



In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority

**Quarterly Report:
January-March
2009**

The Public Authority (PA) and the IHSS Advisory Committee's (IHSSAC) quarterly report executive summary:

Administration

- 2008 Annual Report Released
- Budget Reductions Result in Loss of Staff
- Education Services Provider Says Goodbye

Registry:

- New Caregiver Screening Process Tested
- Client Satisfaction Reaches 100%

Education:

- Loss of 2 Staff Positions Will Impact Education Services
- Educational Services Redesign Underway
- Loss of Service Providers Leads to Class Cancellations

Health Benefits:

- Staff Begin Implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 COBRA Cost-Sharing Benefit

IHSS Advisory Committee:

- Four New Members Complete Orientation Class
- Special Fraud Investigation Informational Meeting Held
- Members Respond to 2009 Grand Jury Report on IHSS Fraud

The balance of this report provides information and data on the Public Authority's various activities.



▶ **Staffing**

Further cuts to the IHSS Public Authority budget meant eliminating 3.5 staff positions: 1.0 FTE Human Services Social Worker, and 1.0 FTE Health Educator, and 1.5 vacant positions that had already been unfunded for the current fiscal year. Human Resources worked with incumbents to find comparable positions. Rachael Noble and Ron Meier's last day with the IHSS Public Authority was Friday, March 27.

The PA accepted another CWEX volunteer for whom training and clerical experience was provided. Stacie Hair was assigned to registry and reception services 20 hours per week, where she assisted with processing applications for Registry candidates, in-processing of pre-screening and orientation attendees, preparing and assembling orientation materials, and answering in-coming phone calls. Stacie has proved a willing student and a valuable asset to this agency.

▶ **Contracts**

Eskaton gave notice of intent to discontinue their services contract with the Public Authority citing staffing shortages and an effort to streamline, focusing more directly on their primary mission to: "enhance the quality of life of seniors through innovative health, housing and social services." As of July 1, 2009, Eskaton will no longer be providing caregiver training classes for the Public Authority.

Fiscal Year 2009-2010 services agreement negotiations are underway. PA staff will be negotiating the scope of services and fiscal considerations for:

Refined Technologies, Inc. (RTI)
AccentCare, Inc.
We Print U

Registry software licenses and updates
In-home services: Urgent Care program
Livescan fingerprinting services

▶ **Newsletters**

Education staff received training in newsletter development and design in order to produce the next *Caring Matters* newsletter, scheduled for distribution in mid-June.

Responding to the recommendations of the IHSS Advisory Committee, staff began developing a process by which IHSS consumers and providers can provide an email address for access to the newsletter and other notifications, such as new class schedules. It is anticipated that printing costs may be significantly reduced. Staff are examining different ways of getting the word out that email addresses are needed, and developing a method for capturing and monitoring those email addresses.

▶ **2008 Annual Report**

Staff completed and distributed the 2008 Annual Report of the Sacramento County IHSS Public Authority in early February. The report was produced entirely in-house in order to reduce costs associated with printing and bindery.



► Caregiver Orientations

The Caregiver Registry has had an ongoing struggle with how to balance the ever increasing interest of people wanting to get on the registry with the registry's capacity for screening. This challenge has led us, on several occasions, to close the registry to new applicants as it was quite common for orientation registration to be filled several months in advance. Along with this increased demand came the need to add another level of screening to the orientation process to ensure only those suited for caregiving were admitted to the registry.

In an effort to identify those people appropriately suited for the registry, registry staff developed a pre-screening questionnaire consisting of 20 questions, both multiple choice and open ended. The questions include a variety of situations where the applicant must make a choice about the most appropriate response, as well as questions about what motivates them to enroll on the registry; their experience; demeanor, etc. To determine if the questionnaire was going to be something that was usable with the population of people applying to the registry, we tested it with the attendees of several orientations and gauged the responses. Once adjustments were made to address concerns about clarity, ease of understanding, the registry implemented the use of this questionnaire at the beginning of March. Interested individuals were scheduled to come in to complete the questionnaire. Of those that attended 46 people that were scheduled to complete the questionnaire, 31 attended and were referred on to orientation. Of the 15 people that did not complete the questionnaire satisfactorily, six had a score that suggested they would do well on the registry with a little additional training and they were referred to a professionalism class that provided them another opportunity to be referred to orientation. Of the 31 scheduled for orientation, 25 attended and 23 completed the entire screening process – a significantly larger percentage of the people signed-up and attended this orientation than prior to the pre-screening process being put in place. In addition to a higher level of attendance, it has been the experience of registry staff that the people currently completing the orientation process are appreciably better suited to caregiving.

