2015 Kansas Disability Caucus: Igniting the Fire!

After three years, the Kansas Disability Caucus has returned and was re-energized! Over 200 members of the disability community from across the state came together on August 13-14, 2015 at the Ramada Hotel in Topeka. The theme was “ADA 25: Igniting the Fire!” and it got everyone pumped up and excited to accomplish great things for the Kansas disability community.

The Caucus started off with a panel of various speakers to discuss the past, present, and the future of the Americans Disabilities Act (ADA), the Kansas Statewide Plan for Independent Living (SPIL), and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). There were numerous workshop sessions for members to attend throughout the Caucus. There was a Regional Caucus Session to assist in developing the new SPIL. The state was split into three regions and those regions came up with barriers/issues facing Kansans’ disability community and solutions to these issues. Many solutions focused on more advocacy, employment, and education.

RCIL was able to send 10 staff members to the Caucus. Many staff volunteered and participated in the sessions and other caucus functions. The Information and Outreach Coordinator, Beth Burnett, was on the panel for the SPIL during the opening session and she gave a short presentation on Outreach. The Director of Core Services, Adam Burnett, along with his workgroup members, gave a presentation on the SPIL Employment during a workshop session, and the Independent Living Specialist, Macy Collins, gave a presentation on the SPIL Housing during a workshop session, along with her workgroup members. RCIL’s Assistive Technology Specialists, Mikel McCary and Sarah Knutson, displayed their Assistive Technology for Kansans booth in the exhibitor hall throughout the entire event.

The Caucus also had an awards banquet along with an inspirational keynote speaker named Matt Christensen. Matt shared his story about his learning disability. He shared his struggles in life and how he used his self-advocacy and study strategies to become successful. He graduated from college and became a high school teacher at his school where he graduated from high school. By the end of the Caucus, Kansans were igniting the fire! They were geared up and ready to accomplish great things for the Kansas disability community by the next Disability Caucus in 2017.
**KAN-DO**

Are you looking for a way to stay updated on the latest changes to disability programs and services? Do you want to learn about the newest proposals and how they may affect your healthcare and community living services?

Kansas Advocacy Network-Disability Organization (KAN-DO) is a brand new statewide consumer group created to help keep you informed! KAN-DO will provide frequent email updates, Facebook postings, and other contacts to keep you in-the-know.

If you have questions about how the changes may affect you – ask KAN-DO! Not only will KAN-DO put you in touch with professionals who are knowledgeable with Kansas’ disability services, but you will be able to connect directly with other consumers across Kansas who are just like you.

KAN-DO is seeking members who want to SPEAK UP about disability issues and make a difference! If you are interested in joining KAN-DO call Adam at the Osage City office at 1-800-580-7248!

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**Advocacy in Action!**

RCIL Friends groups have been busy working on advocacy projects in their local communities. Over the past several months they have made a real difference for people with disabilities. Here are a few examples:

- **Emporia:** Extended length of stoplight crosswalk timers
- **El Dorado:** Installed extra benches at Walmart
- **Iola:** Increased lighting outside a local housing complex
- **Fort Scott:** Created a disability awareness quilt

In addition to those successes, the members of each Friends group had the opportunity to provide valuable information to help RCIL develop its next strategic plan. Those are only a few examples of the exciting things happening at Friends groups. If you have an idea for a local advocacy project, or if you’d like to become involved, contact your local RCIL office!

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**How to Develop a Plan**

Do you have an issue or a goal that you need some assistance to achieve? Perhaps you can’t afford that piece of medical equipment you need? Is your goal is to make an apple pie, learn how to budget, or find a job? RCIL’s Independent Living Specialists work with consumers to help them resolve their issues or achieve their goals by developing an independent living plan (ILP). The ILP involves consumers identifying their

*Continued on page 5*
Preventing the Flu: Good Health Habits Can Help Stop Germs

Fall is approaching. Weather is getting colder. Do you know what that means? Seasonal influenza also known as “the flu” is right around the corner. In the United States, flu season typically occurs between October and May according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The flu is different from a cold and it usually comes on suddenly. People who have the flu often feel some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)

Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults. Also some people may be infected with the flu, and have respiratory symptoms without a fever. So what can we do to prevent from getting the flu this year? The best way is to get a flu vaccination at your doctor’s office or your local health department. Along with getting a flu vaccination, there are six good health habits that can help stop spreading germs according to the CDC and they are:

1. **Avoid close contact.** Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

2. **Stay home when you are sick.** If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. This will help prevent spreading your illness to others.

