Kansas Telecommunications Access Program

Are you or someone you know frustrated trying to use the telephone because is it difficult to hear or understand the conversation? Do others have a hard time hearing you, or ask you to repeat yourself often? Is it challenging to dial a phone with small buttons or hard to read displays? Perhaps you don’t always hear the telephone ring or can’t get to the telephone in time before the caller hangs up.

The Kansas Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) provides specialized telephones and other telecommunications devices to Kansans with disabilities who have a difficult time using a traditional home telephone. Kansas residents with existing

From the Desk of the Payroll Department

The Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) is requiring changes to the Direct Support Worker’s (DSWs) worker entry screen in the Kansas AuthentiCare clock in and clock out system. They are requiring additional information on all current DSWs and for future DSWs. We have recently made some changes to the DSW new hire packet and will be sending a letter to all current DSWs to be able to complete these fields. These required fields must be completed for current DSWs by April 1, 2015. If it is not completed by April 1st, current DSWs will not be able to clock in to Kansas AuthentiCare. Some of the required questions are:

1. Are you related to the consumer? Yes/No (Parent, Adoptive
Parent, Grandparent, Spouse, Aunt/ Uncle, Sibling, or First Cousin)
2. Do you use sign language? Yes/No
3. Are you Bilingual? Yes/No
4. Do you require any other Language Accommodation? Yes/No
5. Do you have a work visa from the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services? Yes/No

Another change to the DSW new hire packet is a pay rate reimbursement. The consumer sets the pay rate from a pay range. As the employer of the DSWs, consumers have the responsibility and right to set their DSW’s pay rates.

Please remember that when completing a DSW new hire packet, to make sure all paperwork is filled out and turned in to the RCIL office in a timely manner to ensure that your DSW will be paid correctly and on time.
KDADS Submits Medicaid Waiver Renewal Applications to Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services

The Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) submitted application to CMS for renewal of the Developmental Disability (DD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Physical Disability (PD) and Frail Elderly (FE) programs on December 31, 2014. The Severe Emotional Disturbance (SED), Autism, and Technology Assisted (TA) program renewal applications are also being processed.

What is a Medicaid waiver? A waiver is a mechanism that states can use to test new or existing ways to deliver and pay for health care services in Medicaid. Kansas has several waivers (see listing above) designed around the specific needs of the population the waiver is intended to serve.

What are some of the changes the state has proposed to the waivers?

Background checks and eligibility requirements for all services and assessors (including Direct Support Workers); policy on mitigating conflict between Guardian and Consumer; expedited access to services for military and their immediate family; eligibility language modified to include documentation requirements for the PD and TBI waivers; proposed requirement for all TBI providers to complete KDADS approved training; standard definition of attendant care services; clarified service plan development and more.

The waiver renewals also include re-defining Financial Management Services (FMS) from the "agency with choice" model to the "fiscal/employer agent" model. All participants who are self-directing their Home and Community Based Services are required to have a Federal Employer Identification Number that the FMS provider will use to report Direct Support Worker wages, unemployment, etc.

RCIL provided feedback on the waivers consistent with preservation of self-direction and choice for individuals receiving services and encourages all citizens to be a part of the decision making processes that affect their lives through self and systems advocacy. One way to do that is to communicate regularly with your legislators. Don't know how to contact your legislator? Call the Independent Living Specialist at the RCIL office nearest you. Nothing about us without us!

Welcome RCIL's New Staff

RCIL is proud to introduce Nancy Lamb as the Fiscal Agent/Compliance Specialist. Nancy started on December 1, 2014 in the Osage City office. Her duties revolve around fiscal agent compliance including assisting consumers with the paperwork required to attain a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN). Individual FEIN's are required for consumers to self-direct their Home and Community Based Services including personal services and sleep cycle support as the employer of their Direct Support Workers (DSWs). Welcome Nancy!
Eating Well As You Age: Nutrition and Diet Tips for Healthy Eating as You Age

As we age, eating well can be the key to a positive outlook and staying emotionally balanced. But eating healthy doesn’t have to be about dieting and sacrifice. It should be all about fresh, colorful food, creativity in the kitchen, and eating with family and friends.

Remember the old saying, you are what you eat? Make it your motto. When you choose a variety of colorful fruits and veggies, whole grains, and lean proteins you will feel energetic and healthy inside and out. Below are some things to keep in mind.

- **Live longer and stronger** – Good nutrition keeps muscles, bones, organs, and other body parts strong for the long haul. Eating vitamin-rich food boosts immunity and fights illness-causing toxins. A proper diet reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, type-2 diabetes, bone loss, cancer, and anemia. Also, eating sensibly means consuming fewer calories and more nutrient-dense foods, keeping weight in check.

