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# OIL Newsletter



**A monthly publication of THE OKLAHOMANS for INDEPENDENT LIVING**

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## **TRANSPORTATION NEWS**

OIL provides lift-equipped transportation in McAlester and the surrounding area. The OIL bus is 10 years old and has over 150,000 miles. Because of the mileage and the mechanical condition of the bus, OIL has limited out-of town trips and recreational activities in the past year. The safety of OIL passengers is most important.

Last summer, OIL submitted a 5310 Capital Assistance Vehicle Application for a replacement, 11 Passenger Bus. OIL received notice in February that the application has been approved and an in-kind match was required by OIL, to receive the new bus.

The Puterbaugh Foundation has assisted OIL in meeting this match!! The bus has been ordered and we are expecting the bus sometime around July 2014.

Funding for the Transportation Program comes from the City of McAlester, United Way, Sertoma, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, and the \$1 pick-up fee that a passenger pays for the service.

The Transportation Program provides door to door transportation for people with disabilities and the elderly. Accessible door to door transportation is provided Monday through Friday from 8 to 5. Saturday transportation is provided twice a month from 8 to 5. Evening transportation is provided for specific community integration activities. A 24 hour notice is required. The Transportation Program does not provide set scheduling in order to allow individuals to meet their transportation goals, such as medical appointments, banking, shopping, etc.

The Transportation Program provides 1 full time driver and 1 part time driver. On average, OIL transports an estimated 97 individuals monthly. This past year the Transportation Program cost \$44,000. The funding OIL received for the program was not sufficient to meet the needs of the community.

OIL is excited to receive the new bus! We are glad to know that our passengers will benefit from the comfort of the new bus while receiving transportation. However, the Transportation Program has had some ups and downs as mentioned. This past year, the program received a decrease in funding. The decrease has put a strain on the program. OIL is always researching for additional funding and donations to increase funding. If you would like to make a donation to the Transportation Program or would like more information, you may contact Pam at OIL.



## **KEDDO SENIOR DAY AND WELLNESS FAIR**

The event will be held at the Southeast Exposition Center on Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The theme will be Sports.

Some of the events included are; Free Lunch, Bingo, Coloring Contest, Music, Western Wear Costume Contest, Health & Wellness Fair. Call 1 800 722-8180 or OIL for free local transportation.



## **DISABILITY WORDS SELF-ADVOCACY**

**Self-advocacy** refers to the civil rights movement for people with developmental disabilities, also called cognitive or intellectual disabilities, and other disabilities. It is also an important term in the disability rights movement, referring to people with disabilities taking control of their own lives, including being in charge of their own care in the medical system. The self-advocacy movement is (in basic terms) about **people with disabilities speaking up for themselves.**

It means that although a person with a disability may call upon the support of others, the individual is entitled to be in control of their own resources and how they are directed. It is about having the right to make life decisions without undue influence or control by others.

## **FEDS EARMARK MILLIONS FOR DISABILITY HOUSING ASSISTANCE**

Federal housing officials are putting \$120 million on the table to help thousands of people

with disabilities access rental assistance. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development said Tuesday that state housing agencies can apply now through May 5 for a share of the funding that's intended to help prevent homelessness and unnecessary institutionalization of those with disabilities.

The money is available under HUD's Section 811 Project Rental Assistance Demonstration Program, an initiative created through a 2010 law designed to expand community-based housing options for people with disabilities.

To participate, state housing agencies must work with local Medicaid and health and human services agencies to identify and assist individuals with disabilities who require long-term services and supports to live independently in the community. The money is tagged to help those with disabilities who earn less than 30 percent of their areas median income, officials said.

Similar funding was distributed for the first time last year to 13 states, making available some 3,500 new housing units many of which went to help people transitioning out of institutions. At that time, advocates said that 35 states had applied to participate in the new program, highlighting the demand for housing aid.

## **SOCIAL SECURITY LAUNCHES NEW EXPEDITED DISABILITY PROCESS FOR VETERANS**

Social Security has announced the launch of a new disability process to expedite disability

claims filed by veterans with a Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation rating of 100% Permanent & Total. Under the new process, Social Security will treat these veterans' applications as high priority and issue expedited decisions, similar to the way the agency currently handles disability claims from Wounded Warriors.

"We have reached another milestone for those who have sacrificed so much for our country and this process ensures they will get the benefits they need quickly," said Acting Commissioner Colvin. "While we can never fully repay them for their sacrifices, we can be sure we provide them with the quality of service that they deserve. This initiative is truly a lifeline for those who need it most."

## **NEW MEDICAID WAIVER RULES SET TO TAKE EFFECT**

In a long-awaited move, federal officials are clarifying what counts as home and community-based services for people with disabilities. Under a final rule expected to be published in the Federal Register next week, housing for those with disabilities will not only be judged by its location or physical characteristics but will also have to meet specific "outcome-oriented" criteria in order to qualify under Medicaid home and community-based services waivers. "Home and community-based settings do not include a nursing facility, institution for mental diseases or an intermediate care facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities," the rule states. What's more, homes "must exhibit specific qualities to be eligible sites for delivery of

home and community-based services” under the new federal requirements. Specifically, the settings must be integrated in and provide full access to the community and be places where individuals choose to live, Medicaid officials said. Additionally, homes must offer personal rights to privacy and dignity and allow individuals to independently make choices about daily activities, their physical environment and who they interact with. The new rule also states that individuals with disabilities receiving Medicaid home and community-based services do so through a person-centered planning process.

