



SOCIAL WORK NEWSLETTER

March 2014

Do You Live Alone?

Medical alert buttons have become popular for those living alone, allowing for safety and independence to seniors and the disabled. Often medical alert buttons are set up through your home phone land line, allowing contact with live operators 24 hours a day in an emergency. Different companies offer a selection of plans starting from \$25.95 to \$40.00 monthly. Some insurance plans offer services to their members at a lower cost. **Alert1 is currently offering a Spring special for \$25.95 monthly.** You may call and order toll free at 1-866-581-4540 or see your social worker for more information.

UPDATE from February Newsletter: Changes for Medi-Cal

Letters have been coming to some of you current Medicare/Medi-Cal patients explaining that **your Medi-Cal will be assigned to an HMO by 5/1/14 if you do not choose one yourself.** Your choice for an HMO locally, includes IEHP and Molina.

For those patients receiving Medi-Cal for the first time, you will automatically be assigned to an HMO to manage your Medi-Cal. Under these HMOs, you may further be assigned a medical group to manage your care. If you are not satisfied with your care, **YOU CAN CHANGE** your medical group and doctor. 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.

Looking for Volunteers for Peer Support and Encouragement

Desert Cities Dialysis is looking for experienced dialysis patients that would like to make a difference in a peer's life. Who knows better than you what it feels like to start dialysis for the first time, and the challenges of adjusting to a life on dialysis. **We believe that you can help in a way that only someone that has been there can help.** Please see a social worker if you are interested in this new position. Being of service to others not only helps the new dialysis patient but helps you too!!

If You Miss a Treatment

We here at **Desert Cities Dialysis** would like to remind patients that missing a dialysis treatment can put an individual at risk for serious health complications and even possible death. It is easy to forget that the normal person with kidney function flushes toxins out of the body 24 hours a day. But the dialysis patient flushes toxins for only the time he/she is on dialysis, roughly, 12-16 hours a week.

Therefore, we ask here at DCD, if you must miss a dialysis treatment, please attempt to reschedule your treatment for the following day. **YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON IT!!**

Diabetic Shoes

You can get new diabetic shoes every year. If you are diabetic and have had issues with foot wounds or other complications, talk to your PCP about diabetic shoes.





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Audio Books for Visually Impaired

The Braille Institute has provided Desert Cities Dialysis with audio book players and about 40 books. Feel free to ask for an audio book and player to listen to while at dialysis. If you are interested in having audio books and a player at your home you can call 1-800-808-2555 and request one.

Safety Net Grants

American Kidney Fund has reopened their grant to assist patients with dialysis related expenses. Limit of \$100 per year per patient. Talk to your social worker about applying for assistance paying for medications, transportation, or other health related expenses.

Cancer Care Grants

If you or a loved one have been diagnosed with cancer, there is a grant available to assist with care, medications and transportation. You can call 1-800-843-HOPE or go to cancercare.org website to apply for assistance.

Assistive Telephones at Home

California Telephone Access Program is a government program that provides free home phones that assist those with hearing, vision or physical limitations to make using a phone easier. Desert Cities Dialysis will be having a representative in the lobby later this month to demonstrate and give away phones. Make sure and stop by if you need a phone.

Home Health Services

Your insurance typically covers for medical services in the home that cannot be provided at the dialysis center. Talk to your social worker about services you may need your Doctor to order:

Wound Care- If you have a opening in your skin of any kind that needs care.

Evaluation- Check your medications, blood pressure, and evaluate your health needs for recommendations to you and your doctor.

Physical Therapy-Help improve your strength, balance, endurance. Also, proper transfer of yourself or your caregiver to prevent injuries.

Humor

