



The Maine Personal Assistance Services Association is a coalition of people employed to provide assistance to persons with disabilities and elders. Maine PASA is organized to empower workers, to build opportunities, to respect human dignity and to improve the quality of our jobs.

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Maine PASA puts its Mission and Purpose to Work

The last newsletter featured the new Maine PASA brochure. We are pleased that so many people responded to the mailing by sending us membership information. The purpose statements printed in the brochure are now guiding the development workgroup to plan activities to fulfill our mission; to form a coalition, empower workers, build opportunities, respect human dignity and improve the quality of our jobs. The goals will now serve as subject areas for the Maine PASA 2nd annual conference day; *People in Direct Care, Support Work and Personal Assistance: Building Our Capacity, Valuing Our Work*. Mark your calendars: November 14th 8AM – 4PM, with half day sessions an option. The event will be held at Southern Maine Community College in South Portland, and scholarships for long distance travel and lodging are being arranged.

SAVE THE DATE! November 14th

PCAs, CNAs, Personal Attendants,
PSS, DSPs, HHAs, CRMAs,
Homemakers and other direct care
and direct services personnel...

Maine PASA is planning an event for you!

Watch for news and call us for brochures
at (800) 268-6612.

Spotlight on Direct Care and Support Workers

Events in Maine and across the country are focusing on the value of direct support workers in long term care and community services for people with disabilities and elders.

- Better Jobs Better Care Grants: Five states have been awarded a total of \$7 million to demonstrate methods to improve the recruitment and retention of direct care workers. The program, supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Atlantic Philanthropies, granted the awards in July to Iowa, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Vermont
- The federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is responding to concerns for workforce shortages and seeks proposals for the Demonstration to Improve Direct Service Community Workforce. Maine has responded to the solicitation and the Governor's Office of Health Care Policy & Finance submitted a proposal in August to address health insurance coverage and retention programs in home health agencies in Maine. This is a national competition and award notices are expected in early October.

**For the latest news on direct care worker topics
and Voices from the Frontline:
See www.directcareclearinghouse.org**

Upcoming Events in Maine

- **September 23rd: Excellence in Resident Care Conference, Augusta Civic Center**
Educational topic and recognition awards; Understanding & Managing Challenging Behaviors in the Long Term; Care Setting. Sponsored by the Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman Program and the Maine Health Care Association. For information call 623-1146.
- **September 24th: Building Alliances for Healthy Aging, Augusta Civic Center**
A conference on healthy aging and alliances to support programs. Sponsored by Maine Department of Human Services, Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services, USM Muskie School's Maine Nutrition Network, and Partnership for Healthy Aging. For information contact Claudia at 626-5036.
- **October 7th, 7:00a-5:30p: Healthcare Jobs and Education Fair, Holiday Inn By The Bay, Portland**
Sponsored by the Healthcare Review.
- **October 15-16th: Direct Support Professional Conference, 16th annual event, Bangor Civic Center**
Topics and presentations for Direct Support Professionals in MR. Sponsored by the Maine Department of Behavioral and Developmental Services and the USM Muskie School's Center for Learning. For information contact Melanie at 626-5244.
- **November 14th: People in Direct Care, Support Work and Personal Assistance: Building Our Capacity, Valuing Our Work, Southern Maine Community College**
Sponsored by Maine PASA (the association that brings you this newsletter). For information call Maine PASA at (800) 268-6612.

From Muskie School of Public Service to Maine PASA

Many of you know that the Maine PASA project is funded through a grant from the U.S Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services as a part of the Real Choices System Change Grant in partnership with the Muskie School of Public Service, USM.

The Muskie School is a well-known research center, and it trains health care policy analysts and managers. It is not surprising that the School has a great interest in the development of the Maine PASA project, as both focus on improvement of quality of health care and health care jobs. The School supports the Maine PASA in many ways – from providing facilities for business meetings to technical support and expertise. The Association owes a great part of its success to a project coordinator from heaven – Elise Scala. Thanks to her

commitment, resourcefulness and energy, the Association moved from a wonderful idea on paper to a real-life, powerful tool for bringing personal assistants together to reach their goals. One of the Muskie School's graduate students, Olga Gross, has been working with the Association since November of 2002. Currently Olga's assignment is to present the Maine PASA with a strategic business plan by December of this year. The key steps of the process are to analyze implications of non-profit status for Maine PASA, explore networking opportunities and establish relationship with organizations providing advice and technical support in non-profit development; interview other worker associations (Iowa, North Carolina, Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut) and define how their experiences could be applied to the development of Maine PASA.

