



Caring Matters

County of Sacramento

October 2017

The Advisory Committee Needs YOU!



IN THIS ISSUE

Advisory Committee 1

Upcoming FREE Classes 2

Professionalism in Work 2

IHSS Public Authority

Welcome to the new IHSS Public Authority Newsletter! We've gone electronic with our newsletter, and welcome your suggestions for content or general feedback.

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Joe Samora recently "retired" as a member of the Sacramento County IHSS Public Authority Advisory Committee, after serving for over three years. He has been a fierce advocate for IHSS Recipients and Providers, having taken on the duties of caregiving for his mother, wife and two aunts over several years. Joe served on the IHSS Public Authority Advisory Committee from April 2014 through September 2017, and has brought his unique knowledge and perspective to the committee. We will miss him, and thank him for his service!

Are you an IHSS Recipient? Are you interested in making a difference in the IHSS program? Consider supporting a program that has been of great value to your independence and dignity, and make the program even better for future IHSS Recipients and Providers!

The IHSS Advisory Committee has two openings for current (or former) IHSS Recipients. IHSS Advisory Committee members serve for a three-year term. Two-hour public meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month from 1:00 to 3:00pm, with the IHSS Advisory Committee paying (or reimbursing) the cost of transportation to and from meetings.

If you are an IHSS Recipient and interested in this opportunity to improve the IHSS program, please visit the IHSS Public Authority website at www.pubauth.saccounty.net and click on the Advisory Committee link at the top of the page, or call (916) 875-2005 for more information on how to become an Advisory Committee member.



Upcoming FREE Classes

IHSS Public Authority regularly holds classes on a variety of subjects related to caregiving! All classes are open to both Providers and Recipients, and are held on Thursday evenings as scheduled below. Classes begin at 5:30pm and end by 7:30pm. Take a look at some upcoming classes:

October 5th: Adult Protective Services and Mandated Reporting. Presented by Irene Chu, M.S. of Sacramento County APS, this class will discuss the various types of elder/dependent adult abuse, how to prevent abuse, and how to report it.

October 26th: Nutrition and the IHSS Consumer*. Presented by CSUS Nursing students, this class will discuss how you can eat healthy, even on a budget. Learn how to read labels, identify hidden salt and sugar in your diet and smart shopping. Special attention is paid to the senior diet.

November 2nd: Mobility and Fall Prevention*. Presented by IHSS PA staff, this class will identify primary conditions leading to falls and how to prevent accidental falls in the home.

November 9th: California Victim Compensation Board. Presented by Cindy Kaiser, Advocate and Liaison for the California Victim Compensation Fund, this presentation will provide an overview of the program and information on how victims of violent crime can access the State Restitution Fund.

If you have questions regarding the IHSS Educational classes, please contact Mary-Ann Cowan at (916) 876-5682 or send an email to

Maintaining a Professional Relationship

There is a natural bond that develops between a Provider and a Recipient. A Provider is responsible for the Recipient's well-being, while a Recipient is dependent upon a Provider for their health and comfort. While this warmth can be beneficial to the Recipient's healing, it is essential to maintain a level of professionalism in the Provider/Recipient relationship. Upholding a professional relationship protects a Provider from conflicts of interest and potential liability, and is key to a lasting care relationship and career.

1. Set firm boundaries and maintain them.

A Provider does not have to be cold to maintain professional decorum, and warmth and empathy should not be confused with being unprofessional. Keeping a professional distance simply means keeping focused on the job. This ensures that, if problems arise, they are prompted only by conflicts about a Recipient's care and not by personal conflicts. Be friendly and empathetic, but remember you are not being paid to be someone's friend. You are being paid to provide care.

2. Stick to your area of expertise.

A Recipient in need of healthcare is likely a person in need of other forms of assistance. When someone needs help beyond your scope of practice, it can be difficult to refuse, but it is a bad idea to involve yourself in Recipients' lives beyond their healthcare. Do not entangle yourself in family arguments, provide financial advice, accept loans, borrow items or volunteer any information outside your field. Your Recipient will respect you as a professional and you'll avoid unnecessary conflict or misunderstandings.

3. Incorporate boundaries into care contracts.

While many boundary issues that might come up throughout the course of a Provider's employment cannot be anticipated, some potential issues can be anticipated and avoided. When working in a household with young children, for instance, it is very easy for a parent to ask a Provider to just "keep an eye" on their child while they go to the store or run another minor errand. As much as a Provider may want to help out in a pinch, it's a bad idea to accept additional responsibilities outside what is expressly stated in the Notice of Action. Just because you are there doesn't make it your job.

In such close working conditions, plenty of opportunities arise to cross the professional line between a Provider and Recipient. By setting up firm boundaries with patients and the families of Recipients from the start of the working relationship, a Provider should be able to avoid many of the pitfalls that can appear throughout the course of his or her employment.

