

PIRS Hot Sheet

Advocacy & Services for People with Disabilities

H.R. 1041: The Fairness in Medicare Bidding Act

The American Association for Homecare (AAHomecare) is working with key members of the House and Senate on bipartisan legislation that would end the new Medicare “competitive” bidding program for home medical equipment and services (HME) because the program is fatally flawed. People who require home medical equipment are being harmed because services are being curtailed and they are not able to receive the equipment they need. HR1041 would protect patients’ access to medically required home medical equipment and services.

The bidding program was implemented on January 1, 2011 in nine cities and begins in an additional 91 cities later this year. Since it began, patients, clinicians, and homecare providers have reported:

- Difficulty finding a local equipment or service provider;
- Delays in obtaining medically required equipment and services;
- Longer than necessary hospital stays due to trouble discharging patients to home-based care;
- Far fewer choices for patients when selecting equipment or providers;
- Reduced quality; and
- Confusing or incorrect information provided by Medicare.

Hundreds of patients and providers have

reported problems and complaints about getting medically required home medical equipment and services to seniors and people with disabilities. The program affects Medicare beneficiaries who require oxygen therapy, enteral nutrients (tube feeding), continuous positive air pressure (CPAP) and respiratory assistive devices, power wheelchairs, walkers, hospital beds and support surfaces, and mail-order diabetic supplies.

More than a dozen national consumer and patient advocacy groups including **the ALS Association, American Association of People with Disabilities, Muscular Dystrophy Association, National Council on Independent Living, National Spinal Cord Injury Association, and United Spinal Association** oppose this bidding program. Last year, a bipartisan group of 260 members of the U.S. House of Representatives supported legislation to repeal it.

If not repealed, it will be implemented nationally. PIRS shares the concerns of the consumers impacted by the program and joins all the other organizations that have declared their opposition to it. CMS needs to tell Congress the bidding program is not working as anticipated and seek approval to abandon it.



WoundedWarriorsFamilySupport.org/: support to the families of those who have been wounded, injured or killed during combat operations.

PIRS Calendar

Reasonable accommodations are available upon advance request to facilitate access to PIRS facilities and services.

In order to maintain a comfortable environment for everyone, we respectfully request that **no perfumes or other scented products** are worn when attending activities at PIRS. Thank you.

Deaf Awareness and Conversational American Sign Language:

⇒ **Advanced Class:** call for info.

⇒ **Beginning Class:** Monday, 1:00 – 2:00 pm
For more information on classes, call Virginia at TTY (530) 885-0326, or use CA Relay Service at 211 or 1-877-314-6025 and give the operator the TTY number.

Disability Peer Support Groups:

⇒ **Depression Support Group** – Every Thursday, 2:00 – 4:00 pm. at PIRS. This group is facilitated by Senior Peer Counseling Program of PCHHS, and it is open to all adults regardless of age.

⇒ **Women's Depression/Bipolar/Mental Health Disabilities Support Group** – Monday 5:00 – 7:00 pm. Call Jeff, ext. 15.

⇒ **Men's Disability Support Group** – Tuesday 6:00 – 8:00 pm. Call Jeff Cowen, ext 15, before attending.

⇒ **Women's Disability Support Group** – Wednesday, 1:00 – 3:00 pm. Open drop-in group. Call Facilitator Barbara Finn, ext. 26, for more information.

⇒ **Family & Caregivers Support** – Call Facilitator Barbara Finn, ext. 26, for more information.

Auburn People First: self-advocacy for people with developmental disabilities

⇒ Call the Supported Life Institute, Self-Advocacy Coordination Project at 916-567-1974 for more information.

FREE Help with your healthcare services problems:

HICAP – Health Insurance Counseling for seniors and people with disabilities. Call Seniors First/SeniorLink at 1-800-878-9222 to make an appointment.

Health Rights Hotline, serving Placer, El Dorado, Yolo, & Sacramento Counties, regardless where you receive your health coverage. Tollfree (888) 354-4474 or TDD (916) 551-2180. In Sacramento, call (916) 551-2100. www.hrh.org.

HMO Help Center: State Dept. of Managed Health Care, free independent medical review (IMR) for denial of services. Assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call (888) 466-2219 or (877) 688-9891 (TTY). www.healthhelp.ca.gov.

DRA's Health Access Project: free publications about the health care and insurance rights and concerns of people with disabilities and serious health conditions. <http://dralegal.org/>, and click on "Projects".

