

Celebrating
40 YEARS



MONADNOCK
DEVELOPMENTAL
SERVICES

HELPING PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
LIVE AND WORK IN THEIR COMMUNITIES



Winter 2024

THE CLIPBOARD

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The mission of MDS is to work toward inclusion, participation and mutual relationships for all people who are at risk of isolation from their community.

www.mds-nh.org

Inclusion
Participation
Mutual Relationships



Find us on
Facebook

Message from the Executive Director

You may recall the state of New Hampshire was required to make changes to come into federal compliance with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS). Staff and families have now been navigating the changes brought on through the NH Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS) System Redesign since July 2023.

Direct Billing: Starting in July, the state came into direct billing compliance, launching a new billing system that allows all providers to bill Medicaid directly. All provider agencies are now Enrolled Medicaid Providers. They are able to bill Medicaid directly or, if they choose, can have a third party do their billing.

Budget/funding requests: One of the biggest changes that has taken place is how the state receives and approves funding requests, now referred to as a "service authorization". In the past, the area agency would submit an individualized budget request to BDS for review and approval. Now, service coordinators are responsible for this task, submitting requests for service authorizations directly to the state using the state's website/database, NH Easy.

Service Coordination: Another required change is conflict free case management. CMS states that no agency may provide both direct services and service coordination to the same individual. In Region 5, we had approximately 60 people who were considered to be "in conflict". Each person, or their guardian, needed to choose to change either their provider agency or service coordination agency. With the collaboration of provider agencies and service coordination agencies, MDS is now in full compliance with conflict free case management.

Staff at provider agencies, area agencies and the state have been working diligently to keep the wheels in motion and ensure these changes have as little impact on individuals, services and family support as possible. As a family member or someone who receives services, please reach out to your service coordinator if you



Mary-Anne Wisell
MDS Executive Director

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THE CLIPBOARD



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The Clipboard is an agency-wide MDS newsletter. All departments, families, individuals, and community organizations are invited to submit items to be included in the publication. The opinions expressed in articles are those of the people who have written and submitted the material. Therefore, the information contained in these articles is not necessarily the opinion of MDS.

Send your comments or articles to:

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Message from the Executive Director

have concerns. Your coordinator is still your primary point person.

These changes are just the tip of the iceberg. If you'd like more detail about the changes and the progress the state is making, check out the BDS website <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/programs-services/disability-care/developmental-services/bds-systems-work>.

Personnel Changes at BDS:

Jessica Gorton has been named Bureau Chief of the Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS) within the Division of Long Term Supports and Services.

Jessica, who most recently served as the Administrator of the 1915(c) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waivers, has been with DHHS since 2005 and has a long history of supporting the mission of BDS.

Over the past several years, BDS has been in a period of change and growth, working closely with New Hampshire's Area Agencies, stakeholders, and community members to address the needs of the people we serve so they can live as independently as possible. Jessica's leadership will help to continue to propel this work going forward.

Laurie Vachon has been named Chief Operating Officer of the Division of Long Term Supports and Services (DLTSS). Laurie, who most recently served as the Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS) Administrator for Operations and Utilization Management, has been with the Department since 2016. Prior to her state service, she worked at an Area Agency for 26 years. In the COO position, Laurie will oversee and be responsible for the spending and reporting of a DLTSS budget that includes federal funds, state funds and multiple grants. Laurie will assist DLTSS to remain compliant with our federal partner for 1915(c) Medicaid waiver reporting, budget neutrality, and post-service auditing.

Mary-Anne Wisell

Executive Director

Service Awards

Please join us in recognizing employees who are celebrating milestone anniversaries of employment with MDS. Congratulations to the 2024 honorees!

