



Role of Information and Referral in Times of Economic Crisis

A Report on MNIP Regional Meetings, 2009

Coordinated by New England INDEX,

The University of Massachusetts Medical School Shriver Center

This year's annual MNIP meeting took the form of five regional meetings across the Commonwealth over April and May. Information and Referral has always been a challenging service: even in a specific area such as disabilities, information always covers an infinite number of categories and it's always in flux. Also, I&R/case management are arguably the most basic of all human services and a prerequisite to providing other services.

Given the dramatic economic events that have affected us all, it seemed very important for us to investigate what is being required of information and referral specialists in this time and how INDEX and the MNIP can respond helpfully to these needs. These were the primary topics of our meetings this year and we present here a brief summary of some of what we have found.

A total of 51 individuals attending representing 32 agencies were able to attend. The first part of the meetings dealt with the nature of the most challenging calls.

Here are some of the major findings:

1. Almost all (83%) of the MNIP members that responded to our poll indicated that the number of calls has increased over the past six months. This increase is by and large due to calls about basic needs such as food and housing, rather than to specific issues about disabilities.
2. Major areas of call increases seem to be the following:
 - Housing—due to foreclosures, lack of income to pay rent, need for accessible housing in areas where individuals and their families have been living

- Other basic services—information around food pantries, transportation, and paying routine bills such as utilities
- Health Care and Insurance—including special circumstances such as increases in Social Security cost-of-living affecting eligibility for MassHealth
- Special Populations—particularly difficult for some immigrants, people living in rural areas, and people under 60 with disabilities who do not qualify for services

We learned that information specialists and case managers are handling more cases while it is likely that the numbers of these staff will be cut back because of cuts to state agencies in the budgets. Because calls are more complex, they take more time. Many callers are desperate and information specialists are felt stressed in trying to respond, particularly where circumstances don't provide any obvious answers. As a result, information specialists report stress and danger of burn-out. We plan to investigate if there is interest in providing some opportunities for support and training in the area of dealing with especially difficult calls.

The second part of the meeting dealt with resources being used to provide helpful information.

Some examples:

1. The MNIP network, particularly the Support Conference-The usage of Support Conference has increased substantially and MNIP members report that the email alert and notification now in effect has increased the efficiency of their use. Support Conference is an easy way members can ask questions of the entire network. It is available to all staff of member agencies at <http://tinyurl.com/mnips>. New users of SC should click on the "Register Here" button to get started.
2. Local Resources-Many information and referral specialists reported that there are resources specific to their local area or community. These resources are often not listed in directories and not widely known. It therefore is important to use any networks people have and to follow all leads with persistence.
3. Online resources including, <http://www.disabilityinfo.org>, <http://www.800Ageinfo.com>, <http://mass.gov/MADIL> provide comprehensive information on services and disability-related topics.

Summaries

Some examples of the types of calls and queries that are especially difficult are listed below. The difficulty of these calls in normal circumstances has increased because the volume, duration, and desperation of the calls have all increased. Also, as a result of cutbacks in the state's budget, in many of the agencies there are fewer staff to receive the calls.

Challenging Calls (as reported by MNIP members)

Information & Referral and Case Management issues

- **Application process for basic services**
 - Application process can be overwhelming for families; they just give up
 - There has been a substantial increase in calls for assistance in filling out SSI applications
- **I&R specialist having to perform case management tasks**
 - Callers needs are going beyond information and referral
 - Basic needs issues are more often discussed and then disability issues discussed
 - Resources are needed for I&R Specialist who are stressed and over worked
- **Case Management**
 - Resources for case management are low and people are on waiting lists
- **People need help applying for various benefits**
 - There has been such an increase in the number of people applying for food stamps that the state agency is not able to keep up
- **Increase in callers with Mental Health issues**
 - Callers are often difficult to handle
 - Resources are needed for handling these types of calls
- **Asperger programs for young adults & adult population**
 - For this population there is a need of case management
 - “This population is falling through the cracks”
- **Case Managers Needed**
 - To help consumers to fill out paperwork for service eligibility
- **Family Support Services**
 - Arcs may lose capacity to provide I&R services. Since the meeting the budget has been modified. It is not clear what will actually be in the budget that is adopted.
- **Resources for People under 60**
 - Elder Service agencies are receiving these calls; if not ADRC, how to handle

Emergency

- **Increase in Protective Service calls**

Energy

- **Many people are having difficulty paying monthly utility bills**

Finances

- **Basic living expenses, e.g.**
 - Rent
 - Moving financial assistance
 - Co-payment for health insurance
 - Mortgage assistance
- **Lack of financial resources for child care**
 - State vouchers frozen
 - No summer vouchers

