



Monthly Memo
December, 2011

www.arcnm.org

(T) 505- 883-4630 ★ (F) 505-883-5564
3655 Carlisle Boulevard NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110-1644

The mission of The Arc of New Mexico is to improve the quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities of all ages by advocating for equal opportunities and choices in where and how they learn, live, work, play and socialize. The Arc of New Mexico will promote self-determination, healthy families, effective community support systems and partnerships.

DD Waiver Waiting List Continues to Grow

The Arc of New Mexico held a media event on Thursday, December 22 to address the growing DD Waiver Waiting List. Over 5,500 people with developmental disabilities are waiting to receive services. Each year another 1,000 people apply for DD Waiver Services and about 300 are found eligible and added to the waiting list. People are now waiting 8 to 12 years for services.

In Fiscal Year 11 the waiting list was reduced by approximately 111 individuals. These included allocations made with specific Legislative appropriations and expedited allocations. The one million dollars approved this year is to serve 50 additional individuals is for FY12. The state anticipates making expedited allocations beyond those 50 for individuals who meet that criteria, as the need arises. It is evident that the need for services is outpacing the provision of services and the waiting list continues to grow each year.

A Waiting List Story

Double Take in Grant County - Our Short Story

Eleven-year old twins, Samantha and Danielle, were diagnosed with Autism right after their third birthday. Their birth and early years were marked with many trying times: temper tantrums, inability to communicate (talk and understand) and inability to play. They were over 4 years old before they began having a full night's sleep. We applied for the Developmental Disabilities Waiver Waiting List in 2003.

As a nurse I earn a decent salary and my ex-husband also has a good job so my children have private insurance. Despite this, having four kids, two with developmental disabilities, has caused some financial struggles but we try the best for our children.

Samantha and Danielle love animals! Horses, dogs – they really light up their lives – and through animals, the twins are learning to communicate. Samantha learned to speak through commands to a therapy dog made possible through Assistance Dogs of the West. A simple command of ‘Sit’ led to a breakthrough in speech. We’re thrilled! But the cost of therapeutic horse riding, speech therapy and purchasing our own therapy dog Lexi is expensive. First is the \$400 private insurance deductible. Two months of therapeutic horse riding was \$800/month so I had to make the painful and probably wrong decision, not to pursue this. Private Speech Therapy in Las Cruces through NMSU is about \$500/month. Just seeing the profound improvement is worth the financial sacrifice and we are blessed that some grant funds were available for the Speech Therapy because we simply could not afford to make all these trips.

Samantha and Danielle are in the Fourth Grade at the Cobre School District. Thanks to the educators and school therapists, the girls continue to improve. Samantha passed the 3rd grant NM Standards Based Assessment tests in reading and math. Danielle is talking in abrupt sentences, and while not doing well academically, has an affinity for computers and anything electronic – great learning tools.

It’s been 8 years on the DDSD Waiver Waiting List. We are still waiting for help to continue these promising therapies. Although local charitable organizations in our community like the Moose Club, our school, and the small grant funds we have received have led to remarkable changes in the twins’ lives, I worry about the future. Will we still be waiting when the girls hit their teens and their needs change? Will I still be their primary caregiver as they reach young adulthood? What happens when they leave the school system and the critical services are not there? I pray for those families that cannot afford to pay for therapies and wait for services – and wait for the skills their children with disabilities so critically need – and deserve - to function, learn and grow.

Our children are our most important resource. If we can give our children the treatment and help they need when they are young, they can reach their highest potential. If not, these children will become adults that require more intense (and expensive) interventions.

-Peggy Humble, Grant County



The Disability Coalition Pre-Legislative Forum and Workshop

Pre-Legislative-Session Forum and Workshop - Health Care Reform and People with Disabilities Saturday, January 7th, 2012

Legislative Forum: 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Lunch with Senator Dede Feldman
Health Care Reform Workshop: 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Room C, UNM Continuing Education, 1634 University Blvd. NE, Albuquerque

Registration/Cost: \$10 per person, which covers the morning forum, lunch, and the afternoon workshop. **Please register in advance so we can have adequate supplies of the materials, lunch and refreshments.** See registration form and information below.