30 Years

Paula Smith

20 Years

Charlie Wilder
Bethany Chauncey

15 Years

Alissa Delaney
Jeanne Lafleur
Linda Glancey
Jeanne Wolhandler

10 Years

Cassy Ricker
Andrea MacMurray
Tina Parise
Chris Lemire
Armand Comtois

5 Years

Kathleen Eichorn
Elizabeth Karlson
Sonja Martineau
Beverly Poirier
Jen Clark

Chapman Challenge 10K
MONADNOCK DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
Run • Walk
SMILE
10 K / 5 k / 1 Mile
10TH ANNIVERSARY

SAVE THE DATE

November
2nd 2024

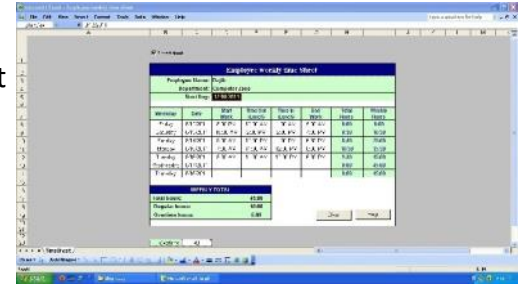


Employee Information

MITC: New Time Sheet System

MDS is excited to share that we are updating our timesheet and payroll system. We have been using our current system for almost twenty years. It has served us well, but there are new compliance factors that we need to address at this time. Over the next few weeks and months MDS will be transitioning from our current time sheet system to MITC. The new system comes highly recommended but, like most new systems, it will require some training for employees.

The MITC system has many enhanced features for both employees and supervisors. Employees will be able to easily clock in and out at the start and end of each work day, providing a “real time” record of time worked. MITC will allow employees and supervisors to see what hours were worked in previous weeks and months. On the new system employees will be able to access their biweekly paystubs and benefit accruals online. Requests for time off will be submitted and approved online and a history of time off will be able to be viewed as well.



Later this year, MDS will be required to have and use an electronic visit verification (EVV) compliant system. As a Medicaid provider, MDS will be required to have an electronic system to verify certain home and community based services were delivered. MITC offers the features necessary to meet this requirement when the state mandates the change.

Currently, we have over 130 employees piloting the new system. The rest of our employees will be brought on over the next couple of months. Once our piloting is complete, we will transition to using MITC exclusively.

MDS Merchandise



COMING SOON!

MDS is going to be partnering with a local business to offer MDS logo merchandise available through an online store. More information to come!



MONADNOCK
DEVELOPMENTAL
SERVICES

Thank You!

A special note to say how much our staff is appreciated. We are so grateful to work with such a hard working and talented team. The caring and commitment you give on a daily basis is truly inspiring. The management team wants to thank our staff for all they do everyday.

MARCH 1, 2024 - EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY

Children's Holiday Party

By Lynn Yeiter, Director of Children's Service Coordination

The MDS Family Council and Children Service Coordination department teamed up for a holiday celebration on a rainy Sunday in early December. The outside gloom did nothing to dull the inside cheer as seventy people came together to share a meal and to welcome the winter holiday season! While waiting to dine, guests colored their personally-decorated tablecloths, enjoyed a cup of cocoa, or worked at one of the many craft stations.

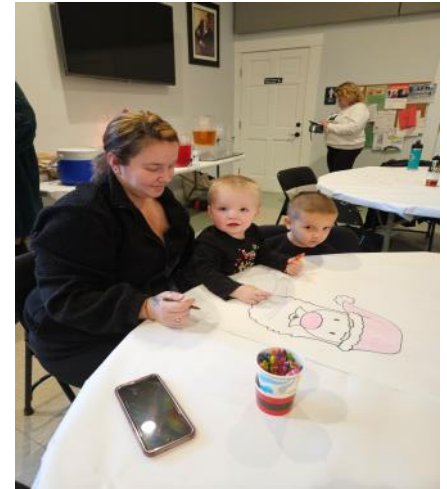
Under the able direction of Troy Rec. Department staff member Bob, we prepared and served a meal of spaghetti, meatballs, salad, and garlic bread and even had gluten-free options! Following dinner, we enjoyed one, (or two or three), of the many desserts the guests provided. Santa made a special appearance, met each of the children, and had his photo taken with many.

During the course of the event, we discovered that our colleagues have many hidden talents, that it is important to come together to share food and laughter, and that a gloomy day need not stop us from having fun. Every family left with a gift bag, a board game, and happy memories as evidenced by their comments:

Love the paper table cloths!

