

Maine Welfare Director's Association Newsletter



April 2003

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Letter From the President

Even though I still have two months remaining as the President of the Maine Welfare Directors Association, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for having faith in me as your President. This has been a most rewarding experience. I have learned so much this year about our own organization, legislative issues, financial matters, how to run a meeting, etc., and the list goes on. But the nicest thing of all is the friends that I have made. I have surrounded myself with the finest group of people imaginable. I recommend to anyone who is doing GA, to join MWDA, and you will not regret it. By attending the monthly training sessions that we offer, the Basic GA Workshops and the Spring Seminar, you can learn many more aspects of GA that will assist you with the everyday issues that your clients present to you. The lines of communication open up as you make friends with other welfare directors. If one day a client issue really stumps you and you are not quite sure how to handle it, give one of your new friends you have made with MWDA a call. The help is there, You can also call the DHS Hotline or Antoinette Mancusi at MMA.

A special thank you to Sue Charron, Judy Hardy-Goddard and Nancy Sargent, who have been there whenever I had a question; Linda Fossa who has struggled with our financial statement time and again, Mary Frances Bartlett who taught me much about the legislature, and all the Board members who have done a fantastic job this year. You're the Best.

I hope to see you all at the spring seminar that promises to be a great one.

Respectfully,

Brenda Harrington
President
MWDA

Happiness comes of the capacity to feel deeply, to enjoy simply, to think freely,
to risk life, to be needed.

Storm Jameson

May is National Mental Health Month

Mental Health Month, a national health observance founded by the National Mental Health Association, focuses the nation's attention on the importance of mental health and the realities of mental illness. One in five Americans experience a mental disorder each year, making mental illness more prevalent than cancer, lung and heart disease combined.

Mental illnesses are health conditions characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior (or some combination) associated with distress and/or impaired functioning.

Fact and Figures About Mental Illness

- Of American adults, 5.4 percent have a serious mental illness. Twenty-three percent of American adults (ages 18 and older) suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year, but only half report impairment of their daily functioning due to the mental disorder. Six percent of adults have addictive disorders alone, and three percent have both mental and addictive disorders.
 - Almost half of the adults with serious and persistent mental illnesses are between the ages of 25 and 44.
 - Approximately nine percent to 13 percent of children ages nine to 17 have a serious emotional disturbance with substantial functional impairment, and five percent to nine percent have a serious emotional disturbance with extreme functional impairment due to a mental illness.
 - Not all mental disorders identified in childhood and adolescence persist into adulthood, even though the prevalence of mental disorders is almost the same percentage. A substantial number of children and adolescents recover from mental illness.
 - Four of the ten leading causes of disability in the United States and other developed countries are mental disorders, which include major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.
 - The treatment success rate for a first episode of schizophrenia is 60 percent, 65 percent to 70 percent for major depression, and 80 percent for bipolar disorder.
 - Out of the 1,012,582 total hospital admissions in the U.S. in 1998, 261,903 (25.8 percent) were psychiatric admissions.
 - The total cost of mental health services in the U.S. was \$148 billion in 1990. The direct cost of mental health services (treatment and rehabilitation costs) totaled \$69 billion, and the indirect costs (lost productivity at work, school, or home due to disability or death) were estimated at \$78.6 billion.
 - Serious mental illnesses interfere with employment. An estimated 57 percent of adults with serious mental illness were not employed in 1990 compared to 29 percent of the general population.
 - Approximately one-third of the estimated 600,000 homeless people in the United States have a severe mental illness. However, only one in 20 persons with a severe mental illness are homeless.
 - Only five percent to seven percent of homeless persons with a mental illness need to be institutionalized; most can live in the community with appropriate, supportive housing.
 - In 1998, 283,800 people with mental illnesses were incarcerated in American prisons and jails. This is four times the number of people in state mental hospitals throughout the country.
 - Mentally ill offenders are more likely than other offenders to have a history of substance abuse/dependency and a higher rate of homelessness and unemployment prior to incarceration.
-

Unemployment Rates as of January 23, 2003

January 23, 2003

HISTORICAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATES
 MAINE, AND THE UNITED STATES
 BY MONTH 2002 AND ANNUAL AVERAGES 2001-1978

Year	Maine	U.S.
2002		
December.....	4.5%	5.7%
November.....	4.3	5.7
October.....	3.7	5.3
September.....	3.5	5.4
August.....	3.2	5.7
July.....	3.4	6.0
June.....	3.9	6.0
May.....	3.7	5.5
April.....	4.4	5.7
March.....	4.8	6.1
February.....	4.9	6.1
January.....	4.8	6.3
	ANNUAL AVERAGES	
2001.....	4.0	4.8
2000.....	3.5	4.0
1999.....	4.1	4.2
1998.....	4.4	4.5

Source: Maine Department of Labor, Division of Labor Market Information Services, **Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program**, (LAUS), in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Estimates for 2002 are preliminary and are not seasonally adjusted. Estimates for 2001 are revised, and 2000-1978 are final.