Food and Nutrition

- **People need help applying for various benefits**
 - Food Stamps
 - Due to increase in the number of people applying for food stamps, state agency is not able to keep up
- **Home Delivered Meals (Low Cost) for those under 60**
 - Increase has been reported in meal referrals for those under 60
 - Meals on wheels can be purchased for \$6. This is too expensive for some people.
 - Grocery delivery is also challenging with online services and expensive
- **Food pantries**
 - Identification is required to receive services.
 - Many immigrants do not have the required identification

Health

- **Mental Health**
 - There has been a noticeable increase in calls
 - Information specialists report that many calls are hard to handle
 - Resources are needed for handling these type of calls
- **MassHealth**
 - What about the population that is slightly over income eligibility for MassHealth?
 - Their social security monthly amount exceeds the limit
 - Information specialists find it challenging to keep up with all of the changes to the health plan

Help for People Living at Home

- **Home care / homemaker services**
 - Locating affordable homecare services for people under 60 with disability that do not have MassHealth is difficult
 - In one instance, over 600 elders on a triage list were waiting for services
 - ASAP (Springwell) are looking for creative ways to get people on MassHealth or other programs
 - More calls are being received from frail population (elders)

- **Caregiver program**
 - Some Families are not able to care for elders
 - There are no funds for caregiver program
- **PCA services**
 - It is not clear what to do for those who don't qualify for PCA (MassHealth) program but still need help

Housing and Related Services Calls

There has been a huge increase calls around housing issues at MNIP agencies

- **Housing**
 - Long waiting lists exist for all types of housing
 - Elderly parents want to find transitional housing arrangements for their child with a disability
- **Foreclosures**
 - The well-known increase in foreclosures is particularly difficult for people with disabilities
 - Landlords and tenants are being evicted with no place to go
- **Housing Resources**
 - Finding financial assistance for help with rent is difficult
 - Financial resources to help for rent are depleted
 - Low income accessible housing is difficult to find
- **Homeless shelters (local)**
 - It is difficult to find local shelters for homeless families in the area.
 - Families have local doctor, dentist, and supports in their area and therefore do not want to move to another area even when housing is available there
 - With DTA, if you refuse a shelter placement, which may be out of their region, you have to wait one year before reapplying.
 - Shelters are not accessible

Multicultural

- **Undocumented Workers**
 - Families' fear of deportation keeps them from seeking services, i.e. IEP services for children.
 - Because they do not qualify for state or federal services, they seek community resources. There are not many available.
- **Interpreting Services**
 - Job coaches who speak Spanish and Portuguese (MRC) are needed
- **Translation Services**
 - It is difficult to find services for these languages (Western MA)
 - Spanish
 - Somalian
 - Albanian
 - Russian

- Polish
- Turkish

State Agencies

- **Dual diagnosis**
 - Information specialists find that agencies may refer people to other agencies; these agencies in turn refer elsewhere
 - “Frustrating for children having more than one disability. Agencies need to work together.”
- **Special education**
 - “Springfield school system is hard to work with regarding special education.”
 - School-based services have been reduced.
- **State agencies**
 - It is frustrating to be on wait list for state services.
 - Family services are drying up.
 - Agencies no longer working together as much as they used to.

MassHealth

- **Ineligibility because of Social Security Increase**
- **MassHealth / Medicare changes**
 - It is challenging to keep up with changes
- **State Services Eligibility**
 - Adults with Aspergers do not qualify for DMR services
 - Once a person becomes an adult, DMH may classify a person as on the autism spectrum and determine them not eligible for services
- **MassHealth**
 - What about the population that is slightly over income eligibility for MassHealth?
 - Their social security monthly amount exceeds the limit
- **Budget Cuts**
 - No services to offer parents of children with Autism
 - Parents are looking for behavioral supports

Transportation

- **Medical / Doctor Appointments**
 - Some COAs report cutbacks to medical appointments
(Providing provides transports only to chemo, dialysis & radiology appointments)
 - There has been a decrease in volunteers
 - Rural areas have no taxi service
 - Medical / doctor appointments
 - Decrease in volunteers
 - Limited public transportation
- **Rural Areas**
 - Rural poverty and lack of transportation causes isolation.

Tangible Goods, Household Furnishings, etc.

- **Free Stuff / Mattresses**
 - Donations for mattresses and furniture are needed for homeless population transitioning out of shelters into housing

