



Welcome

“ Welcome to the first edition of the Home Services Program (HSP) newsletter! As you can see from its title “SUCCESS,” we want to highlight the many ways HSP supports the tens of thousands of individuals with disabilities who are living successfully and independently in their communities. This newsletter will help keep you up to date on forthcoming initiatives...and give you the resources to manage the changes as we roll out those initiatives. Looking forward to our successful journey together!

David Hanson, Director
Division of Rehabilitation Services

contacts:

IDHS Customer Help Line

- 1-800-843-6154
- 1-800-447-6404 (TTY)

EVV Call Center

- 1-888-713-5139
- 1-888-575-0531 (TTY)

For help with:

- Santrax ID
- Using Call in/Call out process
- General Questions

Report Abuse or Neglect

- 1-866-800-1409
- 1-888-206-1327 (TTY)

HSP Success

Making it Work Together...

Home Services Program – Transforming Lives

By Cathy Contarino
Executive Director, IMPACT CIL

An Illinois Medicaid program that provides essential home care assistance to adults with disabilities was thrust into the news recently. Twenty-nine Home Services workers from the Metro East and Springfield areas were charged with fraudulent time reporting.

As an individual with a disability, and a Customer of the Home Services Program (HSP), I rely on personal assistants whose support allows me to live independently and to go to work every day. I also serve as the Executive Director of IMPACT Center for Independent Living, which advocates, along with individuals with disabilities, for the right to live full and fulfilling lives of our own choosing.

These fraud allegations are distressing, and let's be crystal clear: any fraud in the HSP is intolerable, and those who break the law should be held legally accountable.

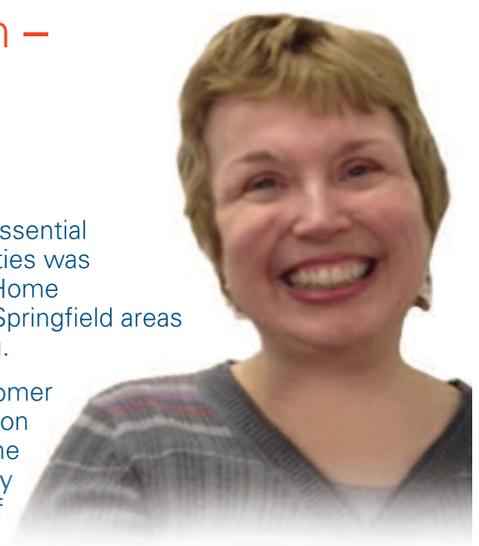
However, these charges of wrongdoing by a few bad apples shouldn't undermine or diminish the importance of a vital program that allows over 28,000 customers to live in their own homes with dignity, security, and privacy, with the assistance of a worker whom they select.

There are over 30,000 of those workers, whose service, professionalism, and commitment to customers make this a valuable investment, especially for the taxpayers of Illinois. HSP saves Illinois tens of millions of dollars annually because it provides a welcome, cost-effective alternative to institutional and nursing home care.

Despite the recent press coverage, the truth is that over the last 24 months the Program ramped up its safeguards against fraud and abuse:

- On January 1st, the Department of Human Services introduced an electronic timekeeping system for caregivers, designed to safeguard against fraud;
- All personal assistants now receive mandatory fraud and abuse prevention training;
- The Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living initiated a statewide fraud, abuse and neglect training program for HSP customers; and,
- HSP assigned additional staff and resources to their anti-fraud unit, which is responsible for identifying suspicious cases.

I am someone whose life has been transformed because of the Home Services Program. It's why I'm able to work, pay taxes, write this commentary from my desk and continue to advocate for equal rights for all.



Home Service Program (HSP) Training

■ Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) Guidance

All Individual Providers are required to call in and out of the Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) timekeeping system when providing services to Customers of the HSP. New Individual Providers will receive initial guidance on using HSP's EVV system at their local IDHS/DRS office before they begin employment with the Customer. For additional information about the system, please reference the IDHS website at <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=66961>

■ Provider Management Skills Training for Customers (provided by Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living)

HSP Counselors will refer newly-enrolled HSP Customers for a one-on-one training session, designed to build the skills required for hiring and managing the relationship with their IP. The training covers recruiting, interviewing and hiring an IP, and how to recognize and avoid fraud, abuse and neglect. At the end of the session, Customers will receive reference materials and follow-up contact information for additional assistance if needed. Customers will receive a call after their initial counselor interview inviting them to make an appointment for training at the location most convenient for them.

■ Mandatory New Hire Orientation Training (provided by SEIU)

Newly hired Individual Providers who have not worked under HSP in the last 12 months must attend this mandatory Orientation Training within 90 days of starting employment. Contact the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Member Resource Center at 866-933-7348 to register for the orientation closest to your location. This training session will cover several areas: providing self-directed assistance; using the EVV timekeeping system; and identifying and reporting fraud. Individual Providers will be paid for time spent in training.

■ Voluntary Individual Provider Training Opportunities (provided by SEIU)

Individual Providers have the opportunity to enroll in additional training classes, including: Body Mechanics and Safe Lifting, Universal Precautions, Independent Living Philosophy, Communication Skills and others. You may contact the SEIU Member Resource Center at 866-933-7348 to register. Individual Providers will be paid for time spent in training.

■ E.Q.U.I.P. Mandatory Training

The Home Services Program is committed to ensuring high quality care and service for our Customers. All current Individual Providers are required to participate in a mandatory "Ensuring Quality, Understanding & Integrity of Providers" (E.Q.U.I.P.) training provided by IDHS/DRS. The session will cover Fraud, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation, the Basic Roles of an Individual Provider and Basic First Aid. Trainings are scheduled for Fall 2014 and you will receive notification of the training schedule through the mail. Individual Providers will be paid for time spent in training.

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EVV Timekeeping System Reaches 85 Percent User Compliance!

The Home Services Program's new Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) timekeeping system reached an important milestone in July, with almost 85 percent of Individual Providers (IPs) using the telephone and computer-based system to report their hours worked.

As of July 30th, an estimated 21,000 IPs, serving thousands of HSP Customers statewide, have embraced the Call in/Call out reporting process intended to help make timekeeping faster, easier and more accurate.

In the nine months since its January 1, 2014 launch, EVV has slowly gained momentum despite experiencing some initial growing pains and setbacks. As the number of successful users increases, HSP is engaged in a continuous improvement process to make both IP and Customer transitions to the EVV system as easy as possible.

EVV was implemented in accordance with the SMART Act of 2012, which mandates that the Illinois Department of Human Services implement an electronic timekeeping system for the Home Services Program. Today, the program serves more than 28,000 individuals who are able to continue living in their homes with the support of a wide variety of services provided by more than 30,000 Individual Providers including Personal Assistants, Homemakers, Certified Nursing Assistants, Licensed Practical Nurses and Registered Nurses.

For more information or EVV help, visit the IDHS EVV website at <http://dhs.illinois.gov/evv> or call the IDHS EVV Call Center at 1-888-713-5139 or 1-888-575-0531 (TTY).