Benefits for 2006

According to Global Action on Aging (May 22, 2005), the Bush administration is revising a preliminary draft of the 2006 Medicare handbook - the main tool for educating beneficiaries - after discovering that many statements in the document were inaccurate, misleading or unclear, even to people who have worked on the program for decades. Members of Congress, insurance companies, advocates for beneficiaries and state insurance regulators have all told the Bush administration that the new handbook was flawed.

In describing the drug benefit, for example, the handbook says, "After you meet the deductible, you pay part of the cost of covered prescription drugs, and the plan pays part." The handbook does not mention that beneficiaries face a gap in coverage. After the beneficiary pays a \$250 deductible, Medicare pays three-fourths of the next \$2,000 in drug costs. But then the beneficiary is normally responsible for all of the next \$2,850, and Medicare pays nothing. Beyond that, Medicare pays about 95 percent of drug costs.

Moreover, the handbook lumped together the traditional government-run Medicare program, which covers 36 million people, and tiny private fee-for-service health plans, in which fewer than 100,000 beneficiaries have enrolled. Both, it says, are "fee-for-service" plans, available nationwide.' The handbook repeatedly suggests that private plans offer a better value than the traditional Medicare program. Those plans - H.M.O.'s and P.P.O.'s - "give you more health care coverage choices and better health care benefits," it says.

In a separate notice to beneficiaries, the administration says the new Medicare drug benefit "will cover all the types of prescription drugs you may need," without noting that beneficiaries may have to appeal to get coverage for specific drugs they are using. For more detailed information go to www.globalaging.org/whatsnew/listserv.htm .

News from the National Organization on Disability

The National Organization on Disability's (NOD) May 16, 2005 newsletter reports that 31 percent of adults with disabilities claim to have been refused a job because of their disability. This statistic is taken from the 2004 N.O.D./Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities. For greater detail read "Landmark Disability Survey Finds Pervasive Disadvantages" on the NOD website: www.nod.org . You can also purchase an electronic copy of the 2004 N.O.D./Harris Survey on the site.

NOD has also reported that on May 4, 2005, attorneys from Hogan & Hartson L.L.P. and the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs announced the settlement of a high-profile, ground-breaking lawsuit against Marshalls, requiring the

major discount retailer to provide accessible evacuation routes for shoppers with disabilities in all of its stores nationwide. In 2002, the plaintiff in this case, wheelchair-user Katie Savage, was trapped inside a basement-level Marshalls store in Silver Spring, Maryland for over an hour after an evacuation alarm sounded.

According to the National Council on Disability, emergency evacuation plans often overlook people with disabilities, increasing the risk that when a disaster occurs, they will be left behind or without information that could save their lives. “Saving Lives: Including People with Disabilities in Emergency Planning To access a copy of the full NCD report visit the Emergency Preparedness Initiative web page at www.nod.org/emergency.

INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH & SPANISH

The United Spinal Association (formerly EPVA) now has available the following booklets in Spanish:

- “Understanding the ADA” (“Explicación de la Ley que Protege a los Impedidos”) - Explains the different titles of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- “Access State And Local Government” (“Aceso Al Gobierno Estatal Y Local”)— Gives an in-depth explanation of Title II of the ADA, which prohibits state and local governments from discriminating against people with disabilities in their programs and services.
- “Taking Action” (“Tomar Accion”)—Teaches individuals to become effective self-advocates in any situation, and
- “Fire Safety for Wheelchair Users at Work and at Home” (“Seguridad De Contra Incendios Para Usuarios de Sillas de Ruedas En El Trabajo y En El Hogar”)— Reviews new design features that enhance workplace fire safety, as well as fire prevention and planning in the home. For more information call the United Spinal Association at 718-803-3782.

Four new fact sheets for individuals with MS and their families are available in Spanish including: “A Child's Story About MS,” “When the Going Gets Tough, the Tough Get Help,” “Access Resources in Your Community,” and “An Employer's Guide to MS in the Workplace.” [Call 888-MSFOCUS (673-6287) or e-mail support@msfocus.org to request a copy.]

Making EEO Mediation Accessible to People with Disabilities

On May 10, 2005, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the National Council on Disability, and the U.S. Department of Justice jointly released a pair of new publications on how to ensure that the mediation of equal employment opportunity disputes is accessible to people with disabilities. The publications, which are intended for mediation providers and parties to mediation, cover such topics as types of reasonable

accommodation, best practices in ensuring that mediation is accessible, the confidentiality of disclosed medical information, and recommendations on ADA training for mediators. These publications are available on the web sites of all three agencies: www.eeoc.gov, www.ncd.gov, and www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm .

Please relay this Bulletin to your membership including those who do not have e-mail access. Suggest your membership go to the library and go onto www.kleinmanconsulting.com to view or print a copy. If you would like to see previous issues of the Bulletin, read about the background of the Collaborative or if you would like to be added to the mailing list, you may also go to www.KleinmanConsulting.com.

How can you find your federal Representatives and Senators? Go to www.congress.org and find the box under the heading “Write Elected Officials.” Type in your Zip code and press the “Enter” key. Then, when the names of your elected officials come on the screen, click on the word “Info” under the name of the elected official you want to contact. The telephone number will be listed on the page that comes up next. You may also call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 1-888-818-6641.