Resources Identified by MNIP Members¹

I&R/Case Management

- **[The Massachusetts Aging and Disability Information Locator \(MADIL\)](#)**
is designed to help find information on services and programs that support seniors and people with disabilities in Massachusetts. (mass.gov/MADIL)
[MADIL's Quick Guides](#) are a handy tool to locate information on employment, finances, food, housing and where to "get stuff" free or cheap.
- **MNIP fact sheets**
<http://www.disabilityinfo.org/MNIP/DB/FSL/>
"Working the System" fact sheets that are helpful resources for those with low incomes:
 - Basic Programs & Services for People with Disabilities Fact Sheet
<http://www.disabilityinfo.org/MNIP/DB/FSL/FactSheet.aspx?id=75>
 - Benefits Fact Sheet
<http://www.disabilityinfo.org/MNIP/DB/FSL/FactSheet.aspx?id=75>
 - Emergency Resources and Links in Times of Need
<http://www.disabilityinfo.org/MNIP/DB/FSL/FactSheet.aspx?id=123>
 - Financial Resources (Possible)
<http://www.disabilityinfo.org/MNIP/DB/FSL/FactSheet.aspx?id=68>
 Information and Referral Specialists at disability agencies are encouraged to print our fact sheets for callers / consumers or send them a fact sheet's Web address using the handy "Tell a Friend" feature on the right of the fact sheet page.
- **North Quabbin Community Coalition**
<http://www.nqcc.org/>
Community wide alliance committed to improving the quality of life for all those living and working in the nine-town North Quabbin region
NQCC Resource Directory:
http://www.nqcc.org/NQCC%20Resource%20Directory/directory_home.htm
- **SCAN360**
<http://www.scan360.org>
Helps parents with IEP, trainings on site at SCAN360
help parents advocate for their children
(413) 731-3110 (voice), (413) 731-3116 (TTY)
Email: caroline.wenck@scan360.org

¹ The resources listed are those identified by attendees in discussion at the meeting as being especially helpful in responding to calls during the recession. The omission of any resource here is not meant to imply anything about qualitative judgments. Additional suggestions are welcome and may be made via the MNIP Support Conference or my email to info@neindex.org.

- **Silverline Directory of Resources for Elders, Persons with Disabilities & Caregivers**
<http://www.fchcc.org/silverline.htm>
 Download at: <http://www.fchcc.org/SilverlineUpdatedJan09.pdf>
 or stop by local senior center, meal site or
 Franklin County Home Care
 330 Montague City Road
 Turners Falls, MA 01376
 (800) 732-4636, (413) 773-5555
- **Support Conference**
<http://www.disabilityinfo.org/SC/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fsc%2fDefault.aspx>
 Ask your fellow MNIP members for assistance with a challenging call or inquiry.
 Your MNIP network members may have resources or creative insight to a solution.
- **Help for Massachusetts Seniors During Economic Recession**
 A free 52-page guide for seniors that may help them better weather economic tough times. The guide includes information on Food, Medications, Employment, Dental Health, Income, Fuel, Utilities, and much more.
<http://www.bostonseniorhomecare.org/announcements/RecessionResourceBook.html>
MassResources.org
<http://www.massresources.org/>
 Online resource for Massachusetts residents in need of housing, food, health care, and other basic services.
- **SHINE** will come out to agency to do trainings on updates on changes to services and benefits.
 - The SHINE program provides free, unbiased and up-to-date health insurance information, counseling and assistance to Medicare beneficiaries of all ages and their caregivers.
 - The SHINE counselors help older persons (and younger disabled Medicare beneficiaries) understand their Medicare benefits and other health insurance options.
 - To locate a SHINE Counselor in your community, please contact the Central Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging at the Milford Senior Center 1-800-AGE-INFO / 1-800-243-4636.
 - [For a list of SHINE Member Sites in your area, please click here](#)

Legal

Immigration:

- **Greater Boston Legal Services**
<http://www.gbls.org/> offers legal help for immigrants.
 They have an immigration unit as well as an Asian Outreach Unit.
 Boston : (617) 371-1234, Cambridge, Somerville: 617-603-2700
- **Irish Immigration**
<http://www.iicenter.org>
 Main number (617) 542-7654.
 Provides legal advice, information, advocacy, referrals and support for immigrants on

issues relating to immigration, employment, citizenship, housing and social services. In addition, Irish Immigration Center is committed to building bridges of understanding and cooperation across cultures, fighting racism and discrimination, advocating for the rights of all immigrants and working in collaboration with other organizations.

- **International Institute**
<http://www.iiboston.org/>
 Services include legal consultation and representation, employment, English as second language classes, financial advice and savings program. Legal help is available by appointment:
 Boston (617) 695-9990
 Lowell (978) 459-9031
 Manchester, NH (603) 647-1500.
- **Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)**
 (617) 350-5480 Legal Rights Advocacy
<http://www.miracoalition.org/>
 They do not provide direct legal services but have a list of organizations that they work with.
 See list at: <http://www.miracoalition.org/services>
- **Local Churches**
 Immigrants are now going through local churches to receive services including legal services.
- **Legal – Special Education**
 Children’s Law Center of Massachusetts
<http://www.clcm.org/>
 Legal advocacy and resource center providing representation to low income children in Eastern Massachusetts. Call for special education (noncompliance), children’s issues dealing with DCF custody and guardianship.
 (781) 581-1977
<http://www.clcm.org/>
- **Disability Law Center**
 screens intake calls
 Priority cases are listed on DLC’s web site at: <http://www.dlc-ma.org/Priorities/index.html>
 Receives funding from United Way
- **LARC Intake Update Newsletter / Greater Boston Legal Services**
 Monthly newsletter that lists current intake information for major legal services programs throughout Massachusetts. \$25 yearly subscription.