Coloring was fun!

A great annual tradition!



MDS Region 5 Family Council
Annual Fun Day Picnic
East Hill Farm
Sunday, June 2nd
SAVE THE DATE!

Notes & News

Winter Coat Drive

The Children’s Service Coordination Department distributed more than 40 winter coats through the generosity of the Keene Knights of Columbus and the MDS Family Council. The need for warm winter clothing was met. A hand knitted scarf and hat, lovingly made and also donated, were provided for as many as possible.



Planet Aid

Two Planet Aid bins were delivered to the parking lot in front of MDS in late December. Planet Aid will accept donations of clothing and shoes and \$.05/lb will be donated to MDS.



Door Decorating Contest

The Keene and Peterborough offices became quite festive during the holidays. We were so impressed with the great creative designs on display.

BEST OVERALL



Kris Madore, Sarah Stinehour, Traci Blain,
& Kathlyn Russell

MOST CREATIVE



Suzanne DuGray

MOST FESTIVE



Shelly Patenaude & Amy Truax

Special Olympians

Jack Elkan

You may remember the article about Jack Elkan, written by Sonja Martineau, that was published in the Spring 2023 edition of The Clipboard. Jack is a Special Olympian and can now add author to his accomplishments! In the Fall of 2023, Jack and his mother published a book called “Run Your Own Race!” Congratulations Jack! Jack’s book can be purchased at Toadstool Bookstore.



Becky May

On February 11th, over 700 people took part in the Special Olympics Penguin Plunge. Becky May was one of the plungers that day. Leading up to the Plunge, Becky did an amazing job raising funds and awareness about Special Olympics. **She was the #1 contributor of donations in the state with \$29,080!** Becky shared that she pounded the pavement asking individuals and businesses for donations bringing in over 500 donations from all over the state. This was Becky’s 18th year making the icy splash into the Atlantic Ocean at Hampton Beach and Special Olympics New Hampshire’s 25th anniversary hosting the Penguin Plunge.



Project Search



Project SEARCH is a job training program for individuals with developmental disabilities. The program combines classroom learning and hands on training through unpaid internships to gain skills that prepare participants for employment. The training takes place at Cheshire Medical Center.

Are you:

- Between the ages of 18-34?
- Receiving services from Monadnock Developmental Services (MDS) or Vocational Rehabilitation New Hampshire (VRNH)?
- Receiving Medicaid and eligible for the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver?

Check out the MDS website for information on the program!

APPLY SOON!

To register, or if you want to speak with someone about the program, contact us at:

ProjectSEARCH@mds-nh.org

Or 603-352-1304

The **MDS website** has information about the program and how to apply. There are videos, answers to frequently asked questions, and the application for Project SEARCH.

**Deadline March
15th**

This program is a collaboration between Cheshire Medical Center, Monadnock Developmental Services, and Vocational Rehabilitation New Hampshire.

Fundraising Events



FALL IN LOVE IN FEBRUARY!

Visit Granita Enoteca in February and order Moe's specialty Cheesecake which is a decadent and delicious Chocolate Cheesecake with Chocolate Chantilly Cream and Chocolate Shavings.

YOU WILL FALL IN LOVE!

Monadnock Developmental Services will receive the proceeds through Granita Enoteca's philanthropy dessert program.



Join us at The Grove Restaurant at Woodbound Inn in Rindge for a special fundraiser benefiting Monadnock Developmental Services. Attend Wednesday night buffet and MDS will receive proceeds from the meal. The cost of the buffet is \$15.00 per person. A voucher is required in order for MDS to receive proceeds.

Wednesday, February 28

- Stuffed Peppers
- Baked Ziti
- Seasonal Vegetables
- Italian Wedding Soup
- Caesar Salad
- Assorted Desserts



WEDNESDAY BUFFET VOUCHER

PRESENT THIS TO YOUR SERVER FOR YOUR BUFFET TO BE COUNTED TOWARDS TONIGHT'S NON-PROFIT

www.woodbound.com
603-532-9505

March is the month of the Equinox!

