

LIVING WITH AUTHORITY

A NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY THE RIVERSIDE COUNTY IHSS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND THE IHSS PUBLIC AUTHORITY
FOR ITS CONSUMERS AND THEIR HOME CARE WORKERS



Autumn 2008 VOLUME 5, NO. 1

RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK...



It is truly an honor to write to you about the great things that are happening at the Public Authority. I was appointed to Executive Director of the IHSS Public Authority in July of this year. In accepting the appointment, I have made an important commitment to support the needs of our home care providers and consumers. I feel very fortunate to have a dedicated and knowledgeable group of staff that strives to carry out this mission. We are dedicated to helping the elderly and the disabled remain safely and independently in their own homes. We will move ahead and seize every opportunity for growth and improvement in the services that we provide.

In this edition of our newsletter, you will find a new Questions and Answers (Q&A) section. Our hope is that you find this information useful to you. We will publish questions that are frequently asked about our services, including benefits, hours, tasks, training, etc. We encourage you to call us and ask general questions on any topic related to IHSS and the Public Authority. We will consult with the experts and publish an accurate response. Certain responses will not be published to protect your confidentiality.

As you peruse through the newsletter, don't miss the information on becoming a member of the IHSS Advisory Committee. We could use your feedback and ideas on improving the program. Also, you will find very useful information for home care providers on health benefits and how to use your health plan effectively. On News from the Registry, you will meet our new Registry staff!

Leo Harrison, Deputy Director for Adult Services Department of Public Social Services, has included an article about the problem of elder abuse. This is a growing and very serious problem in our society. Mr. Harrison tells us how to identify abuse and how all of us can come together to protect our elderly. He reminds us that we are mandated by law to report any suspected abuse. Remember that you have the power to make a difference and make someone's life better and safer.

We greatly appreciate the important work that home care providers do throughout the year. The month of November is particularly special because the Board of Supervisors has proclaimed it Family Caregivers Month. In recognition of our county's home care providers, we will be holding caregiver celebrations in the western and eastern parts of the county on November 20 and 21, respectively (see the enclosed flyer). The conference will include informational workshops, distinguished speakers, and vendor booths. I'd like to thank Susan Loew, Director Department of Public Social Services, and Leo Harrison, Deputy Director Adult Services, for their support of this worthy effort. This conference is also made possible by the Public Authority in collaboration with local partners, vendors, and organizations that have generously donated their time and resources, including the Riverside County Office on Aging, the Braille Institute, Exclusive Care and the United Domestic Workers of America. I look forward to seeing you there!

Warm Regards,

Anna L. Martinez,
Executive Director
IHSS Public Authority

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JOIN THE IHSS ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Are you a home care worker or a consumer on the IHSS program? Do you have ideas about how to make IHSS better? Would you like to meet others who are like-minded and passionate about contributing? Then join the IHSS Advisory Committee!

Positions on the IHSS Advisory Committee are appointed through your local County Supervisor. These positions are on a volunteer basis, however, wheelchair transportation or mileage reimbursement is available, as well as home care worker expenses if you need help to attend.

It is not necessary to be on the Committee to participate. The IHSS Advisory Committee meets once a month (with a few exceptions) at various Riverside County locations. Please come and tell us about your experiences, let us know your ideas for improving the program, and join in the discussions. You can also request to be placed on our mailing list so you will know what issues we are working on currently and be notified of outreach events.

To find out about committee openings or meeting times and locations contact:

**IHSS Advisory Committee
C/O IHSS Public Authority
12125 Day Street, Suite S-101
Moreno Valley, CA 92557
(888) 470-4477**

Email: IHSSPublicAuthority@riversidedpss.org

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: I need my house cleaned inside and out for rent inspection. Is this okay?

A: This may be considered heavy cleaning and should be discussed with an IHSS social worker. Under certain circumstances, the county social worker can authorize additional hours for a specific period of time. If this is your situation, call the Riverside County IHSS office at (888) 960-4477.

Q: How do I say no to unauthorized tasks and still keep my job?