Emergency

- **MADIL Quick Guide on Emergency**
<http://www.madil.org/qg/emergency.html>
 Contains links to information on emergency preparedness, domestic violence, and shelters
- **INDEX Emergency Services page** <http://www.disabilityinfo.org/emergency.asp>

Contains information on abuse, energy, food, hospitals, mental health, shelters, substance abuse, and suicide prevention

- **Emergency Service Program**

<http://www.disabilityinfo.org/MNIP/DB/TACR/OfficeByAgency.aspx?id=10>

Emergency Services numbers for behavioral health emergencies 24/7 for all citizens of the Commonwealth regardless of age, payer, or ability to pay

Employment

- **Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission**

- **One-Stop Career Centers**

There are 15 Disability Program Navigators (DPN) within the One-Stop Career Centers across the state who provide employment, outreach, education, support services to individuals with disabilities.

[Massachusetts One-Stop Career Center Listing](#)

Energy

- **“Elder Care Fund”**

Old Colony Elder Services, has small amount of financial resources for those over 60 for things such as fuel assistance, utility bills, etc.

<http://www.oc-elderly.org/>

(800) 242-0246 x 276 or (508) 584-1561

- [Utility Bills - Energy Assistance Discounts Basic Programs & Services for People with Disabilities Fact Sheet](#) [URL needed]

- **MassResources.org**

<http://www.massresources.org/>

online resource for Massachusetts residents in need of housing, food, health care, and other basic services.

- **New England Farm Workers Council**

<http://www.partnersforcommunity.org/indexnefwc.htm>

(413) 272-2200

Fuel Assistance Program, Employment, Housing and Voucher Day Programs

Finances

- **Financial Resources (Possible) Fact Sheet**

<http://www.disabilityinfo.org/MNIP/DB/FSL/FactSheet.aspx?id=68>

Lists charitable organizations that may be of financial assistance

- **“Elder Care Fund”** has small amount of financial resources for those over 60 for things such as fuel assistance, utility bills, etc.

<http://www.oc-elderly.org/>

(800) 242-0246 x 276 or (508) 584-1561

- **Camps – Financial Aid**

Locate camp. Talk directly to director for financial aid.

Family Ties has “Planning Summer Fun For Children with Special Needs” handout (authored by Mary Castro Summers, Director of Family Ties)

No child denied services for camps at Easter Seals due to financial hardship.

Camp Resource Guide available at <http://www.ccfscm.org>

- **Autism Cares**

<http://www.autismcares.org/site/c.mqLOIYOBKIF/b.4745901/k.BD21/Home.htm>

AutismCares helps families affected by autism to cover costs associated with critical living expenses such as; housing, utilities, car repair, daycare, funeral expenses, and other essential items on a case-by-case basis.

Families must complete an online application and identify vendor(s) to be covered by the award. Support awards cannot exceed a total of \$1,500 per family.

Online Application:

http://www.autismcares.org/site/c.mqLOIYOBKIF/b.4745955/k.93C3/Apply_Online/apps/fc/form.asp

- Also, call local civic organizations churches and charities for assistance

Food and Nutrition

- **SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)**

Elders and disabled folks do not have to go to DTA office for food stamps.

Business can be done via phone, fax or internet.

SNAP recipient service line 1-800-950-3663 & 866-950-3663. (Audrey Comperchio)

- **Help for Massachusetts Seniors During Economic Recession**

a free 52-page guide for seniors that may help them better weather economic tough times. The guide includes information on Food, Medications, Employment, Dental Health, Income, Fuel, Utilities, and much more.

<http://www.bostonseiorhomecare.org/announcements/RecessionResourceBook.html>

- **Food Delivery**

Schwann delivers food and also some prepared meals

<http://www.schwans.com/>

<http://www.schwans.com/customerService/faq.aspx> (Frequently Asked Questions)

1-888-724-9267

email.us@shans.com

- **Project Bread**

Bread’s Food Source Hotline: 1-800-645-8333

for food pantries, soup kitchens and meals on wheels.

- **Food Stamps**

Food Stamps also known as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are administered by DTA.

For SNAP application, call DTA, (800) 249-2007.