Mental Health America In Crisis? 1-800-273-TALK Pensar en Suicida?

1-800-SUICIDA (784-2432)
(Ellos son Latinos y hablan Espanol)

California AgrAbility Project serves agricultural workers with disabilities and their families. Call (530) 752-1613 voice; Toll free: 1-800-477-6129; fax (530) 752-2640.

<http://calagrability.ucdavis.edu>

US DEPT OF JUSTICE SUES FOR ACCESS IN HOUSING COMPLEXES

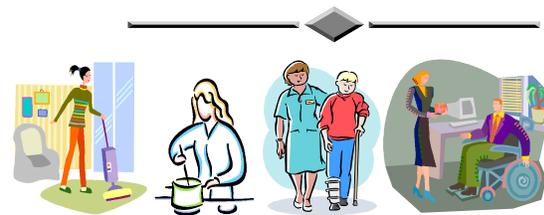
The Justice Department filed a lawsuit against the owners, developers and design professionals involved in the design and construction of nine multi-family housing complexes in Mississippi, Louisiana and Tennessee. The nine complexes comprise more than 2,000 apartments with more than 800 ground-floor units that are required by the Fair Housing Act to contain accessible features. Eight of the complexes contain leasing offices that also are required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to contain accessible features.

The suit alleges that the nine properties are inaccessible to persons with disabilities because they, for example, lack accessible pedestrian routes; lack accessible parking; have steep cross and running slopes; have doors that are not sufficiently wide enough to allow passage by persons in wheelchairs; have insufficient accessible routes into and through the units; have light switches, electrical outlets, thermostats and other environmental controls in inaccessible locations; and/or have kitchens and bathrooms that are inaccessible to persons in wheelchairs. Further, the complaint alleges that the leasing offices are inaccessible to persons with disabilities because, for example, they lack accessible pedestrian approach routes, lack compliant parking spaces, have inaccessible counters, and/or have inaccessible door hardware.

“The Fair Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act include provisions to ensure that persons with disabilities have opportunities to find and live comfortably in multifamily housing across the nation,” said Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division.

The suit seeks a court order declaring that the defendants’ actions violate the Fair Housing Act and the ADA, prohibiting the defendants from engaging in future discrimination in the design and construction of multi-family housing; requiring the defendants to bring the covered multi-family dwellings, and public and common use areas into compliance with fair housing laws; and awarding monetary damages to persons harmed by the defendants’ discriminatory housing practices.

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability and familial status. Title III of the ADA requires, among other things, that public accommodations comply with specific requirements related to architectural standards to ensure accessible public and common use areas. More information about the Civil Rights Division and the laws it enforces is available at www.usdoj.gov/crt. Individuals who believe that they may have been victims of housing discrimination can call the Housing Discrimination Tip Line at 1-800-896-7743, email the Justice Department at fairhousing@usdoj.gov, or contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development at 1-800-669-9777.



**Are you a professional care provider?
Apply to join PIRS Personal Assistants
Registry/Referral Service. (No fee)**

**Do you need to hire an in-home personal
assistant or care provider?**

**Call Tim Cooper at PIRS
530-885-6100, x15, for help.**

ADA CORNER

US Justice Dept. has settled with a state-funded private preschool program, the Beginning Montessori Academy in Baldwin Park, CA. They must not discriminate against any individual on the basis of disability, including autism. They agree to provide children with disabilities an equal opportunity to attend and participate in all programs, services or activities, and to make reasonable modifications in policies, practices or procedures as necessary to afford its child care services and facilities to children with disabilities, except when doing so would cause a fundamental alteration of its services, or when the child's participation in programs, services or activities causes a direct threat to others. They will pay \$5,000 to the party affected by the school's previous policies. To learn more about federal disability rights statutes, call the toll-free ADA information line at 800-514-0301, tty 800-514-0383, or www.ada.gov. For more information about the Civil Rights Division, visit its website at www.justice.gov/crt.

Free Technical Assistance:

- Pacific Disability and Business Technical Advisory Center (DBTAC) – Hotline provides detailed explanations on ADA Guidelines. 1-800-949-4232; www.adapacific.org.
- Dept of Justice ADA webpage: www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm
- Equal Opportunity Employment Commission – non-discrimination in employment: www.eeoc.gov.
- Job Accommodation Network (JAN): lists examples of accommodations that may be appropriate for various types of disabling conditions. www.jan.wvu.edu
- www.access-board.gov – US Access Board publishes access guidelines based on research about best practices.