During the quarter, 1193 interest calls were received from potential registry applicants. Of those who called, 271 were registered for orientation, and 145 attended. Of those who attended orientation, 8 were screened out due to the following:

- Caregiver had criminal history on a local background check (8)
- Caregiver did not pass the interview process (0)
- Caregiver had disqualifying criminal history on a DOJ background check (0)

A total of 170 new caregivers were added to the IHSS Public Authority Caregiver Registry during the quarter. At the end of this quarter, the registry had 340 active caregivers, 142 caregivers who reported being fully employed, and 8 caregivers whose applications were pending completion of the application process.



Performance Indicators

For this quarter, 125 new consumers were added to the registry for services. At the end of this quarter, the registry had 640 IHSS consumers actively using registry services. The following table describes the breakdown of list requests, lists sent, timeframes and confirmed matches for this quarter:

Consumers Requesting a List	407
The Number of Lists Sent to Consumers	346
Average # of Days to Create a List for Consumers	1.5 days
Matches Confirmed	126

Of the lists requested, but not completed, the reasons included: changed their mind, hired someone else, were not IHSS consumers, did not leave adequate information to re-contact, entered a hospital, used an old list and already hired someone, or were already being served by IHSS Family Service Worker staff.

The registry received 3,822 calls during the quarter. Along with the typical requests handled by the registry staff such as consumer list requests, caregiver updates and caregiver interest calls, the registry staff also provided support of the following nature:

Interventions	
Abuse Reports/investigations	6
Assistance in Problem Resolution	156
Assisted Client with Hiring a Caregiver	3
Calls to Law Enforcement	0
Complaints Investigated	60
Fraud Unit Referral	7
FSW Referral	15
IHSS Intake Referral	6
IHSS Payroll Referral	35
Non-urgent care call referred to appropriate resource	0
Provide Education	98
Provided Conflict Resolution	3
Refer to Community Resources	9
Refer to IHSS Social Worker	52
Other	29
Total Interventions Reported	479

Note: This information represents a snapshot of ongoing assistance by Registry staff to IHSS consumers and providers during this the quarter.

Satisfaction Indicators

All IHSS consumers receiving match lists have the opportunity to complete a comment card evaluating list quality and helpfulness of IHSS Public Authority staff. When



negative responses or comments are received, if a name has been provided, registry staff follow-up to ascertain that the consumer is safe, has the services they need, and determines whether an APS or other report should be filed.

Seven (7) satisfaction surveys were received from IHSS consumers this quarter. Survey results are as follows:

Service of IHSS PA staff:

- 100% Very Helpful

Consumers who used the list:

- 71% Used the list
- 29% Did not use the list

Hired a caregiver from the list:

- 57% Hired a caregiver from the list sent
- 43% No Response

Comments about what consumers believe would improve Registry services and make it easier to use:

- To recommend someone.
- You were great.
- It's just right.



▶ **Summary**

Public Authority Staff and IHSS caregivers continue to experience the loss of the SEIU UHW Safety Series as this month’s presentation about preventing back injury had to be cancelled. It remains unknown whether new union leadership will sponsor these trainings.

The Public Authority implemented a new class for current and potential caregivers. “What Every Caregiver Needs to Know” is designed to help caregivers learn to strengthen the working relationship between caregiver and consumer. The class is designed to help caregivers learn techniques that foster professionalism, understand their role and responsibilities, improve their communication skills and personal conduct, and to recognize the importance of maintaining confidentiality that will lead toward developing longer term working relationships with the consumers who employ them. The first class held on March 24, 2009, was developed and conducted by Shawna Crane, SW and Ron Meier, Health Educator. Eight attendees were selected to participate in the first class. This class will be repeated on a regularly scheduled basis.

PA education staff continue efforts to hold classes in three regions of the county, the Broadway location, North County at 6045 Watt and at the new IHSS location at 9750 Business Park Dr. Attendance will be evaluated over the next several months and a determination made whether to continue classes at all locations.

▶ **In-Home Education Program**

IHSS Public Authority staff and interns continued the in-home consumer education effort designed to assist consumers who are new to the registry by answering questions about the employer role and how to best utilize IHSS Public Authority registry and educational services. The program continues to be very much appreciated by IHSS consumers.

In-Home Education Program Referrals <i>This is the number of consumers that were referred to the program by the registry.</i>	41
Home Visits Scheduled <i>This is the number of consumers were scheduled for In-Home visit by registry or social work staff.</i>	15
Consumer Waived Education Services <i>This is the number of consumers who declined in-home education services.</i>	24
Unable to Contact Consumer <i>This is the number of consumers with whom the Public Authority was unable to make contact.</i>	2
Home Visits Completed <i>This is the number of consumers that received In-Home Education during the quarter.</i>	14*

*Two home visits completed this quarter were referred and scheduled last quarter, three consumers referred in this quarter were scheduled for early April and will be reported as completed visits in the next quarterly report.