CMP Disconnect Notice Criteria

	Broken Payment Arrangement Notice (3-Day)	Regular Notice (14-Day)
CSS Notice Type	Type 1	Type 2
Criteria (*Disconnection Notices are based on CMP and SOP Past Due Receivables)	Broken Payment Arrangement And Total Arrears of \$50.00	Has had 60-day arrears within the past 6 months and Total arrears of \$100.00 or 90-day ar- rears of \$50.00
Notice Mail Date	2 work days after bill is mailed	5 work days after bill is mailed
Notice Due Date	4 work days after notice is mailed	15 calendar days after notice is mailed

MaineCare Workshops

Presented by members of the Covering Kids and Teens Campaign, with representation from Consumers for Affordable Health Care, Maine Primary Care Association and the Maine Equal Justice Partners.

Facilitators:

Mary McPherson works for the Maine Equal Justice Partners. She has a background in advocacy, public policy and legal services.

Martin Sabol coordinates the Covering Kids and Families Campaign and is Director of Health Care Coverage at the Maine Primary Care Association.

Lisa Webber has a background in training and facilitation and currently serves as the Covering Kids and Families HelpLine Coordinator at Consumers for Affordable Health Care.

Topics:

- MaineCare (Medicaid, Cub Care and Healthy Maine Prescriptions) Benefits
- Differences Between Benefit Packages
- Eligibility Criteria
- Application Process
- Outreach Strategies

Dates and Times:

- Augusta** May 1, 9:00-Noon wwest@mejp.org
- Bangor June 11, 1:00-4:00 PM wwest@mejp.org
- Calais June 20, 9:00-Noon kdugal@mepca.org
- Ellsworth June 10, 9:00-Noon lwebber@mainecahc.org
- Lewiston May 21, 9:00-Noon wwest@mejp.org
- Portland April 9, 1:00-4:00 PM wwest@mejp.org
- Portland May 22, 9:00-Noon kdugal@mepca.org
- Rockland May 13, 9:00-Noon lwebber@mainecahc.org
- Sanford April 30, 1:00-4:00 PM kdugal@mepca.org
- Waterville April 15, 9:00-Noon lwebber@mainecahc.org

To Register:

Send your name, organization, mailing address, telephone and fax numbers and the workshop you'd like to attend to the contact listed next to the date above.

Coverage for Children Stats

The following statistics were presented on February 25, 2003 by Sarah Shuptrine, CKF National Program Office Director, during the Covering Kids and Families Orientation and Training Seminar held in Savannah, Georgia.

General Statistics on uninsured children:

- There are 8 million uninsured children in America
- Of those 8 million uninsured children, 65% are eligible for Medicaid and SCHIP, but are not enrolled, which translates to 5 million American children who are unnecessarily uninsured

Consequences of being uninsured:

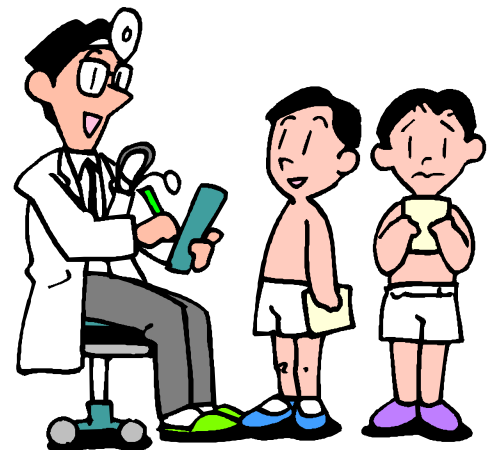
- 20% of uninsured children have untreated vision problems
- 51% of uninsured children had a physician visit during the previous year, compared with 76% of insured children
- 21% of uninsured children had a regular dental checkup, while half of insured children did

Children without health coverage

- 8 times less likely to have a regular source of medical care
- 5 times more likely to use emergency rooms for regular care
- 4 times more likely to delay seeking care

Medicaid expenditures for children:

- In 2002, children made up 15% of all Medicaid recipients, but only 17% of Medicaid expenditures
- Of estimated Medicaid expenditure growth between 2002 and 2003, children will only account for 14% of costs



Aim for success, not perfection. Never give up your right to be wrong, because then you will lose the ability to learn new things and move forward with your life.

Dr. David M. Burns

Federal Poverty Levels

Effective February 2003

Poverty levels are adjusted according to the Consumer Price Index.

Be aware that these will change in February or March of 2004.

IMPORTANT NOTE: For most MaineCare benefits, some income does not count toward these limits.