Books Recommended by Maine PASA Members

She Took To The Woods by Alice Arlen is a biography and selected writings of Louise Dickinson Rich. Arlen writes with a wonderful flow about Louise's life, pointing out her passion and flair for writing stories. Louise, born in 1903, lived in the era of our elder population here in Maine, so many of our elders can relate to her short stories of hardships during the depression, fierce winters, relationships, and wartime rationing. This book will give an understanding of Women's history with the use of the early technology, community life, and caring for one another. The short stories are only two or three pages long and are easy to read to elders to use as a medium for connecting with your elder. The stories may bring back long forgotten memories that elders enjoy sharing. For a little while there is no loneliness, and boredom of the mundane. (Roberta R., PCA)

Maine PASA Updates

The development workgroup is meeting and planning opportunities for direct care and support workers in Maine. Since our last newsletter:

1. Maine PASA is now listed as one of the worker associations in the country. (See www.directcareclearinghouse.org/worker_assoc.jsp)
2. Maine PASA's development workgroup meets monthly to discuss the future of the association as a non-profit organization and the November conference.
3. Maine PASA participated in the State's development of a grant proposal, Providing Health Coverage and Other Services to Recruit and Retain Direct Service Community Workers in Maine: The Dirigo Difference.
4. Maine PASA has arranged for scholarship awards to support workers to attend conferences in the State.
5. Maine PASA participated in the New England Coalition of Direct Care & Personal Assistants Worker Associations.
6. Maine PASA was interviewed by the Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute for an upcoming national report on worker associations.
7. Maine PASA representation was requested at the meeting of Maine Joint Advisory Committee on Select Services for Older Adults (MEJAC) Initiative. (See full article on this page.)
8. The membership keeps growing. If you have not completed a membership entry form, please call Maine PASA at (800) 268-6612.
9. Maine PASA members have presented to staff groups and are available to meet with your organization. Call us to learn more at (800) 268-6612 or in Portland at 228-8423.



Maine PASA Development Workgroup (from left to right): LuAnn, Trish, Olga, Gail, Susan, Roberta, Kim, Julie; missing: Elise, Jon

The Maine Joint Advisory Committee on Select Services for Older Adults (MEJAC) Initiative

by Robert R., Maine PASA member

The 119th Maine Legislature authorized the Maine Joint Advisory Committee on Select Services for Older Adults to conduct a study of the care options for persons with dementia and the challenging behavioral issues that can be associated with their cognitive impairment.

Difficult behaviors that can arise in the person with dementia are potentially harmful to staff and family members and can subject administrators to liability and occupational health and safety (OSHA) issues. Demographic trends imply that these problems will grow over time as Maine's population ages, because dementia is more prevalent with age. The MEJAC's subcommittee will focus on the care needs and options for developing and improving programs and services for older persons with cognitive impairments and the behavioral issues associated with those impairments.

The Maine Alzheimer's Association initiated the legislative document (L.D.) 1075, *An Act to Ensure Appropriate Care for Older Persons with Dementia* in response to growing reports of persons with dementia who develop challenging behaviors. Frequently, these people wind up in hospital emergency rooms in crisis, are admitted to the hospital, and remain there for weeks on end because an appropriate and safe placement is not available. The MEJAC will report back to the legislature in December 2003 and 2004 with recommendations and options for developing and improving programs and services for these people.

At the August meeting, the Committee addressed issues of worker and client safety in various community settings, consistency of care, implications of gaps in care for the clients' families. Discussions were focused on the proactive approach to support and training needs. Applying the guiding principles of the MEJAC, the Committee members brainstormed the opportunities for improvement of care options for people with dementia and behavioral issues.

For Goodness Sake: A Daily Book of Cheer for Nurses' Aides and Other Who Care

by Bethany Knight, CNA

Entry for September 7

The great truths are always very basic. Know thyself. Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. Look both ways.

Being in a good mood makes life easier. That's a great, basic truth. No matter how good your reasons are for being mad, grouchy, sad, or numb, they can't compete with the superiority of being in a good mood.

Of course, experiencing a tragedy is not something we can pop out of in an hour or a day or even a week. We all need time to heal and accept our terrible loss.

Bad moods brought on by stupid things are so unnecessary, and yet they are a common cause of suffering.

Saskia Davis recommends we choose a different kind of suffering—suffering from inner peace. What are the symptoms of this malady?

A tendency to think and act spontaneously rather than on fears based on past experiences.

An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.

A loss of interest in judging other people.

A loss of interest in judging self.

A loss of interest interpreting the actions of others.

A loss of interest in conflict.

A loss of ability to worry (this is a serious symptom)

Frequent, overwhelming episodes of appreciation.

Contented feelings of connectedness with others and nature.

Frequent attacks of smiling through the eyes from the heart.

An increasing tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen.

An increased susceptibility to the love extended by others as well as the uncontrollable urge to extend it.

TODAY: Suffer inner peace.



You're Invited to Join Us!

Are you a CNA, PCA, HHA, DSP or PSS? Do you provide direct support or care for an elder or a person with a disability? Contact us for more information!

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