SNAP Hotline: 866-950-3663

SNAP recipient service line: 1-800-445-6604

<http://www.gettingfoodstamps.org/> (on line application available)

<http://webapps.ehs.state.ma.us/DTAOffices/default.aspx> (DTA offices)

- **Food pantries & groceries (Western Mass)**

<http://www.fchcc.org/resourceslinks/foodpantries.htm>

- **Food Source Hotline**
(800) 645-8333

Health

- **SHINE (Serving Health Information Needs of the Elderly)**
SHINE will come provide trainings to agencies on updates on changes to health services and benefits. The SHINE program provides free, unbiased and up-to-date health insurance information, counseling and assistance to Medicare beneficiaries of all ages and their caregivers. The SHINE counselors help older persons (and younger disabled Medicare beneficiaries) understand their Medicare benefits and other health insurance options. To locate a SHINE Counselor in your community, please contact the Central Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging at the Milford Senior Center
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[For a list of SHINE Member Sites in your area, please click here](#)
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<http://www.bostonseniorhomecare.org/announcements/RecessionResourceBook.html>

Mental Health

- **Latin American Health Institute (LHI)**
has a new recreation services SHIP program for Latinos. Case management services program will be added in the future.
- **Mental Health Fact Sheet** from New England INDEX and the Department of Mental Health

Help for People Living at Home Resources

- **MNIP Homemaker Services Fact Sheet**
<http://www.disabilityinfo.org/MNIP/DB/fslb/FactSheet.aspx?ID=99>
- **Massachusetts Commission for the Blind** provides homemaker services to legally blind persons under the age of 60 who have a serious medical problem in addition to their blindness that is preventing them from performing necessary homemaking tasks. Services are provided on the basis of priority of need. In order to be determined to be in the highest priority category for this service, a legally blind person must:
Live alone; or live with minor children only; or live with another severely disabled adult, who is incapable of performing these tasks, only need assistance in preparing meals, grocery shopping, or laundering clothes. Worcester area (508) 754-1148 x7104

- **The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission's Home Care Assistance Program (HCAP)**
 Provides homemakers free of charge to people with a medically documented disability which prevents you from doing one or more of the following tasks: meal preparation, grocery shopping, medication pick-up, laundry and light housekeeping; are between 18 and 59 years of age; to help avoid being hospitalized; meet the income limits; any other adults who live with you cannot do homemaking tasks. There are citizenship or immigration status requirements for this program. Contact MRC at (617) 204-3853 or (800) 223-2559 x 3853. Intake Coordinator is April Anderson and Betty Maher is the Director.
 Note: At this time MRC's HCAP is no longer accepting applications due to budget constraints.
- **MNIP Long Term Care Options Counseling Program Fact Sheet**
- **MVES (Mystic Valley Elder Service) Gap Fund**
 Gap Fund to provide services to provide services to older adults in the communities of Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, North Reading, Reading, Stoneham and Wakefield who need essential home care services but are ineligible for the State Home Care Program. These older adults fall in the "gap" as they cannot afford to privately pay for the care they need and don't qualify for government-subsidized programs. For more information call Jenny Canasse, Director of Development at (781) 324-77075
- **Group Adult Foster Care (GAFC)**
 Option for those that don't qualify for PCA program but need help at home. MassHealth program that pays for personal care services for eligible seniors and adults (minimum age 22) with disabilities who live in GAFC approved housing. Housing may be an assisted living residence or specially designated public or subsidized housing. To qualify, residents must be eligible for MassHealth and need help with at least one daily personal care task such as bathing or dressing. GAFC only pays for the cost of personal care services and medication management when you live in approved housing. It does not pay housing costs. GAFC providers include assistive living residences, aging service access points and other community / human service or housing entities.
 Contact Pam Gardner, Program Manager of GAFC at MassHealth for a list of GAFC programs at (617) 222-7486.
 Some GAFC resources are:

 - GAFC Peabody Properties
 (508) 999-1039
 contact person: Kim
Provides services statewide.
 - Fall River GAFC
 (508) 677-3822 x3577
 contact person: Tammy
Service area includes Fall River, Attleboro and Taunton area.
- **Respite Care for Children with Special Care Needs**
 "Getting a Break: A Roadmap to Respite Care for Massachusetts Families of Children with Special Health Care Needs" brochure available for download on

Massachusetts' Family Voices website at:

<http://massfamilyvoices.org/Respite%20Brochure.pdf> .

This brochure gives strategies for making the most of limited respite resources & Massachusetts publicly-funded respite services.

- **Home LINKS– MS Society**

A short term care management program (3 months helping people with multiple sclerosis remain independent and safe in the community)

For financial program, apply once a year.

[Visit the NMSS Web site](#)

(781) 890-4990

(800) 344-4867, press option 1

- **Springwell – Benefits First Program**

[PCA MassHealth Program - Springwell](#)

for under those under 60 yrs, (617) 926-4100

Small grants available for respite care

Family caregivers or elder supports available

- **PCA Program at Options**

http://www.masscp.org/pca/pca_frameset.htm

(800) 924-7570 or (508) 880-7577

- **Stavros Home Sweet Home Program**

http://www.stavros.org/home_sweet_home.html

benefits many of the folks in western Massachusetts (Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin Counties) who are in need of wheelchair ramps and durable medical equipment to access safely their homes and community The ramp program is a coordinated effort of volunteers, donated funds and donated materials. Modular ramp units are built and then installed at slated locations.