Annual Income

Household Size	100%	125%	150%	185%	200%	250%	300%
1	\$8,980	\$11,225	\$13,470	\$16,613	\$17,960	\$22,450	\$26,940
2	\$12,120	\$15,150	\$18,180	\$22,422	\$24,240	\$30,300	\$36,360
3	\$15,260	\$19,075	\$22,890	\$28,231	\$30,520	\$38,150	\$45,780
4	\$18,400	\$23,000	\$27,600	\$34,040	\$36,800	\$46,000	\$55,200
5	\$21,540	\$26,925	\$32,310	\$39,849	\$43,080	\$53,850	\$64,620
6	\$24,680	\$30,850	\$37,020	\$45,658	\$49,360	\$61,70	\$74,040

Monthly Income

Household Size	100%	125%	150%	185%	200%	250%	300%
1	\$ 749	\$ 936	\$ 1,123	\$ 1,385	\$ 1,497	\$ 1,871	\$ 2,245
2	\$1,010	\$ 1,263	\$ 1,515	\$ 1,869	\$ 2,020	\$ 2,525	\$ 3,030
3	\$ 1,272	\$ 1,590	\$ 1,908	\$ 2,353	\$ 2,544	\$ 3,180	\$ 3,815
4	\$ 1,534	\$ 1,917	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,837	\$ 3,067	\$ 3,835	\$ 4,600
5	\$ 1,795	\$ 2,244	\$ 2,693	\$ 3,321	\$ 3,590	\$ 4,488	\$ 5,385
6	\$ 2,057	\$ 2,571	\$ 3,085	\$ 3,805	\$4,114	\$ 5,143	\$ 6,170

Free Clinics

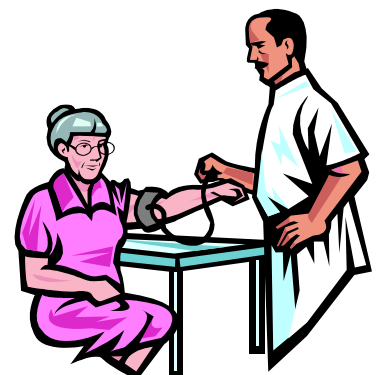
Free clinics offer free primary care services to people with a low income or who have no insurance or are under-insured. Each clinic has its own eligibility guidelines and may provide prescription medications. Some clinics do not offer services to people who have Medicare. Call the clinics to find out what services are available and if you are eligible.

Biddeford Free Clinic
189 Alfred Street
Biddeford, Maine 04005
207-282-1138

Ellsworth Free Clinic
P.O Box 5104
Ellsworth, Maine 04603
207-667-7953

Portland Street Clinic
15 Portland Street
Portland, Maine 04101
207-874-8982

the Oasis Health Center
331 Maine Street-Suite #5
Brunswick, Maine 04011
Opened to the public on Tuesdays 6-7:30 or 8 P.M



EBT— Electronic Benefit Transfer



Governor John Baldacci, along with staff of the Maine Department of Human Services announced the introduction of an electronic benefits transfer (EBT) process for the TANF and Food Stamps programs.

"We want to make sure that the process of accessing services is as easy as possible," said Governor Baldacci. "At the same time, we want to make sure that tax dollars are spent on those most in need. EBT improves our ability to achieve both of these goals."

The change to an EBT process means that participants in TANF and Food Stamps will be issued their benefits via a debit card. The debit card replaces the issuance of paper checks for TANF and Food Stamp coupons. Benefits will no longer have to be mailed thereby eliminating the possibility that those benefits might be lost or stolen in the mail. It also allows the state to more effectively monitor transactions.

"I'm pleased to welcome Maine to the EBT family," said Under Secretary Bost. "Maine's EBT system will provide food stamp recipients with a safe, secure, and effective method of receiving their food stamp benefits at over 1500 authorized food retailers throughout the State."

Cash benefits for TANF recipients are now available at customer service desks, retail checkout lines and at a number of ATMs throughout Maine. Food Stamp recipients can use their EBT card through the same mechanism that exists for debit cards at Maine grocery retailers. Farmer's Markets will be able to participate in the EBT program as well.

Governor Baldacci also took the occasion to thank the Associated Grocers of Maine and the Maine Grocers Association "for their hard work and continued support" in working closely with DHS officials to shape a viable EBT system for the state. EBT will not only be more convenient for TANF and Food Stamp recipients, it will also be more helpful for retailers because it eliminates the added accounting associated with managing food stamp coupons.

The first pilot projects for EBT began April 1st in York and Cumberland Counties and the EBT process will be operational statewide by June. The contractor for the EBT changeover is ACS, who have been prime or subcontractors on EBT projects in 13 other states.

One of the intangible, but no less significant, benefits associated with the switch to EBT will be the elimination of any perceived stigma for Food Stamp recipients. John Brophy, group president of ACS State and Local Solutions, noted that "Maine families can now access food stamps and TANF benefits with the swipe of a card and retailers can more easily track and record these transactions. EBT," Brophy added, "gives Food Stamps participants the assurance that their grocery shopping will be handled just as any other purchaser's shopping is handled."

The Food Stamps Program, which is 100% federally funded, provides roughly 110,000 low-income people in Maine a total of \$100,000,000 per year for necessary food items. The TANF Program serves approximately 11,000 families in the state and provides \$53,000,000 yearly to low-income children.

Rick Morrow and Mike O'Conner will be conducting a session concerning EBT at the Spring Seminar on May 20, 2003.