Waterhouse supports Monadnock Developmental Services



What is an Equinox?

The Equinox is a deliciously dressed-up wine spritzer, featuring Absolut Citron vodka, Sauvignon Blanc wine, Bianco vermouth, Maine Root hand-crafted Mandarin orange soda, spritzed with fresh lemon juice. Light, refreshing, perfect for spring!

*During the month of March
MDS will receive \$5
for every Equinox sold!*

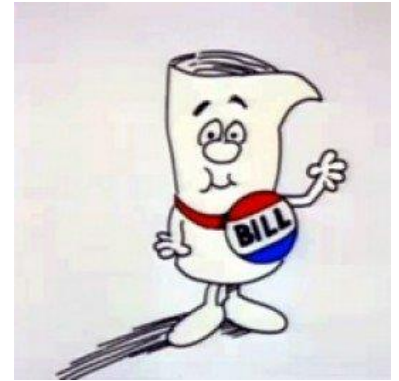
**Waterhouse Restaurant
Gives to MDS in March 2024**



Legislative Advocacy

Senate & House Bills

HB 1593 This bill was filed because of written communication received last year (2023) from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that clarified to individuals and families that certain items and services that may have been historically funded by Medicaid in NH are not supposed to be covered and no longer will be in the future. Specifically, these services are known as community integration. CSNI believes that community integration services are critical to supporting individual goals in an Individual Service Agreement (ISA). Sometimes, NH must implement strategies that fall outside of Medicaid allowable funding. Thus, we need to create a new fund that will use state funds to support services that assist in skill development to aid health, wellness, and safety goals of people with developmental disabilities. For example, community-based and integrated karate, dance, and swimming classes that support weight loss and mental and social wellness strategies identified for the individual in a person-centered way. The bill contains a general fund appropriation of \$1 million in FY25 for deposit into the fund. The next step is a full committee vote. Because of the fiscal impact/state budget impact, **HB 1593** will need to be reviewed by the finance committee before it can move over to the House.



Other high priority bills in 2024 include:

HB 1028, relative to the definition of mental illness for the purposes of the New Hampshire mental health services system.

HB 1168, establishing a committee to study the impact of the housing crisis on people with disabilities.

HB 1291, Prohibiting discrimination against tenants holding certain vouchers for purposes of renting dwellings.

HB 1615, relative to the autism registry.

SB 353, relative to insurance coverage for autism spectrum disorder and Down syndrome.

SB 408, establishing a committee to study the effects of the housing crisis on the disability community.

Please reach out to Linda Amaral with any questions at Linda@mds-nh.org.

Self-Advocacy & Self Directed Services

Recently, MDS Region 5 Self Advocacy Group members worked in collaboration with the Institute on Disabilities at UNH and created the NH Rights & Responsibilities Booklet which is used state-wide.

Here are some excerpts from the booklet:

“It is important to learn about your rights, and how to talk to others about them.”

“You should speak up for yourself if you are not being treated the way that an adult should be treated.”

“You need to remember that you must be responsible for yourself and the choices that you make.”

“You need to treat others with respect - just like you want people to treat you.”

Please go to this link to read the entire booklet: <https://www.mds-nh.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Rights-and-Responsibilities-Booklet-1.24-2.pdf>

S Speaking up for ourselves
E Embracing strengths
L Living our best life
F Finding yourself

A Advocating for others, ourselves
D Doing group projects, activities
V Voicing our thoughts and ideas
O Opening up to share our stories
C Coming together to work as a team
A Acting out different social situations
C Count on yourself
Y Your voice matters

By Brianna

MDS Self-Advocacy Connections
 Come join us on the 3rd Monday of every month – 10:30 am to 11:30 am
 In person – MDS office – 121 Railroad St, Keene or via ZOOM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87016696979?pwd=d1JuckU3NVg0dTlyV01ubFc2cDYvZz09>

Meeting ID: 870 1669 6979
 Passcode: 407639

A drawing of a girl with dark hair, one blue eye, and one brown eye, holding a pink megaphone.