Contact Lois Brown, lbrown@stavros.org, at (800) 804-1899 x240.

Housing and Related Services Resources:

- **Mass Access: The Accessible Housing Registry**

is an accessible and user-friendly web site that helps people with disabilities find affordable and accessible housing in Massachusetts. To access the database, call your local independent living center or visit website at

<http://www.massaccesshousingregistry.org/>.

- **Caritis Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing**

Caritas Communities is a leader in providing Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing. They own and manage 25 houses, providing permanent affordable housing for over 600 men and women in Greater Boston.

<http://www.caritascommunities.org/>

(781)-843-1242.

- **Commonwealth Land Trust**

<http://www.commonwealthlandtrust.org>

Has been providing safe, affordable housing for low-income, mentally and physically disabled, the homeless, and people with HIV and AIDS.

1059 Tremont St, Suite 2

Roxbury Crossing, MA 02120
(617) 445-4075

- Some SRO's must have BHA application
<http://www.bostonhousing.org/>
Contact Steve Wikins
617-988-4200
617-988-3400
- **Homestart, Inc.**
<http://www.homestartinc.org/>
(617) 542-0338
Mission is to end homelessness. Homestart provides the following services: homelessness prevention, housing search, housing stabilization, representative payee services, training and technical assistance, rental assistance, housing subsidies, and vacancy clearing house to match homeless people with government funded housing units in Boston. SRO booklet several years old through Home start – referral through DMH.
- **HAP, Inc.**
<http://masshousinginfo.org/hap/programs/>
Renters, homebuyers, homeowners, and landlords all come to HAP for the latest information about housing opportunities, housing-related problems/questions, access to a wide variety of housing resources, and education about their rights and responsibilities. Counselors are available to meet or talk to you on the phone. Located at 322 Main Street in Springfield
(413) 233-1500
Consumer Education Center: (413) 233-1600
Email: Luz Alvarado at lalvarado@haphousing.org
- **HAP's Western Massachusetts Foreclosure Prevention Center.**
The Center is a collaboration of 15 nonprofit agencies in Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin and Berkshire counties working together to help homeowners avoid mortgage foreclosure.
Call HAP at **413-233-1622** during regular business hours for individual counseling assistance at an agency near you.
- **HAP's Rental Assistance Programs:**
HAP is perhaps best known for its rental assistance programs that have assisted thousands of families and individuals over the past 30 years. The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program and other programs allow families with very low incomes to be able to rent decent, safe housing at an affordable rent. Although the statewide waiting list is long, you are encouraged to apply if you believe that you may be eligible. Eligibility is primarily based on household income; you must also meet other program preferences. Call 413-233-1530 for application information or stop by the HAP office during regular business hours.
For other waiting list information, call 413-233-1520.
The Rental Assistance Department's general number is 413-233-1510
Northampton office's number is 413-584-8495.
- **Emergency Shelter and Transitional Assistance**
HAP has operated Prospect House, an emergency shelter for homeless families.

In 2009, HAP expanded its capacity to help homeless families, leasing 47 apartments in various locations. Families must be homeless, and DTA eligible; referrals are accepted through the Department of Transitional Assistance. Prospect House can be reached directly at 413-737-5518.

- **Nueva Esperanza**

http://www.nuevaesperanzacdc.org/home/index.php?title=Main_Page

Community based organization in Holyoke active in promoting development in housing, economics and human services. The organization's primary interest of providing affordable housing has expanded widely to include: neighborhood economic development, health and human service programs, development of community leadership, promotion of accessible community education and several youth empowerment programs.

401 Main Street

Holyoke, MA 01040

(413) 533-9442

- **RAFT (Residential Assistance for Families in Transition)**

<http://www.massresources.org/pages.cfm?contentID=23&pageID=2&subpages=yes&dynamicID=858>

- **Springwell – Benefits First**

Adult foster care program, a residential program age 16 and older.

Multicultural

Immigration Legal

- **Greater Boston Legal Services**

<http://www.gbls.org/> offers legal help for immigrants.

They have an immigration unit as well as an Asian Outreach Unit.

Boston : (617) 371-1234, Cambridge, Somerville: (617) 603-2700

- **Irish Immigration Center**

<http://www.iicenter.org>

Provides legal advice, information, advocacy, referrals and support for immigrants on issues relating to immigration, employment, citizenship, housing and social services.

In addition, we are committed to building bridges of understanding and cooperation across cultures, fighting racism and discrimination, advocating for the rights of all immigrants and working in collaboration with other organizations.

Main number (617) - 542-7654.

- **International Institute**

<http://www.iiboston.org/>

Services include legal consultation and representation, Employment, English as second language classes, financial advice and savings program. Legal help is available by appointment.