3. **Cover your mouth and nose.** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing.

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From the Payroll Helpdesk

1. Direct Support Worker’s (DSW’s) cannot work until all paperwork is complete for each Consumers/Participant Employers. DSW’s working for Multiple Consumers/Participant Employers must receive a call or e-mail from RCIL before they can begin working for the additional Consumer/Participant.

2. DSW’s cannot work without having an active KS AuthentiCare ID number.

3. All consumers must have an authorized phone number for the DSW’s to clock in and out on. Multiple authorized numbers are allowed.

4. Consumers/Participant Employers are encouraged to call RCIL to verify that your DSW’s time worked was properly captured by KS AuthentiCare.

5. When hiring a new DSW always call our office and request a new DSW packet. Packets are updated regularly so only current packets updated in 2015 will be accepted.

6. If you have any issues with clocking in and out, call our EVV Specialist Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at 1-877-929-7655 to verify time worked.

7. We are using a new form for incomplete claims these are called “KS AuthentiCare-Consumer Verification of Time Worked” they are for incomplete claims ONLY and cannot be copied. Consumers/Participant Employers and their DSW need to add the missing information sign and return within 60 days of time worked in order to be paid.

8. Just as a reminder: The Consumer/Participant Employer needs to verify that your DSW is working within the allotted Plan of Care and only using authorized service codes, when clocking in and out.

If you have any Questions please call Payroll Helpdesk at 785-528-5045.

Continued on page 5
How to Develop a Plan Cont.

Continued from page 2

goal and the steps to take to achieve that goal.

Why should you develop a plan? Having a plan written down with a set date for accomplishment can give you something to plan and work towards. It can also help you to stay focused, motivated, and it can be a constant reminder of what you need to accomplish. When the plan is accomplished, it can build your self-confidence as you recognize your own ability and competence in achieving the goals that you have set.

How do you develop a plan? First you will need to identify your number one issue or a goal you want to achieve. Then write your SMART goal on paper. SMART stands for: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time Oriented. For example, instead of saying “find a new place to live” as a goal, use SMART goal to make it more powerful such as “I want to live in an apartment closer to the grocery store by December 31, 2015.” When a SMART goal is written, list all of the steps you need to take along with target dates to complete them. Next make a list of things that may interfere with your plan and how to overcome those barriers. When your plan is developed, place it where you will see it daily as a reminder and motivation. You can share your plan with your family and friends who will give you support and assist you when needed. They can also help your accountability to follow through with your plan.

What should you do when you accomplish your goal? When you’ve achieved your goal, take the time to enjoy and celebrate what you have accomplished!

Call RCIL at 1-800-580-7245 if you would like assistance to develop an ILP!

Preventing the Flu Cont.

Continued from page 3

or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

4. Clean your hands. Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

6. Practice other good health habits.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Hopefully by following these good health habits will help prevent from getting the flu this year. Are you interested and want more information on how to prevent from getting the flu? Please visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/flu/indext.htm.

When can I join Medicare Part D (Prescription Drug Coverage)?

October 15 - December 7, 2015 is the annual coordinated election period and is when you may join a Part D plan for 2016 but it won’t go into effect until January 1, 2016. If you have a 2015 plan this is your chance to make a choice for your 2015 coverage such as keeping your current plan or switching to a new plan. There is no enrollment needed to renew your current plan.

If you need assistance to enroll in Medicare Part D or change your prescription drug coverage plans, contact the RCIL office at 1-800-580-7245.

What is the KanCare Consumer Assistance Phone Number?

1-866-305-5147. They can answer general questions and accept requests to change KanCare health plans.

Contact the Information and Referral Specialist at 1.800.580.7245 if you have any questions or need any resources.