Email Address for Self-Directed Services Department

Just a reminder we now have the sdsadmin@mds-nh.org email address for Self-Directed Services (PDMS and IHS) families to submit their monthly paperwork to MDS. The department Administrative Assistant will then ensure that all paperwork is distributed to the individual's Service Coordinator.

MDS Family Council

MONADNOCK *Family Council*



FAMILIES SUPPORTING FAMILIES



Family Education

Arranging education sessions and advocacy by providing a forum for families to make their concerns, needs and preferences known to MDS and to its policy makers.



Creating Connections

Funding events and activities that bring families together. For example: camp scholarships, support groups, and recreational gatherings among families



Meeting Needs

Vetting requests from MDS families for respite, home modification, and emergency family assistance



JOIN US



Second Mondays at 6pm. Meetings are open to everyone. Anyone who would like to observe or provide input is encouraged to attend.

WE ARE YOUR PEERS
MDS families: moms, dads, guardians,
AND advocates of children and adults who experience developmental delays, intellectual disabilities, and acquired brain disorders.

FIND US



121 Railroad St, Keene, NH 03431



(603) 352-1304



FamilyCouncil@MDS-NH.org



MDS-NH.org/Monadnock-Family-Council



facebook.com/MonadnockFamilyCouncil

The mission of the Monadnock Family Council is to support, assist, and educate families, individuals, and the greater community. Our purpose is to ensure greater access to the community, increase engagement, and strengthen families by working in partnership with MDS. We strive to empower families and to be a voice for change and inclusion through advocacy and inclusiveness throughout the lifespan.

Resources & Opportunities

New Hampshire Resources

ABLE NH

2 1/2 Beacon Street
Concord, NH 03301
(765) 4ABLENH
www.ablenh.org

Advocates for the civil and human rights of all children and adults with disabilities. Promotes full participation by improving systems of supports, connecting families, inspiring communities, and influencing public policy.

Disabilities Rights Center

64 N. Main Street, Suite 2
Concord, NH 03302
(800) 834-1721 (603) 228-0432
www.drcnh.org

Provides advocacy assistance, information and referral services to families and individuals with disabilities.

Governor's Commission on Disability

54 Regional Drive, Suite 5
Concord, NH 03301
(800) 852-3405 (603) 271-2773
www.nh.gov/disability

Information and referral service, Client Assistance Program for vocational rehab clients, Barrier Free Committee, and newsletter.

NH Council on Developmental Disabilities

2 1/2 Beacon Street
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-3236
www.nhddc.nh.gov

Recommends policy and advocates for legislative change on issues affecting people with developmental disabilities. Not a direct service agency, but likes to hear your thoughts.

NH Family Voices

129 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-4525
www.nhfv.org

Family organization that provides services to families and professionals caring for children with special health care needs and/or disabilities. network of families speaking on behalf of children with special health care needs.

MDS is hiring! Email employment@mds-nh.org

Respite Providers Needed
Part time hours with flexibility!



Looking for rewarding part-time work?

Are you dedicated, creative, committed, team-oriented, with a good sense of humor?

MDS is hiring part-time Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) for children and adults in Keene and Peterborough.

You could make a huge difference in someone's life!

Call 603-352-1304 or send an email to us at employment@mds-nh.org for more information.



Inclusion • Participation • Mutual Relationships

Medicaid False Claims Act

False claims are not claims with innocent billing mistakes. False claims include services that are:

- ♦ Not rendered
- ♦ Not supported by patient's medical record
- ♦ Part of a previously submitted claim
- ♦ Upcoded

Watch a brief video on the False Claims Act to help you understand and comply with this law:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbZ78QTLztQ&feature=youtu.be>

Rights & Responsibilities Concern?

To file a complaint with the Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS), call 1-855-450-3593. After you file a complaint, an investigator will contact you directly.

Mack's Lunch Stop

Mack's Lunch Stop meets at the United Church of Christ (UCC) Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week from 11am to 2pm. The UCC is located on Central Square in Keene.

Annual membership fee is \$30 and is used to cover the cost of using UCC facilities.

For more information and to become a member, contact Chad at :

mackslunchstop@gmail.com