Regional DHS Offices

Fort Kent District Office
92 Market Street
Fort Kent, Maine 04743-1447
834-7700
1-800-432-7340
FAX: 834-7701 TDD: 834-7702

Caribou District Office
14 Access Highway
Caribou, Maine 04736
493-4000
1-800-432-7366
FAX: 493-4001; TDD: 493-4034

South Paris Regional Office
243 Main Street
Suite #6
South Paris, Maine 04281
744-1200
1-888-593-9775
FAX: 743-8735 TDD: 744-1224

Rockland District Office
360 Old County Road
Rockland Maine 04841 596-4217
1-800-432-7802
FAX: 596-4331 TDD: 596-4201

Sanford District Office
890 Main Street
Suite 208
Sanford, Maine 04073
490-5400
1-800-482-0790
FAX: 490-5463 TDD: 490-5466

Augusta Regional Office
219 Capital Street
Augusta, Maine 04333
624-8200
1-800-452-1926
FAX: 624-8124 TDD: 624-8004

Bangor Regional Office
396 Griffin Road
Bangor, Maine 04401
561-4100
1-800-432-7825
FAX: 561-4122 TDD: 561-4124

Houlton Regional Office
11 High Street
Houlton, Maine 04730
532-5000
1-800-432-7338
FAX: 532-5027

Lewiston Regional Office
200 Main St.
Lewiston, Maine 04240
795-4300
1-800-482-7517
FAX: 795-4444 TDD: 784-4421

Skowhegan District Office
98 North Avenue
Skowhegan, Maine 04976
474-4800
1-800-452-4602
FAX: 474-4888 TDD: 474-4891

Calais District Office
88A South Street
Calais, Maine 04619 454-9000
1-800-622-1400
FAX: 454-9012 TDD: 454-3415

Biddeford District Office
208 Graham Street
Biddeford, Maine 04005
286-2400
1-800-322-1919
FAX: 286-2408 TDD: 286-2402

Farmington District Office
114 Corn Shop Lane
Farmington, Maine 04938
778-8211
1-800-442-6382
FAX: 778-8210 TDD: 778-8239

Machias District Office
13 Presott Drive
Machias, Maine 04654
255-2000
1-800-432-7846
FAX: 255-2022 TDD: 255-6866

Portland Regional Office
161 Marginal Way
Portland, Maine 04101
822-2000
1-800-482-7520
FAX: 822-2310 TDD: 822-2293

Ellsworth District Office
17 Eastward Lane
Ellsworth, Maine 04605
667-1600
1-800-432-7823
FAX: 667-5364 TDD: 667-1639

Legislative Updates

Most of you are aware that LD #619, “An Act Making Substantive and Technical Changes to the General Assistance Laws” which Senator Peggy Rotundo of Androscoggin sponsored, , was tabled, allowing time for MWDA’s Legislative Committee and Antoinette Mancusi of MMA to re-work it. Once it is re-written to everyone’s satisfaction, the committee will again ask Senator Rotundo to sponsor it.

LD # 866, “An Act Concerning Recovery of Expenses under the General Assistance Laws” was voted down. The Committee for Health and Human Services did however ask that we include the section of the bill that would provide reasonable attorney’s fees and litigation costs for recipients who are awarded a lump sum payment under the workers’ compensation laws to LD #1066.

LD #1066, “An Act to Address the Temporary Maximum Levels of Assistance for General Assistance Established in 1991” was also tabled until further work can be done on it. As a result of the committee’s decision, we met with Judy Williams who will form a committee consisting of someone from MMA, some GA Directors, Maine Equal Justice, Councilor of Churches, Maine State Housing, Inter Agency Task Force on Homelessness, Pine Tree Legal and the Bureau of Mental Health. A meeting date has yet to be determined

BenefitsCheckup

The BenefitsCheckUp is the nation's most comprehensive online service to screen for federal, state and some local private and public benefits for older adults (ages 55 and over). It contains over 1,100 different programs from all fifty states (including the District of Columbia). On average there are 50 to 70 programs available to individuals per state.

In addition to identifying the programs that a person may be eligible to receive, BenefitsCheckUp also provides a detailed description of the programs, local contacts for additional information (typically the addresses and phone numbers of where to apply for the programs), and materials to help successfully apply for each program.

BenefitsCheckUp was developed to address a concerning problem: millions of older adults are eligible for benefits, but not receiving them. Ranging from health coverage to supplemental income to help in paying utility bills, there are millions of older adults who could benefit from a wide array of public programs if they knew about them and how to apply for them.

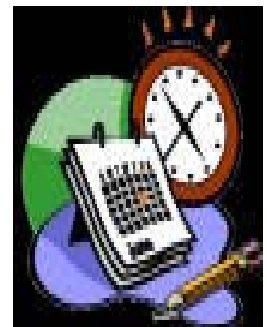
Upcoming Events

Spring Seminar—Point Sebago

Monday and Tuesday, May 19 & 20
Point Sebago

Monthly Meeting/Training-MMA

Friday, June 20



From the Desk of Cindy Boyd

Hotline Calls

1) We often receive calls from agencies or shelters that are assisting a client. The call usually is to find out which municipality is financially responsible for assisting the client with General Assistance. These calls are always difficult. There are usually a number of issues that have to be addressed before a decision can be made.