- **Sharpen the mind** – Key nutrients are essential for the brain to do its job. People who eat a selection of brightly colored fruit, leafy veggies, and fish and nuts packed with omega-3 fatty acids can improve focus and decrease their risk of Alzheimer’s disease. Regular consumption of antioxidant-rich green tea may also enhance memory and mental alertness as you age.

- **Feel better** – Wholesome meals give you more energy and help you look better, resulting in a self-esteem boost. It’s all connected—when your body feels good you feel happier inside and out.

Let’s face it, these tips are great but there’s a reason why so many of us struggle eating nutritiously every day. Sometimes it’s just quicker or easier to eat unhealthy food. If you’re wanting to eat healthier but having trouble getting started on a healthy eating plan, try eating with family or friends. A social atmosphere can stimulate your mind and can help you enjoy meals. When you enjoy mealtimes, you’re more likely to eat better. If you live alone, eating with company will take some strategizing, but the effort will pay off. Some ideas you can try are taking a class, getting involved with your local RCIL Friends group, volunteering, or going on an outing. All of these ideas can lead to new friendships and dining buddies. Also, senior meal programs provided by your local Senior Center is another great way to meet friends and eat healthier.

This article is from Eating Well As You Age on the Helpguide website at http://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-eating/eating-well-as-you-age.htm.

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Kansas Telecommunications Access Program Cont.

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Assistive Technology for Kansans (ATK) began providing Kansas TAP services in May 2014. Each of the ATK access sites (which are located in Dodge City, Garden City, Hays, Hutchinson, Kansas City, Lawrence, Oakley, Parsons, Salina, Topeka, Wamego, and Wichita) assist with applications and provide demonstrations on different types of phones. Call 1-800-KAN DO IT (1-800-526-3648) to contact your regional Assistive Technology Access Site or visit http://atk.ku.edu/ks-tap for more information on Kansas TAP services.
Consumer Success Story: Endurance

By: Sheila Ivy

Some people learn the true meaning of endurance when tragedy strikes, and keeps striking, and they discover just how much they can do. Sheila Ivy in Iola started a support group to help individuals of traumatic brain injuries and their loved ones in Iola.

Sheila knows firsthand how a traumatic brain injury (TBI) can suddenly and violently change the lives of an entire family. It’s happened to her own family not only once but twice. On May 23, 2004, Sheila and her family were celebrating their two oldest children graduating from high school at their home. Sheila’s nephew attended their party with his motorcycle so everyone wanted to take turns riding it. Sheila’s husband, Richard, rode the motorcycle for the second time. While he wasn’t driving very fast without a helmet, a bolt that secured the seat came loose and threw him over the handlebars headfirst and he landed into a ditch. The fall had cracked his skull clean open, like an egg. After surgery Richard remained in a coma for nine and a half days.

Richard relearned how to do activities of daily living skills such as eating and dressing himself. Sheila stayed by his side, doing rehab Monday through Friday, and coming home on weekends to be with the kids. After Richard’s rehab at the hospital was officially over, he still needed a lot more help. Then someone connected them to RCIL and Richard was able to receive Home and Community Based Services. Richard was also able to regain the ability to do things with constant, intensive therapy that the hospital had told him he never would do again.

When things were getting better for Sheila, she had relived similar tragedy again in 2009. This time it was her younger brother Shawn. He has diabetes. One day he had a low blood sugar incident while driving which caused him to pass out. His car flipped and ejected him from the vehicle. The accident caused a hairline fracture to his skull which caused his brain to swell inside, creating pressure and damage to all four lobes. Shawn was in a coma for three and a half weeks. Sheila and her family members were told from the doctors that Shawn would be bedridden for the rest of his life, the rehabilitation program wasn’t available in Arkansas where Shawn lived, and he would need to be in a nursing home. This time Sheila knew exactly what she needed to do to help her family members. She and Richard agreed to take Shawn home with them and helped him to receive the services he needed. Sheila provided rehab with him herself from what she learned from helping her husband. Over the next few years, Shawn was able to regain his activities of daily living skills. He also took online classes and received his high school diploma.

Shelia, Richard, and Shawn went to their nearest support group in Paola. Richard and Shawn met people with brain injuries who could relate to what they were going through. Sheila was able to meet people who knew what she was going through as a caretaker. The experience exceeded their expectations which led them to develop their own support group called, “Endurance” in Iola.

Endurance is a group for individuals who have suffered brain injuries in Iola and their families. They meet at 3:00pm on the last Saturday of every month at Assembly of God 1020 E. Carpenter St. Iola, KS 66749. For more information, contact Sheila Ivy at 620-365-5238.
Moved?
If you've moved or changed your phone number, name, or email address, call 1.800.580.7245 so we can keep in contact with you!

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