



# Family Connections

A Family Newsletter from OASIS  
Oklahoma Areawide Services Information System



ON THE ROAD FAMILY  
PERSPECTIVE  
CONFERENCES

### NEXT

**On the Road Conference —**  
Tuesday, October 20, 2009,  
Altus, OK. —

Call Sally Selvidge at OASIS  
at (800)426-2747 or email her  
at  
Sally-Selvidge@ouhsc.edu  
For More Information.

**Registration flyers online at**  
<http://oasis.ouhsc.edu>.

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## Health Care Reform: Key Disability Issues.

**\*\*Fact Sheet from:** THE ARC, AAIDD, AUCD,UCP, NACDD AND SABLE  
(Information on these organizations on page 7)

### Background

There is broad consensus that America's health care system needs reform. Over 46 million Americans are uninsured and more join their ranks every day as unemployment rises. A March 2009 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services report which summarized several studies found that U.S. health care spending doubled from 1996 to 2006, reaching \$2.2 trillion in 2007, nearly double the average of other developed countries. All stakeholders agree that reform must provide affordable coverage, improve quality and lower costs. To achieve these goals, emphasis has been given to prevention to transform our health care system's focus from sickness to wellness, care coordination, chronic disease management, and shifting payment rates to focus on performance rather than services provided. Many Members of Congress have focused on the need to address the national shortage of physicians, nurses, and dentists which is especially severe in rural areas.

Reform must address the health care disparities faced by individuals with developmental disabilities. According to the 2002 U.S. Surgeon General's report, *Closing the Gap: A National Blue Print to Improve the Health Care Needs of Persons with Mental Retardation*. These individuals experience poorer health and have less access to medical care than the general population. People with developmental disabilities often have difficulty recognizing and communicating their own health care needs. Moreover there is a significant shortage of qualified, trained health care professionals who are willing to treat them.

In addition to improving access to quality medical care for persons with developmental disabilities, health reform legislation must improve the way our nation provides long term services and supports (such as assistance and supervision with activities of daily living, taking medication, managing a home, and preparing meals, managing money). Removing Medicaid's institutional bias so that persons with disabilities can receive services in community-based settings that are preferred and more cost effective rather than in large congregate settings is critical.

Continued on page 3



### In This Issue:

Health Care Reform	1
Important dates	3
Swine Flu prevention	4
Tulsa Autism Center	5
Living in The Community	6



## On Going Events

**Statewide Training and Regional Supports (STARS)** The mission of STARS is to support the provision of individualized, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, family-centered, community-based programs and services for people with disabilities through a coordinated training system. Staff and contractors of the SoonerStart program, local public schools, and DDSD-Developmental Disabilities Services Division, as well as families accessing services from these agencies may attend STARS trainings at no charge. Others are welcome to register and attend STARS trainings on a “space available” basis for a charge of \$50.00 per person per workshop. A list of workshops and more information can be found at: [http://www.ah.ouhsc.edu/tolbert/courses\\_workshops/](http://www.ah.ouhsc.edu/tolbert/courses_workshops/)

**Oklahoma People First Chapter Meetings.** These meetings are held across the state for adults who have an intellectual disability to help them learn advocacy, social, and leadership skills. Please contact Lance Davis, Executive Director at (405) 602-2704 for information on a chapter meeting near you or how to start one or how to become a volunteer advisor/mentor.



## Upcoming Events, Conferences and Workshops

**Grandfamily Conference,** October 20-21, 2009, New Covenant Christian Church, 12000 N Rockwell Ave, Oklahoma City, OK. For more information call 405.521.2281. A conference for grandparents raising grandchildren and other families in transition.

**On The Road Family Perspective Conference.** Tuesday, October 20, 2009. Southwest Technology Center, Altus, OK. To download a registration form go to: <http://oasis.ouhsc.edu> or call Sally at 800-426-2747 for more information.

**Oklahoma Statewide Autism Conference.** November 6-7, 2009. Embassy Suites, Norman, OK. Contact 877.228.8476 for more information or go online to [www.okautism.org](http://www.okautism.org) to register,

Go to **OK.GOV** and click on **Calendar** to view other events that might interest you across the state.





## Health Care Reform: Key Disability Issues



Continued from page 1

Huge waiting lists for long term services and supports across the country constitute a major crisis.