A: At the Public Authority Registry we receive numerous calls from home care workers who have concerns about the tasks that they are asked to perform for their consumers. Many home care workers are aware that certain tasks are not authorized tasks, meaning that IHSS does not pay for them. If the home care worker knowingly claims time for these tasks, he/she is committing fraud. The problem is that many home care workers are uncomfortable refusing to perform these tasks. They are fearful that they will lose their job or offend the consumer. The consumer is your employer and you may feel awkward or uncomfortable

correcting them. The staff here at the Public Authority recognizes this problem and is here to help. How you say it makes a difference. Don't assume that your consumer knows better or is just trying to get you to do things. Sometimes, consumers are not aware of what the tasks might be. One way to resolve this issue is to call the consumer's Public Authority community program specialist or their social worker and ask for their authorized tasks. Write them down and show them to your consumer. If your consumer has any questions, he/she can also contact the Public Authority staff or his/her social worker. Remember, claiming hours that are not authorized on your timesheet is fraudulent.



MY WORLD – YOUR WORLD – OUR WORLD – FREE OF ELDER ABUSE



Each year, the month of May is set aside as a time to educate ourselves and our community about the problem of elder abuse. We need to be aware that unfortunately, our senior population is increasingly becoming a target of those who would take advantage of their trust and generosity. As the number of seniors grows, so do the crimes against them.

The International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse has chosen a theme for this year's Elder Abuse Awareness activities which says: "My World - Your World - Our World - Free of Elder Abuse". I know that taking on the entire world will take time, but how about Riverside County? Can we work together and wipe out this problem in Riverside County? As care providers that serve our senior population, we should be extra vigilant to what we see, hear or observe when it comes to elder abuse.

What is Elder Abuse? Elder abuse is any action or lack of action by a person who is in a position of trust who may willfully cause harm to any older person. The harm may be physical, emotional, sexual, or financial or simply neglect. Elder abuse is still a hidden crime. Even with all of our efforts, only 1 out of 5 elder abuse situations is reported. Elder abuse affects us all, so we need to come together to protect our seniors; and in doing so, we will protect our future. It is our responsibility to provide our seniors with a safe, healthy environment to live out their "Golden Years".

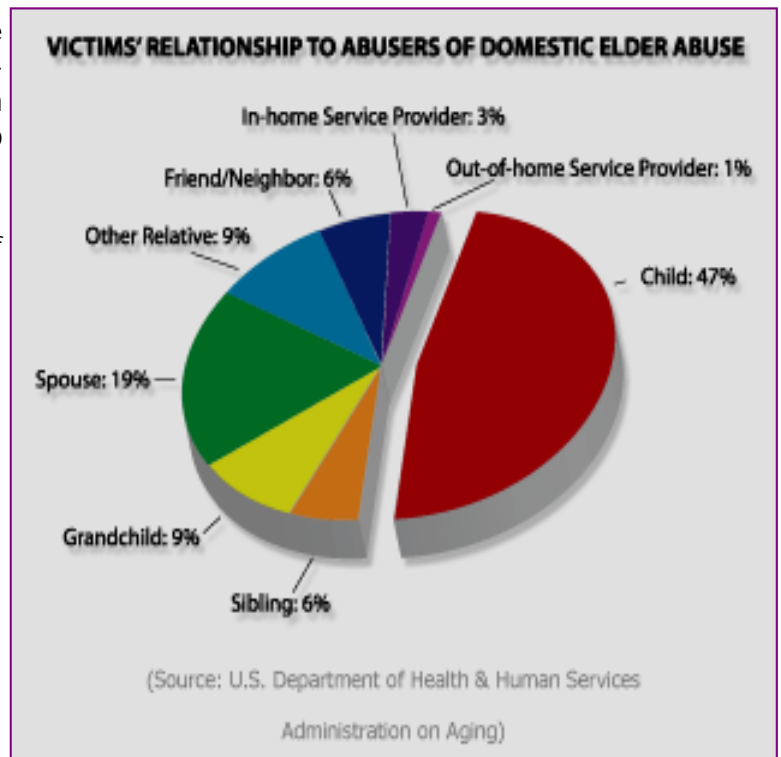
Did you know that care providers are required by law to report elder abuse? You do not have to make a judgment or know all the specific facts; just call and report your suspicions. You can call anytime to discuss a situation and to begin the process of getting help for an elder who needs protection. The Adult Services Division of DPSS has specially trained social workers who can help in these situations and will assist seniors by giving them the support and choices they deserve to live their lives in comfort and without fear.

You are an important part of the team of people whose job it is to protect our elderly. Seniors depend on you every day, to be aware and to reach out to get help for those who are unable to do so for themselves.

Together we can make Riverside County free of elder abuse!