In one of the cases that I was involved with the client placed a call to the town office. She spoke to someone at the office who told her that the municipality did not have a shelter or a hotel so she would need to go to a municipality that did and that she could not get General Assistance. 22MRSA§4307(4B) states that a municipality would be financially responsible if the municipality advises or encourages a person to stay in temporary lodging or illegally denies housing assistance and as a result the person stays in temporary housing.

The municipality that received the call should have completed an application with the woman that called and determined if there was eligibility. Because the woman was told that she could not receive General Assistance and she was verbally advised to go to another municipality to find temporary shelter, she called one of the agencies in the area and the agency called us. I spoke to the General Assistance Director in the municipality involved and the client did complete an application. The municipality assisted the client with a few nights at a hotel that was in another municipality until the woman's TANF check arrived and she found permanent housing. If the municipality had not assisted and the woman had gone to the other municipality for assistance to stay in a shelter or a hotel, the municipality that had the shelter or hotel would have been correct to contact the other municipal about being reimbursed for any assistance given.

As I said these cases are always complicated and there are large portions of Maine that do not have shelters or hotels. Municipalities still need to complete the applications and determine eligibility even if there is no shelter or hotel in the area. The decision made might be that the client is eligible for General Assistance and that as soon as the client finds housing the municipality will assist with the amount that the household is eligible for.

2) We also receive a number of calls concerning disqualifications. When there is more than one adult in the household municipalities are often not sure who should be disqualified. 22 MRSA§4309(3) states "Failure of an otherwise eligible person to comply with this chapter shall not affect the General Assistance eligibility of any member of the person's household who is not capable of working, including at least:

- A) A dependent child
- B) An elderly, ill or disabled person, and
- C) A person whose presence is required in order to provide care for any child under the age of 6 or for any ill or disabled member of the household"

There are municipalities that disqualify all the adults in the household unless one of the adults is disabled or needed for childcare or the care of a disabled person and there are other municipalities that are only disqualifying the adult who commits the program violation such as fraud or a job quit. I was asked to share the Department's interpretation with the municipalities so that things would be consistent. I ran the question by the Assistant Attorney General back in March of 2000. She stated that she believed that either side could be defended if we went to court. The Department decided that the adult that commits the program violation is to be disqualified. Any other adults in the household would be potentially eligible for General

From the Desk of Cindy Boyd cont.

Assistance. There were two reasons that the Department decided to interpret the statute this way. One reason is to be consistent with the other programs that the Department administers. The other reason is that if all the adults are disqualified the municipality cannot place requirements on anyone to do job searches or workfare.

Once you disqualify a member of the household you need to look at the eligibility of the other members. If you have a household of 4 and you disqualify one person, you determine eligibility for 3 people. You use the maximums for 3 to determine eligibility, but you use all the income that the household has. If the disqualified person receives TANF of \$363, you use that \$363 when you calculate the eligibility.

3) I received a call from a GA Director, who asked me to go over assets in one of the newsletter. Page 2 of the General Assistance application that was developed by Maine Municipal Association has a section on assets. I will go over each item.

- A. Home----The house the applicant lives in is not considered an asset. If the applicant or dependents own more than one piece of property, the GA Director should require that the household make a good faith effort to dispose of the property at fair market value. If the property could be rented out and provide a source of income for the household so that the household would not need assistance that could be a solution. Another requirement could be that the household obtains a loan against the property so that the household's needs could be met. If the property is transferred for less than fair market value in order to receive General Assistance, assistance can be denied for 120 days.
- B. Bank accounts----Any money in the bank needs to be added to the household's prospective thirty-day income. This money needs to be used to meet the household's basic needs.
- C. Cash on hand----This needs to be added to the next thirty-days prospective income.
- D. Stocks or Bonds----These also need to be used to meet the household's basic needs. Because it may take some time to liquidate stocks or bonds, the municipality may assist if there is an immediate need and require the household to liquidate the stocks or bonds. This needs to be done in writing.
- E. Real Estate----The household should be required to make a good faith effort to sell the property when the property is separate from the principal home.
- F. Car, trucks, motorcycles, snowmobiles, etc.----If the household has more than one vehicle the household will be required to sell one. If the household has one vehicle the household can be required to trade down depending on the value of the vehicle. The household can be required to sell any motorcycles, snowmobiles, trailers, boats, etc.
- G. Life insurance----If there is a cash surrender value and the household has received assistance for more than 4 weeks, the household can be required to cash the insurance in.

Things such as livestock, farm equipment, equipment used for self-employment, jewelry, or household furnishings are not considered assets in determining eligibility.