About the Forum: This annual event provides a preview of the disability issues to be addressed in the 30-day legislative session that begins on January 17, 2012. It will include information about the overall state budget situation, and in particular the outlook for the Medicaid program and services for persons with disabilities. We'll be looking at the state's plans to redesign the Medicaid program as part of its push for "modernization" as well as changes to the DD waiver and behavioral health services. The Forum also provides an opportunity for a quick look at other bills or initiatives affecting people with disabilities that we expect to be introduced during the session, as well as some tips on how you can get involved.

The morning Forum wraps up with lunch for everyone and a presentation by State Senator Dede Feldman. Senator Feldman, who chairs both the interim Health and Human Services Committee and the Senate Public Affairs Committee, is one of the Legislature's foremost experts on health care issues.

Health Care Reform Workshop: The new federal health care reform law (the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) makes significant changes to our system of health coverage through expansions of Medicaid and new rules that make private insurance much more accessible and meaningful. These changes will be particularly important for people with disabilities. Health policy consultant Ellen Pinnes, who works with The Disability Coalition, will be the lead presenter for the afternoon workshop on the new law. We'll cover the law's new opportunities and requirements for employers and individuals, expansion of Medicaid eligibility and what that means for New Mexico, and how new insurance rules and creation of a "health insurance exchange" will provide access to health care for those who don't qualify for Medicaid. The workshop will focus on provisions in the law that provide protections and benefits of particular interest to persons with disabilities and their families – such as guaranteed coverage, affordability, benefits that must be covered, and more.

To register for these events:

- By mail: Print and fill out the registration form (last page of memo), and mail it to DRNM, 1720 Louisiana NE, #204, Albuquerque, NM 87110. Enclose your check for \$10, or mark the box showing that you will pay at the door and bring your check or cash on January 7. Mailed registrations must be postmarked by Dec. 29, 2011.

- By email: Send an email to info@drnm.org. Put “Forum Registration” in the subject line. Cut and paste the registration form below into the body of the email and complete the form, or just provide the information called for on the form in your email. Check the box indicating that you will pay at the door.
- By phone: Call the DRNM office (505-256-3100 or toll-free at 1-800-432-4682). Indicate that you are calling to register for the forum and provide your name and contact information.
- By fax: Send the completed registration form to DRNM at 505-256-3184.

If you are registering by phone, fax or e-mail, please do so by Tuesday, January 3, 2012. Although we will be accepting registrations at the door, we cannot guarantee copies of the materials or a lunch for you unless you have registered in advance.

The \$10 registration fee must be paid in cash or by check. Unfortunately, we are not equipped to accept payment by credit/debit card.

Disability Accommodations. Sign language interpreters will be provided throughout the day. If you need any other disability-related accommodation in order to participate in the meeting, contact the Disability Rights New Mexico (DRNM) office at 505-256-3100 or 1-800-432-4682, or email us at info@drnm.org. **Please let us know of any such needs by Monday, January 2, 2012** so we’ll have time to make the arrangements.

(Registration Form Last Page of Memo)

Disability Rights Awareness Day

The 2012 Disability Rights Awareness Day will be held Monday, January 23 and Tuesday, January 24 in Santa Fe during the 30-day Legislative Session. This year will feature the following activities:

- **Monday, January 23** – Presentations and workshops from 9am to approximately 4pm at the Courtyard by Marriott on Cerrillos Rd regarding key issues facing New Mexicans with disabilities. A continental breakfast and lunch are provided. Approximately 100-150 people to attend mostly individuals with disabilities, family members and advocates. Cost is \$10.00 for individuals with disabilities, family members and support staff. Fee for professionals is \$30.00. Please pay with checks or money orders.
- **Tuesday, January 24** - Rally in the Capitol Rotunda with speakers and awards from 11am – 1:30pm. Information tables from 9am – 3pm in both wings of the Capital Building and visits with legislators. Literally hundreds of people walk through the Capital Building and visit the information tables. There is no charge for the Tuesday activities.

