



# *SOCIAL WORK NEWSLETTER*

*February 2015*

## **Dialysis Support Group**

High Desert Kidney Hope, a local nonprofit organization offers support groups every second and fourth Tuesday each month from 6 to 7:30pm. If you received a calendar from High Desert Kidney Hope, the dates of dialysis are marked on the calendar. The next meetings are February 10th and February 24th. These are open meetings for all to attend. The meetings are held on the second floor of Desert Community Bank on the corner of Hesperia Rd. and Silica Rd.

## **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 the difference is 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. It 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.

## **Safety Net Grant Available Again**

The American Kidney Fund’s Safety Net Grant offers \$100 per patient, per year. This grant is intended as a reimbursement for travel costs, medication copays or medical equipment. So please come see your social worker to apply. Please bring receipts for reimbursement.

## **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. If you have Kaiser, they have a low income program for assistance. If you have Caremore, but not Medi-Cal, it is very likely you will need assistance before you reach the “donut hole”.

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### **Would you like to work, but thought you would lose your disability or SSI benefits?**

Social Security's work incentives and ***Ticket to Work programs*** can help you if you are interested in working. Special rules now allow you to work temporarily without losing your monthly Social Security disability or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. **A nine month trial period allows you to test your ability to work without any risks to your benefits. You can get full disability payments during this period no matter how much you earn.**

After this nine-month trial period, you can work an additional three years risk free and still receive benefits for any month in which your earnings do not exceed certain limits:

- \$1,740 for blind individuals; or
- \$1,040 if you are not blind.

Additional incentives to help you succeed back in the work force include:

- Continued Medicare or Medi-CAL while you are working; and
- Help with education, training and rehabilitation to start a new line of work.

For more information you can call toll free 1-800-772-1213 or visit their website at [www.socialsecurity.gov/work](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work).

### **If You Miss a Treatment**

Missing a dialysis treatment can put an individual at risk for serious health complications and possibly death. The normal 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. Please reschedule for the next day!

### **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. Please talk with your social worker on how to apply for your free home 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 an opening in your skin of any kind that needs care.

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

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

### **Humor**