“People with disabilities and older adults have a right to live, work and participate in the greater community,” said Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius. “The announcement will help ensure that all people participating in Medicaid home and community-based services programs have full access to the benefits of community living.”

States offering existing Medicaid waivers for home and community-based services must establish transition plans to meet the new requirements as soon as possible under the rule.

Medicaid officials previously said that they were prompted to issue the new rules after hearing reports of homes built on the sites of former institutions that were being labeled as community-based.

### **EQUIPMENT NEEDED**

Electric Patient Lift with sling. Call OIL if you have one. A tax donation letter can be provided.

### **INCREASED MENTAL HEALTH SPENDING**

After years of state spending cuts, mental health budgets increased in 37 states this year, according to a new report by the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

“Arguably the most notable development was that Texas increased mental health spending by \$259 million over two years, the largest increase in its history,” NAMI said in a statement accompanying the report. South Carolina, which had cut mental health programs the deepest in recent years, was also among those states to increase funding this year. Overall, the increased investment in mental health, spurred in part by the deadly shootings last year in Aurora, Colo., and Newtown, Conn., represents a dramatic reversal from recent years. Between 2009 and 2012, state spending in mental health services dropped by \$4.35 billion.

According to NAMI, only six states decreased mental health funding this year — Alaska, Wyoming, Nebraska, Louisiana, North Carolina and Maine. Aside from money, the NAMI report said states enacted other measures related to mental health.

Five states passed legislation to improve the early identification of mental illness in children and youth. Seventeen states adopted laws to tighten restrictions on gun ownership by those considered dangerously mentally ill. And nineteen states tinkered with laws pertaining to court-ordered treatment of those with mental illness.

### **SATURDAY TRANSPORTATION**

OIL will take individuals anywhere needed in the McAlester area whether it is to visit friends/family or just to see an afternoon movie matinee.

The cost is \$1 per stop. The dates are set for April 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> starting at 8:00 a.m.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

OIL provides lift-equipped transportation in McAlester and the surrounding area, Monday – Friday, 8:00 – 4:30. A twenty-four hour minimum notice is required. The cost is \$1 per pick up in McAlester and \$2 for Krebs and Frink Chambers. Outside this area, fees are based on actual costs of gasoline needed to provide the service.

**\*Prices are subject to change.**



You can have the freedom that comes with living at home even though you have a long-term illness or disability. The Oklahoma Living Choice Project can help you move out of a nursing home and back into the community. This project gives Oklahomans like you or your loved one more options to manage health care needs and adds more balance to the state’s long-term care system. If you live in a nursing home and qualify for SoonerCare, then Living Choice may be able to help.

**Contact Leah Medina,  
Case Manager, for a referral  
to the Living Choice Project at  
(918) 426.6220**

| <b>*Events are held at OIL unless otherwise noted</b>   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| <b>APRIL EVENTS</b>   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
| SUNDAY  | MONDAY                                       | TUESDAY   | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY  | FRIDAY   | SATURDAY  |
|    |  | <b>1</b>  | <b>2</b><br><u>People with Disabilities Awareness Day</u><br>State Capitol<br>8 am | <b>3</b><br><u>Shopping</u><br>7:00-10:45am<br><u>Men's Gp.</u><br>Rib Crib<br>5 pm | <b>4</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b><br><u>Brain Injury Gp.</u><br>1 pm  | <b>8</b><br><u>OIL Social</u><br>Charlie's Chicken<br>5:30 pm | <b>9</b>   | <b>10</b>   | <b>11</b><br><u>KEDDO Sr. Day</u><br>Expo Ctr.<br>9:00 – 2:00 pm | <b>12</b><br><u>Saturday Transportation</u><br>8 am |
| <b>13</b>   | <b>14</b>                                    | <b>15</b>   | <b>16</b>  | <b>17</b><br><u>Shopping</u><br>7:00-10:45am  | <b>18</b>  | <b>19</b>   |
| <b>20</b>   | <b>21</b><br><u>Brain Injury Gp.</u><br>1 pm | <b>22</b><br><u>Women's Gp.</u><br>TBA<br>11am                | <b>23</b>  | <b>24</b>   | <b>25</b>  | <b>26</b><br><u>Saturday Transportation</u><br>8 am |
| <b>27</b>   | <b>28</b>                                    | <b>29</b>   | <b>30</b>  |   |  |   |
| <p><b>*Low Impact Exercise Class for Sr.'s</b> meets Mon., Wed., &amp; Fri., 10:00 a.m., Stipe Center    <b>*Alzheimer's Support Group</b>, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed., 12:30 p.m., Main &amp; OK Church of Christ, call Glenda at 916-1210    <b>*Diabetes Support Group</b>, 1<sup>st</sup> Tue., 6:00 p.m., McAlester Regional Health Center Wellness Conf. Room, contact Kathy at 421-6812    <b>*For information on Men's &amp; Women's Grief Support Groups</b> – call Hospice of McAlester at 423-3911 or for information on the 7 week <b>Grief Support Group</b> – call the Health Dept. at 421-6600,    <b>*For information on the Stroke Support Group</b>, call the McAlester Regional Health Center at 426-1800</p> |  |   |  |   |  |   |

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