Please register as soon as possible. The registration form can be down loaded from www.arcnm.org. For registration information contact Steve Scarton, The Arc’s Self-Advocacy Program Coordinator, at 505-883-4630, 1-800-358-6493 or sscarton@arcnm.org.

Medicaid, State by State

The Arc of the United States is excited to announce a valuable new resource available at www.thearc.org to help guide people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families through the complexities of Medicaid benefits, services and supports. The Medicaid Reference Desk offers detailed state-by-state information about Medicaid benefits, a glossary of terms, answers to frequently asked questions, person-centered planning resources and a blog from The Arc's training specialist about issues related to Medicaid, self-advocacy and planning.

Medicaid is the largest source of financing for disabilities services in the United States. For people with disabilities and for those who provide their care, Medicaid serves as a valuable safety net. Often the only source of financial assistance for health care, Medicaid plays a critical role for people with disabilities, in providing coverage and access to care. Medicaid is, however, extremely complicated. At least half of the funds for Medicaid programs come from the Federal government with the remainder coming from state funds. Federal law contains detailed requirements and limitations on eligibility, services and financing. But, state law varies widely.

This project was made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities (Grant No. 90 DN0215). We encourage you to explore the Medicaid Reference Desk on www.thearc.org under What We Do – Resources.

The Arc of California Files Lawsuit

The Arc of California has filed a lawsuit against the California Department of Developmental Services and the Department of Health Care Services claiming that the State is violating federal law by failing to adequately fund services needed by individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The lawsuit asks that laws requiring the State to provide necessary funding to ensure adequate care for individuals with I/DD be enforced.

In its case, The Arc of California lays out how the State has not been providing sufficient support for people with I/DD because of economic woes. Over the last decade, there have been rate freezes, program closures, and budget cuts that have shut down many community-based services, leaving more than 240,000 Californians with disabilities in dire straits.

In early October, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a case that The Arc and the disability community are watching very closely. The case, Douglas vs. Independent Living Center of Southern California, et al, concerns whether individuals and providers can sue States to block cuts to Medicaid rates. California maintains that only the Federal government can enforce the portion of the law concerning payment rates. This case may impact the Arc of California's lawsuit as well. For more information visit www.thearca.org.

Donate to The Arc

The Arc of New Mexico is a statewide, non-profit agency that was born 56 years ago as a grassroots movement of families working vigilantly to create services for children and adults with disabilities who were being denied opportunities to receive an education, to work and to participate in their communities.

The Arc works on behalf of individuals with disabilities and their families every day to ensure that they have the support to participate in and contribute to their communities. The Arc serves as the Corporate Guardian for over 180 individuals, administers Special Needs Trusts for over 400 individuals and helps over 50 individuals with their Social Security Benefits in our Representative Payee Program. We also serve hundreds of people with disabilities and their families through our Self-Advocacy Programs and our Southern New Mexico Office located in Anthony, NM.

The Arc of New Mexico depends on public donations to sustain our work. You can make a one-time gift or a recurring gift. [Make a donation now](#) to support our mission to benefit all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in New Mexico.

A memorial gift is a beautiful and lasting tribute for a loved one or to a family as an expression of sympathy. Family and friends can be recognized with a gift in their honor. This might be for a special occasion such as a birthday, anniversary, holiday, wedding, retirement, etc.

REGISTRATION FORM

THE DISABILITY COALITION

**2012 Pre-Legislative-Session Forum and
Workshop on Health Care Reform and People with Disabilities**

I will be attending the following events on January 7th:

___ Pre-Legislative-Session Forum, 8:30 to 12:30

___ Lunch, 12:30 to 1:30

___ Health Care Reform Workshop, 1:30 to 3:30

Name: _____

Organization (if any): _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Registration Fee (\$10):

___ Enclosed is my check for \$10, made out to Disability Rights New Mexico.

___ I will pay at the door (**cash or check only; no credit or debit cards, please**).

Mail it to DRNM, 1720 Louisiana NE, #204, Albuquerque, NM 87110