**To report any concern or elder abuse situation you can call
1-800-491-7123.
There is someone there
24 hours a day to assist.**

*Leo B. Harrison, M.S.W.
Deputy Director - Adult Services Division
Riverside County Department of
Public Social Services*



GREAT NEWS FOR HOME CARE WORKERS WHO ARE RECEIVING HEALTH BENEFITS!

NEW STAFF-We would like to introduce two new members of the Health Benefits Team, Sandra Ochoa, who is our new Health Benefits Liaison and Belina Lopez, who is our new Sr. HR Clerk. Both Sandra and Belina have been with the Public Authority for several years and we know they will do an awesome job with their new responsibilities! Welcome!

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS-As of March 1, 2008, the health benefits package includes dental coverage through United Concordia and a vision discount program through Davis Vision at a current premium rate of \$32.24 per month. These new benefits are in addition to the medical benefits provided through Exclusive Care and cannot be purchased separately. If you are already enrolled in Health Benefits through the IHSS Public Authority, you will automatically receive these exciting new benefits. If you have worked 80 hours for the last three consecutive months and you would like to find out if you are currently eligible to enroll in the Health Benefits package, please call your Health Benefits Liaison, Sandra Ochoa, at 1-888-470-4477 ext. 237.

WAIT LIST- At this time there is a wait for a home care worker to actually be enrolled into health benefits program once they have submitted their application. When a home care worker becomes eligible, they are advised by mail that they are eligible and that a wait list is in effect. The enrollment application is entered into the system; and the home care worker will be enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis as open slots become available.

OPEN ENROLLMENT- Open enrollment notifications will be sent to potentially eligible home care workers in mid-December. We will be advising home care workers that they can request an enrollment application, although they may be placed on the wait list. The home care worker will also be advised of any premium rate increase that may become effective in the near future.



*Health Benefits Staff (left to right): **Belina Lopez**, Sr. HR Clerk; **Barbara Simpson-Lara**, Admin. Svcs. Analyst II; **Nan McCoy**, Admin. Svcs. Manager-Operations; **Sandra Ochoa**, Health Benefits Liaison and **Bobbie Rivas**, Sr. Admin. Analyst.*

**COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
CAREGIVERS CONFERENCE 2008**

**CONFERENCIA DEL TRABAJADOR
DEL CUIDADO EN CASA DEL
CONDADO DE RIVERSIDE 2008**



*Taking Care of Yourself
Cuidando de Si Mismo*

Riverside area:

NOVEMBER 20, 2008
GRACIOUS GATHERINGS
23706 MEYER DRIVE (MARB)
RIVERSIDE, CA 92518
8:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M.

Desert area:

NOVEMBER 21, 2008
BRAILLE INSTITUTE
70-251 RAMON ROAD
RANCHO MIRAGE, CA 92270
8:30 A.M.-3:00 P.M.

For more information about this event, or to RSVP by 11-18-08, please call the
Riverside County Public Authority at 1-888-470-4477.

Para mas información, o para registrarse antes de 11-18-08, favor de llamar a la
Autoridad Pública del Condado de Riverside al 1-888-470-4477.

If you need special accommodations, please call us by November 1st, at 1-888- 470-4477.

Si necesita una asistencia en especial, favor de llamarnos antes de Noviembre 1, al 1-888- 470-4477.

No children please. Childcare will not be provided.

No niños por favor. Cuidado de niños no estará disponible.

HOW TO USE YOUR HEALTH PLAN EFFECTIVELY



The first thing you should do is read the Summary Plan Document (SPD). If you need additional clarification, please call our Member Services Department at 1-800-862-1133, press 1.

The first person you should call for your healthcare needs is your Primary Care Physician. If you must get hospital or similar services, you must go to a facility contracted with Exclusive Care. For more information about which facilities are with Exclusive Care, call Exclusive Care 1-800-862-1133, press 1 or visit our website at www.exclusivecare.com. You may receive emergency care services at any Emergency Department.

Here is a chart to help you learn where to go for medical services. The services you may need are listed in the boxes on the left. Find the service you need, look in the box just to the right of it and you will find out where to go. This may help eliminate additional out-of-pocket cost to you. For a complete listing of all services, please refer to the Exclusive Care SPD.

Type of help you need	Where to go. Who to call.
Emergency Care Services	Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department.
Urgent Care	Call your Primary Care Physician or Exclusive Care at 1-800-862-1133 , press 1 for directions to the nearest facility. You may also refer to the Exclusive Care Provider directory or the Exclusive Care website at www.exclusivecare.com
A physical exam, wellness visit or immunizations	Call your Primary Care Physician for an appointment.
Treatment for an illness or injury that is not an emergency	Call your Primary Care Physician for an appointment.
Family planning services	Call your Primary Care Physician for an appointment.
Test and treatment for Sexually Transmitted Disease (STDs)	Call your Primary Care Physician for an appointment.
To see a specialist	Go to your Primary Care Physician first. Your doctor will give you a referral, if needed.



EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATIONS AND WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Did you know that as the "Employer of Record" for Riverside County's IHSS home care workers, the IHSS Public Authority manages these additional services?

Workers' Compensation:

At no cost to you, it is an insurance that the law requires your employer to carry to help you if you are injured on the job or if you become ill due to your job. If you are injured while assisting a consumer in their home, performing an authorized task, or while transporting a consumer on an approved task, you can file a Workers' Compensation Claim. Feel free to contact the Public Authority Workers' Compensation Liaison at 1-888-470-4477 and a report will be taken when you call. You will also be referred to a physician at that time.

Verification of Employment:

This service is to provide accurate proof of employment, which could either be: dates of employment, hourly wage, total monthly hours of employment, next increase in pay, past years of employment earnings or year-to-date earnings. Should you need to verify employment for your loan officer, a current job offer, a Housing Complex, Social Security Administration, Child Support Administration, your GAIN counselor, your Eligibility Worker, or anyone who may be requesting this information from you, please fax or mail your request along with a release of authorization to the County of Riverside IHSS Public Authority. Fax: 951-686-1419, Mailing address: 12125 Day Street S-101 Moreno Valley, CA. 92557. A release of authorization is simply a form/paper containing your name, Social Security number, and signature, stating that you authorize the County of Riverside In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority to release your financial data to the requesting party.

NEWS FROM THE REGISTRY!

We are pleased to announce our newest team member, Erika Martinez. Erika joined the IHSS Public Authority Training Team on January 31, 2008. Erika is in charge of training for the Eastern part of the county (all desert area) and for the Hemet/San Jacinto and surrounding areas. Erika comes with a great deal of experience in training and working with communities. Her experience has always centered on working with people and she believes in being hands on. We know that those who have been fortunate enough to work with Erika will agree that she knows her stuff.

In April, Erika began conducting all the training for the Desert and Hemet areas along with her team partner Cynthia Urrutia. Many of you already know Cynthia; feel assured that she will continue to be a vital part of the team. Remember you can continue to contact Cynthia with questions regarding trainings and to schedule training classes. Erika and Cynthia will continue working with community groups and agencies to increase the participation of the Public Authority in the Desert and Hemet Areas.

Erika and Cynthia will also be working with consumers to provide information sessions and assist in mediating situations as they arise. Already they are talking about this year's caregiver conference and look forward to bringing you exciting information. If you have any questions, want to schedule training, an information session or want to invite our team to one of your community events, contact the Public Authority at 1-888-470-4477.



*Training Team-Eastern Region (left to right): **Cynthia Urrutia**, Registry Specialist and **Erika Martinez**, Community Program Specialist II*

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

ELDER ABUSE HOTLINE 1(800) 491-7123

CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE 1(800) 442-4918

IHSS INFORMATION TOLL FREE 1(888) 960-4477

IHSS PAYROLL UNIT 1(800) 575-2588

EXCLUSIVE CARE 1(800) 962-1133

UNITED DOMESTIC WORKERS 1(866) 417-7300

OFFICE ON AGING SENIOR HELPLINK 1(800) 510-2020

IHSS PUBLIC AUTHORITY 1(888) 470-4477

IHSS ADVISORY COMMITTEE 1(888) 470-4477 ext. 227

**WORKERS' COMPENSATION/EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION FOR HOME CARE WORKERS
1(888) 470-4477**

DIAL 2-1-1 from your residence or 1(800) 464-1123 from your cell or business line to get information on critical health and human services available in your community.

If you would like to be removed from our mailing list or if you would like this newsletter in an alternate format, please contact Leti Galindo, IHSS Public Authority Program Specialist, by calling 1-888-470-4477 ext. 226.

EN ESPAÑOL

Si desea ser removido de nuestra lista de correo o si desea obtener este boletín de noticias en Español, favor de contactar a Leti Galindo, Especialista del Programa de Servicios de Cuidado de Casa Personal de la Autoridad Publica al 1-888-470-4477 extensión 226.

**County of Riverside
IHSS Public Authority
12125 Day St S-101
Moreno Valley, CA 92557**

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