Advocates in the disability and aging communities have urged the inclusion of long term services and supports in health care reform. The effort should be two-pronged: 1) there should be a national long term services insurance program which assists eligible individuals and their families to meet long term needs with a cash benefit and without forcing them into poverty to receive Medicaid benefits; and 2) the current Medicaid program should be improved to eliminate the institutional bias and allow a real choice for the individual to receive needed services at home or in the community. Two recently introduced policy proposals would address these issues and should be incorporated in healthcare reform: the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) Act and the Community Choice Act

### Action Taken by Congress

During a March White House Health Reform Summit, President Obama stated that health care reform is essential to achieving economic recovery. Summit attendees, including both Republican and Democratic Members of Congress, the insurance industry, health care providers, and consumer groups, agreed that achieving health care reform this year is a necessary and bipartisan priority.

President Obama has set forth general principles for reform but Congress, not the Administration, will be developing legislation. Several Congressional Committees with jurisdiction over health reform issues have held numerous hearings and have set an ambitious goal of House and Senate passage before the August recess. However, there is no consensus on many significant issues such as whether a public plan should be included and how to pay for overall reform.

The President's FY 2010 budget outline includes a reserve fund of more than \$630 billion over 10 years to finance a down payment on comprehensive health reform. The House and Senate Budget Resolutions include funding for this reserve fund; however, offsets will be required to comply with Congressional PAYGO ( pay-as-you-go) rules. The House and Senate must also resolve the issue of whether the final resolution will contain reconciliation instructions on how the Senate deals with it health reform bill.

Continued on page 7

**Meets Quarterly the 2nd  
Wednesday of the month at the  
Oklahoma Dental Association  
317 NE 13th St.  
Oklahoma City, OK  
(405) 848-8873  
Jan., April, July, & Oct, 2009**  
Everyone is Welcome who has an  
interest in Improving the Quality  
and Access to Oral Health Care  
for Children with & without a  
disability in Oklahoma.

For more information or questions , call  
Sally Selvidge at (800) 426-2747 or  
email her at Sally-Selvidge@ouhsc.edu

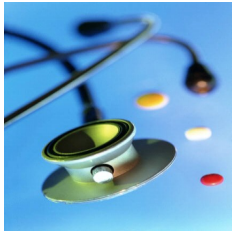


Person Centered Planning.  
Helping People with  
Disabilities Achieve Personal  
Outcomes. By Mary Mercer.  
\$10.95 \*

Sleep Better. A guide to  
Improving Sleep for Children  
with Special Needs. By V.  
Mark Durland (Learn ways to  
help you child get a better  
nights sleep along with  
yourself) \$19.95 \*

\*www.cherryhillbooks.com

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and is for informational  
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# Swine flu

## Important Information for your Health



Oklahoma State Department of Health phone line at 1-866-278-7134 between 8 am and 8 pm, or on-line at [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has recently issued important information on preventing H1N1 Flu from spreading.

The upcoming flu season is different because of the need to deal with both the seasonal flu and the H1N1 flu. H1N1 flu, like seasonal flu, is spread from person to person mainly by coughing or sneezing, and sometimes by touching an object with flu virus on it and then touching the mouth or nose. The symptoms and severity of illness caused by H1N1 flu and seasonal flu are similar. The symptoms include fever, cough, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting.

### **All of us can help by taking the following basic personal steps to prevent transmission of the flu:**

1. Wash your hands thoroughly and often with soap and warm water for 15 to 20 seconds, especially after you cough or sneeze. Singing Happy Birthday to yourself twice takes about 20 seconds.
2. When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand gels are effective.
3. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw the used tissue in the trash. If you don't have a tissue cover your cough or sneeze with your shirt sleeve..
4. Suspend courtesy hand-shakes and kisses during the flu season.
5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
6. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

“For people who do have an underlying condition, it’s important to be seen promptly if you get a fever. That could make the difference between being severely ill and recovering well,” said Thomas Frieden, director of the CDC. “Treatment in the first 48 hours can make a big difference in hastening your recovery.” This is especially true for children with a developmental disability.