4) A question came up concerning mailing the decision to the client. 22MRSA§4305(3C) requires that the General Assistance Director either grant or deny assistance within 24 hours. Often the municipality is not able to determine eligibility while the applicant is in the office and a decision is mailed to the client. The question concerned a client who has no address. The person had no money to obtain a Post Office Box and no family or friends in the area that would allow him to use their mailing address. People can have mail go to General Delivery in the municipality that they are in. I called the Post Office in Auburn and was told that in

Cindy Boyd cont.

order to have mail delivered General Delivery, the person would need to complete a change of address form making General Delivery, Auburn, the person's mailing address (the town would be the town that the person was most likely going to be able to pick up their mail from). Each Post Office has a spot where General Delivery mail is kept. The person would need to show identification in order to pick-up any mail. If the mail was not claimed within 30 days it was be returned to the sender as unclaimed.

5) We received a number of calls this winter from municipalities that received calls late at night or on the weekends for help with fuel. This can be very difficult for the General Assistance Director and I was asked if I'd address it. 22MRSA§4301(4) refers to an emergency as a life threatening situation or a situation beyond the control of the individual that if not alleviated immediately could pose a threat to the health or safety of the person. 22MRSA§4310 states that the assistances has to be issued either in person or by mail, as soon as possible but in no event later than 24 hours after application.

Every case needs to be looked at on its own. If a client calls after hours because the household needs fuel you should determine if the household is totally out of fuel or is there enough to make it through the night. Does the household have friends or family near by where they could go for the night? Is there any back-up heat such as a space heater that can be used for a short time? If the household has no resources and the GA Director decides to grant assistance, the assistance granted only has to be enough to take care of the emergency. The client needs to complete an application to determine any continued eligibility.

Some municipalities have set up plans to help in situation so that the GA Director is not called out in the middle of the night. One town told me that a number of fuel containers were purchased and filled with fuel and left with the Police Department. The emergency number posted is for the Police Department. If the need is fuel and the furnace has not gone out, the police give the person a can of fuel to get through the night and tell the client to call the GA Director in the morning. The client's needs are met and the Director doesn't have to be contacted during the night.

Prescriptions

In October of 2002, the Department received a waiver that allows the Department to provide MaineCare for more people. Prior to October, 2002, people between the ages of 21 and 65 were not eligible for MaineCare unless the household was eligible for TANF or the individual was disabled. Now people between the ages of 21 and 65 can receive MaineCare. This change has saved the General Assistance Program a fairly large sum of money. In September of 2002, municipalities spent \$17,961.00 on prescriptions. The amount spent in October was \$17,878.62. In November the amount was \$23,312.51. We did not start seeing a change until December 2002, when the amount spent was \$8,854.45. The amount in January 2003 was \$9,653.46, February was \$7,203.16, and March was \$5,203.33.

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.

Aesop

Low Cost Drugs for the Elderly and Disabled

Peter E. Walsh, Acting Commissioner of the Maine Department of Human Services, announced today the state has extended the time period for negotiating signed rebate agreements with pharmaceutical manufacturers for participants in the Low Cost Drugs for the Elderly and Disabled Program (DEL). The changes to DEL will be delayed until May 1.

“We want to get the best benefit for our DEL members,” said Walsh. “This additional extension of time hopefully will bring more manufacturers onto the program and that will mean we can cover more drugs for less money for our most vulnerable citizens.”

257 pharmaceutical companies entered into agreements with the state to participate in DEL. When DEL was incorporated into the Healthy Maine Prescription Program in June 2001, it meant that all drugs covered under MaineCare could be made available to DEL members. After the Circuit Court struck down Healthy Maine last December, however, drugs from manufacturers with whom there was no agreement were removed from the program.

In order to preserve the DEL program, DHS officials contacted all of the original 257 companies that had participated, as well as nearly 600 other drug manufacturers that had not. More than half of the 257 reaffirmed their prior agreement and another 42 new manufacturers joined the program. Significantly, there were 88 companies that either did not respond or decided not to reaffirm their prior agreement. Over the past four months, DHS officials have contacted or negotiated with these companies in the hopes of keeping their drugs in the DEL program and thereby making them more affordable for the low income disabled and elder adults who need them.

As a result of this extension of time, the list of drugs covered under DEL will continue to include all those produced by the original 257 manufacturers participating in the program. State pharmacies received a fax communication earlier today advising them of this and upcoming changes. The Department is urging all pharmaceutical manufacturers who would like to reaffirm their prior agreement to do so by May 1, 2003 so that their drugs will continue to be covered in DEL.

DEL, which was initiated in 1975, gives elder and disabled adults of Maine with incomes of less than 185% of the federal poverty level (\$1,841 per month for a family of two) the opportunity to purchase drugs in 12 different disease states at discount of up to 80%. Approximately 36,500 people are currently enrolled in the program.

Anyone who has any questions about their prescription drug coverage should call toll-free 866-RxMaine (866-796-2463). For the deaf or hearing impaired, please call 800-423-4331.

I find that it is not the circumstances in which we are placed, but the spirit in which we face them,
that constitutes our comfort.

