



# SOCIAL WORK NEWSLETTER

February 2014

## Transportation

While the dialysis center itself is not responsible for your transportation, we realize it is necessary part of your getting dialysis. You may see many different vehicles bringing patients into dialysis and have wondered what is the difference and what you may be eligible for.

**Medi-cal** transportation- These are typically white vans that bring 2 or 3 patients per trip. “escorts” are permitted when patient needs assistance. If you have IEHP or Molina you must contact your insurance to set up rides. This is no charge for persons who qualify for Medi-cal. It transports to medical appointments only.

**ADA**- a.k.a. direct access bus. Tall green and white bus for disabled individuals through Victor Valley Transit Authority. Local transportation in the high desert. Typically \$2.50 per trip, each way. Can be more for increased distances. Will take disabled individuals to any local place. Used for grocery shopping, pharmacy, Medi cal or social security office and for local medical appointments. IF an escort is designated on application they will only transport with that escort no charge. If escort is just for that trip, they must also pay the \$2.50 each way. Talk to your social worker about getting ADA or about renewals.

**TREP**- a program operated through Aging and Adult Services where a person living outside of the home can get paid approximately .50 cents per mile to transport disabled individuals. This program operates when money is available to run the program. Contact 800-510-2020 to see if currently available.

## Changing or Eliminating your Medi-Cal HMO

When you receive Medi-cal, you will automatically be assigned to be with an HMO to manage your Medi-Cal. Examples locally are IEHP and Molina. Under these HMOs, you may further be assigned a medical group. **YOU CAN CHANGE THESE GROUPS AND HMOs.**

First of all, if you have Medicare you no longer have to have your Medi-Cal with an HMO.

Secondly, If you are dissatisfied with your managed care you can change it. For EITHER scenario you call HEALTH CARE OPTIONS 1-800-430-4263.

If you wish to keep your HMO but do not like your medical group, simply call IEHP or MOLINA and ask to change medical groups.

## Medicare A, B, C, D...What?

Over the years, Medicare realized that they were not confusing enough, so they began to divide their benefits up and assign them letters. Here is what the letters are all about:

Part A: This covers HOSPITAL visits.

Part B: This covers Outpatient services like doctors visits, home health, xrays, dialysis, other outpatient treatments.

Part D: This covers drugs you get at the pharmacy.

Part C: Never mind. It is a special selection for HMOs to combine A,B and D coverage into one plan benefit.



### **Now That I'm on Dialysis, How Do I Make an Income?**

There is no simple answer besides come and talk to your social worker. But here are some guidelines:

By definition, anyone receiving dialysis treatments are disabled. Many may collect income they are entitled to under Federal and State programs.

#### **Federal Disability Income (SSDI)**

For those legal residents, with a work history prior to being disabled, Social Security put away money for you toward retirement, which you can now receive as income while disabled.

#### **Social Security Income (SSI)**

If you are disabled with an income less than the poverty level, (\$850) per month, you can receive this income to provide enough money to attain poverty level.

#### **State Disability Income (SDI)**

SDI is State funded program paid by EDD. If you were employed legally before you went on dialysis. You should apply within 60 days of when you had to stop working because of your disability. It will pay you for 1 year an amount that is based upon how much you paid in. If you are currently getting pain unemployment or workmen's compensation you are not eligible.

Remember you can receive more than 1 type of disability income at a time.

#### **Work**

A few people who receive dialysis treatments continue to be able to work. There are various options that can be accommodating to working, such as home dialysis. You may need to take time off from work for various medical procedures. The law provides for Medical Leave through the Federal Medical Leave Act (FMLA) which can

get you government protected time off for medical conditions as well as income. Your family can also use this benefit to care for you when needed with protected time off from their employer. See your Human Resources for FMLA forms.

#### **Support Group Moved**

Dialysis Support Group is now at Desert Community Bank (DCB) on Hesperia Road. Corner of Silica and Hesperia Road. It continues to be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 6:00pm.

#### **Copays for Medications**

Social workers are applying for persons who need assistance with paying copays. Programs exist that can help you. Please let your social worker know if you are having trouble affording your copay, or if your copay seems higher than it should be. We have already identified some individuals who we expect to be hitting the "donut hole" this year and we will be approaching you with options.

#### **Humor**



I really feel that you should start dialysis immediately!