Additional information can be obtained from the Oklahoma State Department of Health phone line at 1-866-278-7134 between 8 am and 8 pm, or on-line at [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

Influenza statistics are updated every Thursday at 10AM online by the Oklahoma State Health Department at: [http://www.ok.gov/health/Disease\\_Prevention\\_Preparedness/H1N1\\_Flu\\_Updates\\_and\\_Alerts/OK\\_Flu\\_View/index.html](http://www.ok.gov/health/Disease_Prevention_Preparedness/H1N1_Flu_Updates_and_Alerts/OK_Flu_View/index.html)



**FREE**



# Autism Screenings

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

**The Autism Center of Tulsa welcomes the LINK Project to our offices once a month to offer free autism, developmental, speech and hearing screenings by trained professionals. This service is extended to families with concerns about the development of their children from birth until they turn six years old. Screenings are free and by appointment only. Contact the Autism Center of Tulsa to schedule your appointment.**

**Screenings are offered one day a month between the hours of 9:00am—3:00pm at the Autism Center of Tulsa, 6585 S. Yale, Ste. 410, Tulsa, OK. 747136. William Medical building at 66th and Yale.**

**918-502-4823  
info@autismtulsa.org**

*OASIS/OUHSC does not endorse any program, product, or publication presented in this newsletter. Information is provided as a convenience to our readers and is for informational purposes only.*



## Living in the Community or Being Part of the Community

By Sally Selvidge

Person-Centered supports is more than just changing language. It is a paradigm shift with the vision that each person with a disability can control their own destiny to become a true member of the fabric of the community in which they live. The community as a whole should try to help the family move away from being dependent upon a system to becoming dependent upon the village. The dream is to have a community that has the capacity to befriend, care about, and work alongside everyone.

Some ways families can achieve this to increase the family member's participation in going about your daily routine to the grocery store, the pharmacist, the dry cleaner, or the neighborhood diner. As people get to know your child/family member with a disability they will start to ask about them when they aren't with you. These people and others will start to care about them and come to befriend them. No one should just "live in the community" with no interaction with it.

Self-determination says that everyone should have a choice to a healthy life in the community. Not just maintenance, but a choice of community based services. Each person should be able to have a job, live in an accessible, safe, and barrier-free home; have options for person-driven peer supports, brokerage or self-determination budgeting that assures quality services and supports. They also should have some Medicaid assistance for the use of long term care insurance with public dollars.

In the book by Robert and Martha Perske, "*Circle of Friends: People with Disabilities and Their Friends Enrich The Lives of One Another.*" the circle cuts across age, generations, and races to create pure and simple friendships with people whether they have a disability or not.





## Health Care Reform: Key Disability Issues



Continued from page 3

Reconciliation would allow the Senate to avoid any filibuster by the minority and require only 51 votes, rather than the usual 60 votes, to pass health care reform. If reconciliation is in the Budget Resolution, a bipartisan approach to health care reform will prove more difficult. Nevertheless, health reform might be expedited if the Senate only needs 51 votes to move it forward.

### **Recommendations**

Support health reform legislation that::

- Ensures that the private insurance system covers ALL Americans so that Medicaid and Medicare are not the only option for coverage of people with disabilities;
- Incorporates long term services and supports by including the CLASS Act and the Community Choice Act;
- Strengthens the Medicaid program so that it provides accessible, high-quality health care services to people with disabilities enrolled in the program;
- Increases the education of physicians and dentists by amending the Public Health Services Act to require that medical schools, dental schools, and their residency programs provide training to improve competency and clinical skills in providing care to patients with disabilities (including those with intellectual disabilities) as a condition of receiving federal funds.

### **Relevant Committees**

Senate Finan  
Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee  
Senate and House Budget Committees  
House Energy and Commerce Committee  
House Ways and Means Committee  
House Education and Labor Committee

\*\*For more information, please contact The Arc and United Cerebral Palsy Disability Policy Collaboration (202) 783-2229, Association of University Centers on Disability (301) 588-8252, American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (202) 387-1968, National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (202) 506-5813 or the Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (802) 760-8856.



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To receive the OASIS Newsletter or become an OASIS Parent Contact  
Email Sally-Selvidge@ouhsc.edu or fax this form to 405-271-6305  
Or mail to OASIS/OUHSC, PO BOX 26901, OKC, OK 73126.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

**I want to: \_\_\_\_\_ be an OASIS Parent Contact.**

\_\_\_\_\_ receive the Newsletter

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