Elizabeth T. King

Annual Spring Seminar—Point Sebago

Maine Welfare Directors Spring Training Seminar

Day One - May 19, 2003

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM Registration

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM Ice Breaker

Concurrent Sessions

Session One

9:30AM – 10:45AM 22MRSA 4301 Certification in GA Regulations Statutes and MMA
Model GA Ordinance
(Presented by Sue Charron and Mary Ann Chalila)

10:45AM – 11:00AM Break

11:00AM - 12:30PM GA Regulations Continued

Session Two

9:30AM – 10:45AM Basic GA and Re-application Process
(Presented by Mary Reindl and Brenda Harrington)

10:45AM – 11:00AM Break

11:00AM – 12:30PM Basic GA Continued

12:30PM – 2:00PM Lunch

2:00PM – 3:00PM Evictions
(Presented by Pat Endes; Maine Equal Justice Partners)

3:00PM – 3:15PM Break

3:15PM – 4:00PM MaineCare Program
(Presented by Mary McPhearson)

Check In

STAY FOR EACH SESSION AND RECEIVE A RAFFLE TICKET FOR A GRAND PRIZE DRAWING TO BE HELD ON DAY TWO AT 3:30PM. MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN.

Annual Spring Seminar—Point Sebago

Maine Welfare Directors Spring Training Seminar

Day Two – May 20, 2003

8:00 AM – 9:00AM	Buffet Breakfast
9:00 AM – 10:30AM	EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer – Food Stamp Debit Card) <i>(Presented by Mike O’Conner and Rick Morrow, Department of Human Services)</i>
10:30AM – 10:45AM	Break (Check-out is 11:00 sharp. Express check-out in Lobby)

Concurrent Sessions

Session 1

10:45 AM – 12:30PM	DHS Policy <i>Presented by Cindy Boyd, Program Manager for DHS)</i>
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Session 2

10:45AM– 11:30PM	Burials and the Application Process <i>(Presented by Sue Charron)</i>
11:30PM– 12:30PM	Poverty Tax Abatements <i>(Presented by Mary Reindl)</i>

Session 3

10:45AM – 12:30PM	Section 8 Housing <i>(Presented by Maureen Brown; Director of Section 8 for the State of Maine and John Gallagher; President, Public Housing Directors Association)</i>														
12:30 PM – 1:00 PM	MWDA Business Meeting (Election of Officers)														
1:00PM – 2:00PM	Lunch														
2:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Vendors/Round Table Discussions <table> <tr> <td><i>Salvation Army</i></td> <td><i>Women Unlimited</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>ASPIRE/Parents As Scholars</i></td> <td><i>Shalom House</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Habitat for Humanity</i></td> <td><i>BRAP & Shelter Care</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>GA Tracker (software)</i></td> <td><i>DHS Reimbursement</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Good Will Industries</i></td> <td><i>CarePartners</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Women, Work and Community</i></td> <td><i>MSHA</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>PROP (People’s Regional Opportunity Program)</i></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	<i>Salvation Army</i>	<i>Women Unlimited</i>	<i>ASPIRE/Parents As Scholars</i>	<i>Shalom House</i>	<i>Habitat for Humanity</i>	<i>BRAP & Shelter Care</i>	<i>GA Tracker (software)</i>	<i>DHS Reimbursement</i>	<i>Good Will Industries</i>	<i>CarePartners</i>	<i>Women, Work and Community</i>	<i>MSHA</i>	<i>PROP (People’s Regional Opportunity Program)</i>	
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<i>Women, Work and Community</i>	<i>MSHA</i>														
<i>PROP (People’s Regional Opportunity Program)</i>															

3:30 PM

Grand Prize Drawing

Spring Seminar—Point Sebago cont.

ATTENTION EARLY ARRIVALS

For those who plan to arrive on Sunday, you may take advantage of a special rate from Point Sebago.

Park Home	\$39.00 Per Person
Resort Cottage	\$59.00 Per Person
Check-in time is 3:00 p.m.	



Please note early arrival on your overnight reservation form.



Please join us for a complimentary sunset cruise on board the Point Sebago Princess. It is a one-hour cruise on Sebago Lake that will take place Sunday evening, May 18th from 5:00 pm until 6:00 pm.

At 7:30 pm, please join us at the Sunset Lounge where we will offer live music entertainment featuring the group GREEN & BOSSE. Enjoy some fine Americana music and socialize with your friends. The Sunset Lounge is warm and inviting with a fireplace in the main room and pool table, pin ball machine, and a foze ball table in the adjoining room.



We hope to see you there.

Spring Seminar—Point Sebago Cont.

The entertainment continues on Monday night.

Starting with the banquet with awards and certificates.

A fashion show!

An alternative approach to fashion today.

A satirical look at fashion.

RAFFLES



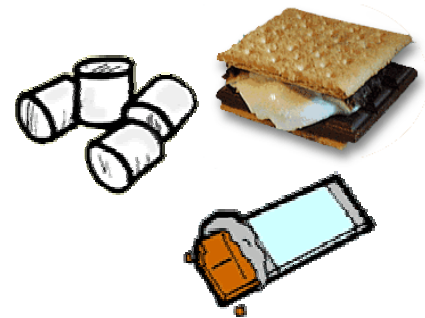
DOOR PRIZES

Bonfire at 9:00PM

Bring your s'more fixings!!!!