Boston (617) 695-9990

Lowell (978) 459-9031

Manchester, NH (603) 647-1500.

- **Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)**
<http://www.miracoalition.org/>
 MIRA does not provide direct legal services but has a list of organizations that they work with. See list at: <http://www.miracoalition.org/services>
 (617) 350-5480
- Local Churches immigrants are now going through local churches to receive services including legal services.
- **Refugee/Resettlement Resources**
 - Resources on Disabilityinfo.org
<http://www.disabilityinfo.org/MNIP/MCR/ImmigrantRefugee.asp>
 - Offers refugee settlement, English language classes, referrals and other services for noncitizens. Massachusetts agencies include:
 - Jewish Family Service of Western Massachusetts (JFS)
 15 Lenox St.
 Springfield, MA 01108
 Phone: 413-737-2601
 Web site: [New Americans Program](#)
 - Lutheran Social Services Center of New England
 593 Main Street
 West Springfield, MA 01089
 Phone: 413-787-0725
<http://www.ssne.org>
 - Somali Development Center - Springfield
 130 Maple Street, Suite 243
 Springfield, MA 01103
 Phone: 413-739-9860
 Web site: [The Somali Development Center](#)
 - Worcester Contact: Abdijabar Hassan Ahmed (works Wednesdays and Fridays)
sdcworcester@yahoo.com; (774)232-6513
- **Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center**
<http://www.riac.us/>
 The Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center works with many communities in the Greater Boston area.
 340 Main Street, Suite 965
 Worcester, MA 01608
 (508) 756-7557

Latino Mental Health Services

- [Latin American Health Institute \(LHI\)](#) has a new SHIP program for Latinos – recreation services for now and case management will be added later.
- **Special Education Services for Spanish speaking parents**
- [BCIL](#) can help Spanish and Portuguese speaking parents with children's services, especially SPED plans.

Translation/Interpretation Resources

- **MCS Translation Services,**

Multicultural Community Service of Pioneer Valley (MCS)

208 High Street

Holyoke

Phone: (413) 534-3299 x 109

Contact Person: Carlos Oliva, carlosoliva@MCSnet.org

Provides interpreter and translation services in Springfield and Holyoke area. DMR Funded. Fee Involved.

Most popular translation language requests are Chinese, Spanish, Khmer, Russian, Vietnamese, and Portuguese.

<http://www.mcsnet.org/>

- **Translation Center, University of Massachusetts Amherst**

The Translation Center offers professional translation and interpretation services in over 80 languages. Translations are fluent in the target languages, and have an advanced degree in the subject matter, be it business, medical, legal, scientific, or technological. The Center provides a full range of services, including translation and interpretation services, Internet translation, software localization, translation of digital sound files translation of marketing materials, and multi-lingual word-processing and design.

Phone: (413) 545-2203

Toll Free (877) 77U-MASS

Email: umass.translation@umasstranslation.com<http://www.umass.edu/translation>

- **Educational Interpreter Services**

<http://www.disabilityinfo.org/MNIP/MCR/IR/educational.asp>**State Agencies**

- **[The Massachusetts Aging and Disability Information Locator \(MADIL\)](#)**

is designed to help find information on services and programs that support seniors and people with disabilities in Massachusetts.

[MADIL's Quick Guides](#) are a handy tool to locate information on employment, finances, food, housing and where to "get stuff" free or cheap.

- **Massachusetts Commission for The Blind** provides homemaker services to legally blind persons under the age of 60 who have a serious medical problem in addition to their blindness that is preventing them from performing necessary homemaking tasks. Services are provided on the basis of priority of need. In order to be determined to be in the highest priority category for this service, a legally blind person must: Live alone; or live with minor children only; or live with another severely disabled adult, who is incapable of performing these tasks, only need assistance in preparing meals, grocery shopping, or laundering clothes. Worcester area (508) 754-1148 x7104
- **The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission's Home Care Assistance Program (HCAP)** Provides homemakers free of charge to people with a medically documented disability which prevents you from doing one of more of the following tasks: meal preparation, grocery shopping, medication pick-up, laundry and light housekeeping;

are between 18 and 59 years of age; to help avoid being hospitalized; meet the income limits; any other adults who live with you cannot do homemaking tasks. There are citizenship or immigration status requirements for this program. Contact MRC at (617) 204-3853 or (800) 223-2559 x 3853. Intake Coordinator is April Anderson and Betty Maher is the Director.