- www.DisabilityInfo.gov is a cross-government portal on disability, and is easily accessible.
- www.ncaonline.org- National Center on Accessibility promotes access to recreational facilities, focusing on universal access and practical solutions by linking designers with users.
- www.firstgov.gov – a one-stop source to find any federal agency and other information.
- Federal Transit Administration – ADA Assistance line: 1-888-446-4511 or www.fta.dot.gov/transit_data_info/ada/
- Information on the U.S. Dept of Education enforcement of education rights (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA). www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/index.html
- Discrimination in air transportation and related services. Hotline at 1-800-778-4838 (voice) or 1-800-455-9880 (TTY) to obtain assistance. Complaints must be submitted in writing. <http://airconsumer.ost.dot.gov/>



Advocate for Your Rights!

Never take your independence for granted. Never ignore discrimination. Speak out and defend your rights to access housing, education, employment, transportation, health care, telecommunications, recreation, and all the other benefits our society enjoys. Stay informed and get PIRS advocacy bulletins by mail or email:

Email: <jcowen@pirs.org> and put “*Subscribe Advocacy List*” in the subject line;
Call – Jeff - 530-885-6100, ext.15; or
Write: Advocate, PIRS, 11768 Atwood Rd. Ste. 29, Auburn, CA 95603.

Want to get more involved? Contact Jeff!

To Contact Your Legislators online:

President: www.whitehouse.gov

Governor: www.governor.ca.gov

US Senators: thomas.loc.gov, then choose "Senate Directory" at top.

US Representatives: thomas.loc.gov, then choose "House Directory" at top.

State Senate: www.senate.ca.gov

State Assembly: www.assembly.ca.gov

Placer County: www.placer.ca.gov

El Dorado County: co.el-dorado.ca.us

Alpine County: www.alpinecountyca.gov



PIRS Board of Directors is seeking new members. In particular, if you are of Latino, Asian, or African-American descent and have a disability, please consider joining our Board.

Please call for an application:
530-885-6100, in Auburn
1-800-833-3453 outside of Auburn area
530-885-0326 TDD
530-885-3032 Fax

PIRS Board of Directors

Dawn Davidson, President
Paul Opper, Vice President
Robert Hancock, Treasurer
Dan Roye, Secretary
Becky Baker, Director
Michael Cummings, Director
Harry Powell, Director
Terry Scott, Director
Linda Wisdom, Director

PIRS Board Meeting:

Third Wednesday, 5:00-6:30 p.m. at PIRS.

Disability Rights Organizations:

www.ADAWatch.org: Advancing the Civil Rights of People with Disabilities

National Council on Independent Living:
www.NCIL.org

Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living: www.april-rural.org

CA Foundation for Independent Living Centers: www.cfilc.org

Mental Health: www.Bazelon.org

Advocacy for persons with developmental disabilities: [The ARC.org](http://TheARC.org)

Disability Rights California: www.drc.org

Disability Rights Education Defense Fund:
www.dredf.org

Not Dead Yet: opposing physician-assisted suicide. www.ndy.org

Disability Rights Advocates: dralegal.org

American Association of Persons with Disabilities: www.aapd.org

California Disability Community Action Network (CDCAN): Advocacy Without Borders: www.cdcan.us



www.disabilitybenefits101.org

Information on employment, health coverage and other benefits, and how it all relates to working. There's a unique "calculator" that will help you figure it out. You can work!

Placer Independent Resource Services
11768 Atwood Rd., Ste. 29
Auburn, CA 95603

Non Profit Organization
US Postage PAID
Auburn, CA
Permit #130

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PIRS Hotsheet is available in alternative formats. Please call us – 530-885-6100.



*Honor your Dad, or
Someone like a Dad, on
Father's Day!*

*Please Include
PIRS in Your Will.*

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PIRS is funded by grants from the US Dept. of Education/Rehabilitative Services Administration; State Dept. of Rehabilitation; Area 4 Agency on Aging; United Auburn Indian Communities; City of Roseville; Community Technology Foundation of CA; James & Virginia Benson Fund for the Elderly of Placer County of the Sacramento Region Community Foundation; by contract with the Pacific Disability & Business Technical Assistance Center; and by private donations.

We need your support. Please make a donation to PIRS today. Thank you!

PIRS is a Certified Agency of United Way California Capital Region: **Agency # 5751**