Please bring your own Lawn Chair.



PLEASE NOTE: THERE ARE NO TELEPHONES IN THE PARK HOMES AND RESORT COTTAGES. PAYPHONES ARE AVAILABLE AT THE LAKE VIEW RESTAURANT AND PALIVION. NOT ALL OF THE PARK HOMES HAVE TELEVISIONS, IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ONE PLEASE REQUEST ONE BY CALLING POINT SEBAGO AT 1-800-655-1232. ALL RESORT HOMES DO HAVE TELEVISIONS. THERE ARE NO ALARMS CLOCKS IN ANY OF THE UNITS.

NO DOGS ALLOWED



Melanoma cancer Awareness

May is National Melanoma/Skin Cancer Month

Melanoma is the most serious cancer of the skin, affecting cells that produce and transport the pigment melanin – the substance that gives skin its color. In the U.S., melanoma is expected to be diagnosed in about 53,600 people this year, nearly double the rate of 1973. Of those, approximately 2,700 cases are expected to affect residents of Pennsylvania, which ranks fifth in the nation in melanoma incidence behind California, Florida, Texas and New York.



Melanoma is a common cancer in light-skinned individuals; African Americans are less likely to develop the disease. If caught in its early stages, and with treatment, more than 75 percent of patients with melanoma survive at least five years after diagnosis.

In an effort to increase public awareness about melanoma, UPMC Cancer Centers joins other organizations nationwide to promote National Melanoma / Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month in May. UPMC developed these pages as a resource for learning more about melanoma and other skin cancers. In May of each year, free screenings are available to the public through the Department of Dermatology.

MWDA Puzzles

1

Y R
I N

2

H E A V E N	H E A V E N
H E A V E N	H E A V E N
H E A V E N	H E A I M V E N
H E A V E N	

3

2 5 2

4

N	S	S
U	U	U
S	N	N

TrickleDown

Take a look at the first word and change one letter -- that's **ONE** letter -- at a time to make a new Word for each line until you've evolved correctly into the last word.

First Word MILK

First Word PEST

2nd Word

2nd Word

3rd Word

3rd Word

4th Word

4th Word

Last Word FOND

Last Word BATS

Answers on back page.

MSHA New Program for the Elderly

MSHA unveils new program designed to keep seniors in their homes

Program makes use of state housing bond funds

AUGUSTA – The Maine State Housing Authority today announced it is seeking proposals from organizations to operate a new \$600,000 program that will help keep seniors living in their own homes.

“Our Keeping Seniors Home program is designed to finance repairs to homes of low income senior citizens who could not afford the repairs themselves, in order to make the homes safer and more accessible and allow the senior residents to live in them longer,” said MSHA Director Michael Finnegan.

“We are requesting proposals from organizations interested in running this program for us. We will select one or more agencies to serve seniors throughout Maine. We expect to start the program in the spring.”

The one or more organizations operating the program will be required to verify the qualifications of contractors doing the work and insure the proper permits are obtained before work begins. The operators also will need to complete all the work on the repairs and accessibility improvements within two years.

The program guidelines allow grants of up to \$5,000 per household for repairs and accessibility modifications. To be eligible, the homeowner must be age 62 or older and have an income at or below 170 percent of the federal poverty level. For a household of two people, that is an annual income of \$20,298 or less. For a single person household, it is \$15,062 or less.

The concept behind Keeping Seniors Home is to finance repairs that will prevent seniors from being forced to move out of their homes, and into nursing homes or assisted living facilities, because they cannot afford the repairs or modifications needed to make the home habitable.

“A few years ago we identified creating more housing opportunities for our burgeoning senior population as one of our housing priorities and one of Maine’s emerging housing issues,” Finnegan noted. “This new effort is one of several steps we have taken, and the first using the new state housing bond resource, to provide seniors with more housing options.”

Maine voters approved a \$12 million general obligation bond to fund affordable housing ventures in November 2001. Following the vote MSHA held a series of public forums to gather information and determine how best to address the bond fund targets.

“During the forums we heard from many people about the need for a program to address the housing needs of our low income senior homeowners,” said Finnegan. “This is one in a series of programs we are developing using the bond money.”

“We expect to be making more announcements early this year concerning other new or expanded housing efforts using this \$12 million in bond funds.”

“THE MEASURE OF LIFE IS NOT IT’S DURATION BUT IT’S DONATION”

-Peter Marshall

WE'RE ON THE WEB
WWW.MAINEWELFAREDIRECTORS.ORG



Friendship is like the
breeze,
You can't hold it,
Smell it,
Taste it,
Or know when it's coming,
But you can always feel it,
And you'll always know it's
there,
It may come and then go,
But you can know it'll
always be back.

- Terri Fanning

4) Sunup Sundown	BATS	FOND
3) Quarterback	BASS	FOLD
2) I'm in Seventh Heaven	PASS	MOLD
1) In under the Wire	PAST	MILD
	PEST	MILK

MWDA
Maine Municipal Association
60 Community Drive
Augusta, ME 04330