▶ **Collaborations:**

Collaboration with APS and PHN Services: PA Staff and the collaborative safety partner agencies, Adult Protective Services and Public Health Nursing Services, responded to a request from ACC Greenhaven Terrace resident to present information on “Elder Abuse, Domestic Violence and Caregiver Safety” on Marcy 30, 2009. Heidi Richardson from APS and PHN Supervisor Leanne Thorpe provided handouts, updated safety resources and answered questions for a group of 10 congregate facility residents.

The South Area Caregiver’s Support Group held its first meeting on February 6, 2009 at the Martin Luther King Jr., Library. Education staff Larson and Cowan was present at the meeting. The meeting began with a self-introduction exercise developed by CSUS Intern Marshay Hunter. Very light refreshments were served. The group got a great start and looks forward to many more productive meetings.

VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) presented a Pro Bono class on Taxes. Topics covered were many and varied with individual questions by attending caregivers receiving special consideration by the presenter. The class seemed particularly interested in learning more about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) since they could be eligible to receive it. The class was as well received this year as last, with 26 caregivers braving drenching rains to attend the training.

Sadly, SEIU-UHW representative Purva Grover presented her final class about worker safety on 02/24/09. Staff extended our utmost appreciation for all of the enthusiasm and professionalism that she brought to each of her trainings. Though her future is bright, she will be sorely missed.

▶ **Interventions**

Education Social Workers provide problem resolution assistance when IHSS consumers or care providers call with a complaint or issue that is beyond the scope of what can be easily handled by Registry Services. Issues referred to social work staff are often complex and require more in-depth assessment to identify appropriate response and referral. Calls to the Urgent Care hotline are assessed immediately for Urgent Care services; if Urgent Care program services are not an appropriate response, the call is referred to the most appropriate staff for the type of intervention(s) needed. It is for this reason that Urgent Care program interventions are listed separately. This quarter, social workers conducted the following interventions:

Interventions (Other Than Urgent Care)	
Abuse Reports/investigations	12
Assistance in Problem Resolution	143
Assisted Client with Hiring a Caregiver	15
Calls to Law Enforcement	0
Complaints Investigated	9
Fraud Unit Referral	5



Interventions (Other Than Urgent Care)	
FSW Referral	3
IHSS Intake Referral	2
IHSS Payroll Referral	2
Non-Urgent Care-Referred to Appropriate Resource	8
Provide Education	34
Provided Conflict Resolution	5
Referred to Community Resources	14
Registry Referral	0
Other	30
Home Visits <i>other than In-Home Education</i>	3
Total Interventions Reported	285

Urgent Care Program	
Calls received on Urgent Care line	34
Resolutions:	
Abuse Reporting/Investigation	0
Assist with Problem Resolution	20
Assisted Client with Hiring a Caregiver	2
Call to Law Enforcement	1
Fraud Unit Referral	1
FSW Referral	0
IHSS Intake Referral	0
IHSS Payroll Referral	1
Non Urgent Care referred to appropriate resource	28
Other	2
Provide Education	0
Provided Conflict Resolution	2
Referred to Community Resources	1
Refer to IHSS Social Worker	3
Registry Referral	8
Referred to Accent Care (Urgent Care Program referral)	2
Unique Clients	2
Urgent Care Assistance Provided:	
Bathing	2
Dressing	0
Bowel/Bladder Care (client continent)	1
Bowel/Bladder Care (client incontinent)	0
Transfer	1
Ambulation	0
Meal preparation	1
Feeding	0



Emergency Medication Pickup	0
Laundry Services	0
Critical Medical Appointments	0
Critical Food Shopping	0

Often, those who call the Urgent Care hotline have multiple issues to be resolved, or the presenting issue requires multiple interventions. Depending on the particular situation, in addition to referrals to various agencies to provide needed assistance, PA staff may contact law enforcement, make a report to Adult Protective Services, or provide conflict resolution between the consumer and their caregiver.

▶ **Performance Indicators**

Performance is measured by the number of classes offered and the number of participants successfully completing offered courses.

Following is a list of classes offered during this quarter, and the number of participants in each:

Training Title	Number of Participants
First Aid/CPR	25
When Behavior is Difficult	12
Improve Mobility and Transfer Safety	27
Bowel and Bladder Care	22
Rx for Communicating with Doctors & Medication Management	31
Taxes for IHSS Caregivers	26
Dementia and Preventing Falls	32
4 D's-Dementia, Delirium, Delusions, Depression	14
Hazards of Homecare and Blood borne Pathogens	28
Skin Care and Infection Control	22
Points for Providing Personal Care/Wheelchair Users	4
Myths & Facts of Aging	22
Child/Infant First Aid/CPR	11
Caregiver Skills Follow-up Training for Registry Caregivers Only	8
Elder Abuse Prevention (consumer class) Greenhaven Terrace	10
Eat Well, Be Well (consumer class) Summerfield Place	13
Orientations	145
Total Number of Training Units* Provided	452
Total Number of Unduplicated Individuals Trained	224

*Each training unit represents one student in one class session. It is common for participants, whether caregivers or consumers, to attend more than one class during the quarter. For this reason, the total number of unduplicated individuals trained is also included.



