



Monthly Memo
December, 2012

www.arcnm.org

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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.

Disability Coalition Hosts Legislative Reception

On Tuesday, December 11, 2012 The Disability Coalition hosted an evening reception for state legislators from Albuquerque and surrounding areas including Rio Rancho and Belen. The event was very successful and was attended by 26 new and veteran legislators. Master of Ceremonies was Senator Gerald Ortiz y Pino with a welcome by Jim Jackson, Chair of the Coalition. Each of the legislators introduced themselves and Doris Husted, Director of Public Policy introduced the members of the Coalition. Other sponsors were also recognized.

Dede Feldman and Danice Picraux, both who recently retired as legislators, were recognized for their many years of service and efforts on behalf of individuals with disabilities and their families. Each legislator was given a packet with information about the various disability organizations.

I was very impressed with the legislators that attended the reception. They are individuals that come from all walks of life who really want to make a difference in their communities and their state. A surprising number of the attendees have one or more family members who are affected by some type of disability.

Please take time to contact your local state Representative or Senator to tell them your personal story. Your story can have a powerful impact on how they vote on legislation affecting people with disabilities.

*“Story is what defines us and sets us apart.
It’s what allows us to connect with each another — to truly know and be known.”*

Jeff Goins, Writer

The Arc's 2013 Legislative Priorities

Maintain Services

Issue: Medicaid continues to be the crucial source of funding for people with disabilities that allows them to live in their communities with the supports and services they need. Any reduction in the state appropriation or even a failure to appropriate sufficient dollars will result in a loss of services and a corresponding reduction in the individual's quality of life. The Human Services Department has submitted its 1115 Medicaid waiver – Centennial Care. Issues may come up before the legislature regarding such things as expanding Medicaid eligibility to 138% of poverty as the federal law now requires.

Position: *Maintain current services for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.*

Waiting List

Issue: Individuals with developmental disabilities continue to apply for services and then be placed on a waiting list (called the Centralized Registry by the Department of Health). People should not have to wait for services that are important to their ability to live and participate in their communities in a safe and fulfilling manner. 5500 or more individuals (un-served and underserved) are on the waiting list for developmental disabilities services with a wait time of up to ten years.

Position:

1. *Protect the current DD Waiver appropriation and add new dollars to serve more people.*
2. *Protect the state general funded programs and add new dollars to serve more people.*

Medicaid Eligibility

Issue: New Mexico has one of the highest rates of individuals without any form of health insurance. This leads to higher insurance premiums for people who purchase health insurance and to more health care provided by the hospitals that is not reimbursed.

Position: *Support efforts to maintain the State Coverage Insurance program provided under Medicaid under the new Centennial Care waiver.*

Guardianship Services Funding

Issue: The funding for legal assistance and training for families seeking guardianship of a family member is not adequate to meet the need. Furthermore, the funding for corporate guardianship services no longer meets the need and a waiting list for services exists.

Position: *Support the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council's requested budget.*

The Arc of New Mexico Survey

The Arc is proposing to offer clinics to help individuals, family members and other interdisciplinary team members to refocus discussions upon the needs of the individual within the team planning process instead of assessment scores and budget categories.

Your responses to the following questions will help us develop our curriculum and information:

1. In your opinion what is the biggest challenge to planning for yourself or your loved one's needs in the team meetings?
2. If you were to attend a clinic about person-centered planning what information would be helpful to you?
3. What information do you need about the new proposed DD Waiver services and standards?

Please return to:
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Urge Governor Martinez to adopt the Medicaid Expansion!

Excerpted from a Message from Ellen Pinnes and The Disability Coalition.

As a major part of covering the uninsured, the Affordable Care Act (ACA, or “Obamacare”) extends Medicaid eligibility for adults up to 138% of the federal poverty level (about \$15,400 for a single adult and \$31,800 in a family of four) starting in January 2014. Currently, parents of minor children qualify for Medicaid in New Mexico only if their income is about 30% of poverty, and adults without minor children can't get Medicaid at all regardless of income level, unless they have some other special characteristic that makes them eligible, like being pregnant or being on SSI due to disability.

Unfortunately, when the Supreme Court upheld the ACA earlier this year, it made the Medicaid expansion optional. Each state now has to decide for itself whether to adopt the change and cover more people. The Coalition believes that Governor Martinez and the Legislature should make the choice to adopt the expansion, and we hope you can help us convince them. This is an offer we can't afford to turn down!

Why the Coalition supports Medicaid expansion:

- *The expansion will provide coverage to people who can't afford to pay for health care. Covering them through Medicaid will significantly reduce the number of uninsured people in our state.*
- *Many of the people who will become eligible have disabilities.*
- *The state will pay only a very small part of the cost of the expansion.*
- *Increased revenue to the state treasury as a direct result of the expansion will more than cover the state's small percentage of the cost.*
- *Medical providers won't have to provide as much uncompensated care because more people will have coverage and providers will be paid for their services.*
- *The \$6 billion in new federal Medicaid money that will come into New Mexico in just the first six years will help to develop and support our health care infrastructure.*

Your message to the Governor:

- *Your message may be as simple as "Please adopt the Medicaid expansion".*
- *You can add a few reasons why this is the right thing to do. The bullet points above give some reasons you can mention in support of the expansion.*
- *If you call the governor's office, the person answering the phone may ask why you support the expansion, so be ready to respond with one or two reasons.*

How to contact Governor Martinez:

- Through her website, www.governor.state.nm.us. Click on "Contact and Constituent Services" in the upper right corner of the homepage, then on "Contact the Governor" in the drop-down menu. Fill out the form and click "Submit" at the bottom of the page.
- By phone at 505-476-2200 or send a fax to 505-476-2226. (Sorry, there's no toll-free number for long-distance calls from outside the Santa Fe area.)
- By mail to Gov. Susana Martinez, State Capitol Room 400, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501.

Thanks for making the voice of the disability community heard!

Register Now - 2013 Disability Rights Awareness Day

"Moving Forward Together for Disability Rights"

Monday, February 4 – One day seminar to learn the key issues. (Hotel to be determined. The Courtyard by Marriott is under construction and a possible new venue is the Hilton Santa Fe Historic Plaza.)

Tuesday, February 5 – Rally at the Capitol Rotunda (Speakers, Awards, Information Fair and visits with Legislators)

Join New Mexicans from across the State during the 2013 Legislative Session in Santa Fe. A hands-on community forum to advocate for your rights!

A registration form is included with this memo. For more information contact Steve Scarton at The Arc of New Mexico at 505-883-4630 or 1-800-358-6493 or visit the web at www.arcnm.org.

We Are Waiting – End the DD Waiver Waiting List Campaign

Are you or a family member waiting for services?

Share your story here.

Call the Arc of New Mexico today at 505-883-4630 or Toll Free 1-800-358-6493. You can also email Carmen Garcia @ cgarcia@arcnm.org. Be sure to check out our website at www.arcnm.org.

*End the DD Waiver Waiting List Campaign funded by
The New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council*

Be an Arc Ally - 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.

We Thank our 2012 Donors and Sponsors

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