Transportation Resources:

- **MAB Community Services** (formerly Massachusetts Association for Blind) has volunteers available for transportation for those that are legally blind.
Call (508) 854-0700 for intake
Donation -couple of dollars
<http://www.mabcommunity.org/>
- **Transportation Guide**
Minuteman Senior Services website has a transportation guide on 16 Minuteman senior service towns (Acton, Arlington, Bedford, Boxborough, Burlington, Carlisle, Concord, Harvard, Lexington, Lincoln, Littleton, Maynard, Stow, Wilmington, Winchester & Woburn) on its website at
<http://www.minutemansenior.org/Transportation.html>
(updated 5/2008).
- **MassHealth Transportation Program Fact Sheet**
<http://www.disabilityinfo.org/MNIP/DB/FSL/FactSheet.aspx?id=107>

Tangible Goods, Furniture and Household Items

- **Amherst Survival Center**
<http://www.people.umass.edu/support/asc>
Region resource providing food, clothing and community through volunteer efforts.
1200 North Pleasant St in North Amherst
(413) 549-3968
email: survivalcenter@verizon.net
- **The Freecycle Network**
Nonprofit movement of people who are giving (& getting) stuff for free in their own towns. It's all about reuse and keeping good stuff out of landfills. Each local group is moderated by a local volunteer. Membership is free!
<http://www.freecycle.org/>
- **Craig's List**
<http://boston.craigslist.org/sob/fua/>
Search furniture for deals.
<http://boston.craigslist.org/> (Free section)
- **Massachusetts Coalition for Homeless Furniture Bank**
<http://www.mahomeless.org/programs/donatefaq.html>
All household's must be referred by an organization and may be eligible if they are transitioning from shelter into an apartment, in a doubled up situation, have been referred by DSS, DTA, emergency shelter or are homeless due to a domestic violence

situation. If the Coalition determines that an individual is not eligible for services, contact the Client Coordinator at (781) 595-7570 x 11 for a list of alternative resources.

- Try contacting **local charities**. Local furniture stores may offer donations.
- **Household Goods Recycling of Massachusetts** (located in Acton)
(978) 635-1763
- **MNIP [Furniture & Household Items - Donated Fact Sheet](#)**
- **Safelink Wireless Free Cell Phones**
<http://www.safelinkwireless.com>

A government program available to income-eligible residents of the federal poverty of Massachusetts. The program provides a free cell phone and 80 minutes of monthly airtime to households at or below 135% of the federal poverty level.

Fill out application online or call 1 (800) 977-3768.

Regional Meeting Locations, Participating agencies, and Attendees

Metro West Region-Waltham, hosted by New England INDEX, April 13

- Linda Byrne & Kate Thurman/Disability Law Center
- Anna Thorpe / GWARC, Inc
- Sandy Slavet / JFCS
- Audrey Comperchio & Jane Bryson / Minuteman Senior Services
- Cindy Nelson / NAMI
- Elayna Hebert / National MS Society;
Christine Cannon & Kerri Zanchi / UCP of MetroBoston

Totals = 10 participants; 7 agencies/organizations

Boston Region-hosted by Boston Center for Independent Living, April 16

- Rosa Robledo & Carolina Trujillo/Latin American Health Institute
- Virginia (Ginny) Morse/Disability Policy Consortium
- Linda Glatt-Anderson/Springwell
- Hang Lee & Louise Beach/ MILCB, Inc
- Louise Hogan, Holly Vernon & Carol Hall-Herborg/Boston Center for Independent Living
- Elizabeth Waters/TILL, Inc
- Craig Hall/ MDDC

Totals = 11 participants; 7 agencies/organizations

Central Region- Worcester, hosted by Easter Seals, May 1

- Rhonda DiMatteo / Child Care Connection
- Mary D'Antonino/ Easter Seals
- Christine Pearson, Linda Wincek-Moore & Julia Martiros / Elder Services of Worcester Area, Inc.
- Carolyn Gordon & Joan Goodlight / MA Commission for the Blind;
- Eileen Sheehan/ Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
- Catherine Pellegrino & Paula Skonieczny/Tri-Valley, Inc.

Totals = 10 participants; 6 agencies/organizations

Southeast Region-Taunton, hosted by Options, Cerebral Palsy of Massachusetts, Inc.,
May 14

- Pat Ryan & Brian Smith / Options
- Kathy Kerwin & Maria DeSilva / Brockton Area Arc
- Lisa Barton & Marilyn Arrott / Hessco
- Brendan Woodburn / Networks Employment Services
- Korin Tracy / Old Colony Elder Services
- Carlina Louizia / Independence Associates;

Totals = 9 participants; 6 agencies/organizations

West Region-Springfield, hosted by SCAN360, May 18

- Caroline Wenck & Jessica Allen-Kosiorek / SCAN360 Family Center
- Maureen Holland / New North Citizens Council
- Donna Kushi / Association for Community Living
- David Chevalier / Department of Developmental Services
- Jean Smyser & Kathy McCord / Stavros;

Totals = 7 participants; 5 agencies/organizations

Meetings coordinated and facilitated by New England INDEX staff:

- Angie Aguirre
- Robert Bass
- Audrey Huntley
- Rebecca Olsen

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- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
- Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services