▶ **Summary**

In addition to handling information calls, determining benefit program eligibility status, processing notifications, and receiving and processing applications, Health Benefits staff were busy this quarter, implementing the appropriate portions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA,) which was designed to increase jobs, fund projects, offer tax relief and assist individuals who have become recently unemployed. The ARRA includes a program for subsidizing and reducing COBRA premiums, for a period of up to 9 months, for those whose loss of health coverage is due to an involuntary termination of employment.

IHSS care providers who experienced a loss of coverage at some time from September 1, 2008, through February 16, 2009 and either chose not to elect COBRA continuation coverage at that time or elected COBRA, but subsequently discontinued that coverage, will be sent a notification letter offering a second election opportunity, and explaining the criteria for being eligible for the ARRA COBRA premium payment assistance.

The 234 identified care providers will be offered the option of declining the subsidy, or completing a "Request for Treatment as an Assistance Eligible Individual" form as well as the "COBRA Continuation Coverage Election Form," in order to be considered for COBRA premium payment assistance. Caregivers have 60 days in which to accomplish this. The premium reduction is significant; the program subsidizes 65% of the COBRA premium cost, leaving the COBRA insured responsible for the remaining 35%. Once eligibility is determined, ARRA reduced premiums will be as follows for the current plan year:

Plan Name	Coverage	COBRA Premium	ARRA COBRA Premium	Plan Year Ends
Kaiser Permanente Medical	Single	\$474.97	\$166.24	12/31/2009
United Healthcare Dental	Single	\$11.73	\$4.11	12/31/2009

The premium reduction is currently available to care providers who experience a qualifying event that is an involuntary termination of employment during the period beginning with September 1, 2008 and ending with December 31, 2009. Each month PA Health Benefits staff will notify those whose health benefits are terminated due to insufficient hours of the ARRA COBRA premium reduction program. New program enrollments may continue through December 31, 2009.

COBRA continuation coverage is available for up to 18 months. If the care provider's COBRA continuation coverage lasts for more than the nine months allowed by ARRA, the premium will increase to the full amount in the tenth month of COBRA continuation coverage.



▶ **Membership**

- Ms. Schlesinger returned from a brief leave of absence in January.
- January 6, four new Advisory Committee members, Koleen Biegacki, DeAnga Hills, Antoinette Lopez-Coles and Cordia Wade participated in a New Member Orientation.

▶ **Other Matters**

Throughout the quarter Committee members actively pursued information about budget cuts and their impact on IHSS from Senior and Adult Services and the IHSS Public Authority, including staff losses, unassigned cases and the restructuring of IHSS processes.

The committee also invited David Brown, from the IHSS Fraud Unit, to provide members with information about fraud and investigation processes in Sacramento County. Mr. Brown supervises three fraud investigators and one fraud assistant; the unit investigates numerous referrals such as check splitting between caregivers and consumers, neglect, adequate care not being provided, hours billed and not actually worked, clients who passed away and caregivers continue to bill for hours, client or caregiver who have gone to prison and continue to bill for hours, stolen checks, too many hours worked, providers who gave false identification information and numerous other referrals.

The committee held a special meeting on January 8, 2009 to review a presentation that included data on the delivery of IHSS in Sacramento County, compared with other counties, to be used as a benchmark against which future discussions and findings could be weighed. The data will be included in a report to be presented to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, who requested the information in conjunction with establishing an IHSS Task Force directed to develop ideas for curtailing the rising cost of the IHSS program in Sacramento County. Representatives from the County Executive's Office, Labor Relations, DHHS, DHA, SEIU-UHW, IHSS, and the IHSS Public Authority were in attendance to provide answers to the committee members' numerous questions. IHSS Advisory Committee members noted that they have a strong interest in being active participants on the Task Force and any initiatives that would impact IHSS services.

Election of a Task Force representative, during which several committee members expressed an interest in participation, resulted in a letter to Chairs Bettis and Rose advising them that to be fully represented, the Advisory Committee felt there should be both a caregiver and a consumer at the task force meetings. Ms. Stuart and Ms. Schlesinger were elected to represent the IHSS Advisory Committee on the Task Force.

Committee members decided to fund only two newsletters each year, since the PA can no longer subsidize the cost of mailing them to more than 26,000 IHSS households. The committee uses the newsletter as a vehicle through which they receive input from and disseminate information to their IHSS constituents. Members requested that the PA begin collecting email addresses from IHSS consumers and providers who might be interested in receiving the newsletter online.

