



The Consumer Connection

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Public Authority Services
by Sourcewise



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Connect with the SCC IHSS Advisory Board

By Janie Whiteford, AB Chair and CICA President

In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) can be a complicated program. The more you understand it and become involved, the better it can serve you as a consumer or provider.

You are invited to have your voice heard at any upcoming meeting of the IHSS Advisory Board (AB). Under state law, the AB is mandated to give recommendations for improvements to the IHSS system to any local, state, or federal entity connected to IHSS. The AB also monitors problems that IHSS recipients face and explore solutions. In Santa Clara County (SCC), the AB is made up of nine individuals, five of whom must be past or present users of IHSS or personal care services. ABs strive to be a voice for IHSS consumers.

The SCC AB meets on the third Tuesday of every month from 12 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. via Zoom, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the beginning of every meeting, there is an opportunity for members of the

public to ask questions or share concerns and problems they are experiencing with IHSS. The SCC AB invites you to join and share your experiences during these meetings.

The SCC AB is part of the statewide organization of County Advisory Boards, California IHSS Consumer Alliance (CICA). CICA holds two public meetings per month to discuss issues related to IHSS. The meetings are informative and open to the public. The SCC AB strongly recommends that you join their mailing list for important updates.

For more information about the AB or to join the AB email list, please call Public Authority Services at (408) 350-3206. To contact CICA, visit CICAIHSS.org.

SCC AB meets on the third Tuesday of every month from 12 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. via Zoom

Three Things to Know About Alzheimer's Disease

By Hunter Nguyen

As a person ages, they may occasionally experience issues with memory. A common fear is that lapses in memory might mean a person is developing Alzheimer's Disease (AD). While there are many factors that may put someone at a higher risk of developing AD, aging is not one of them. Below are answers to three common questions to help explain more about AD.

Are AD and dementia the same thing?

No. According to the Alzheimer's Association, dementia is a "general term for symptoms like decline in memory, reasoning, or other thinking skills." AD is the most common type of dementia.

According to the Mayo Clinic, it is possible for a person to be diagnosed with multiple types of dementia.

The National Institute on Aging describes the cause of AD as a buildup in the brain of plaques and tangles made of different proteins. Like AD, Lewy body dementia is caused by Lewy bodies in the brain, which are clumps of one specific protein. Vascular dementia is caused by damage to blood vessels in the brain, such as damage from a stroke. Frontotemporal dementia is caused by nerve cell damage in the brain.

Is AD determined by genetics?

Not necessarily. According to the Alzheimer's Association, a person with the APOE-e4 gene has a higher risk of being diagnosed with AD than a person without the gene. Yet, having this gene does not guarantee that a person will develop AD.

There are other risk factors for AD besides genetics. Head injuries, heart disease, diabetes, stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, tobacco use, and excessive alcohol consumption increase the risk of AD. Meanwhile, healthy eating, exercise, and an active social life may decrease the risk.

If I am having memory problems, does that mean I have AD?

No. According to the Mayo Clinic, there are reversible causes of memory problems, such as depression and polypharmacy (taking six or more drugs per day). A study from the Journal of the American Medical Directors Association found evidence of a link between polypharmacy and memory problems in older adults.

[For more information and resources for Alzheimer's disease, visit the Alzheimer's Association website at alz.org or call their helpline at \(800\) 272-3900.](#)

Care Providers Needed

By Shannin Prather

There are currently more than 30,000 In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) care recipients living in Santa Clara County, many of whom are looking to hire care providers.

If you know someone who has provided caregiving services in the past and would be a good IHSS Independent Care Provider (IP), let them know Public Authority Services is looking for more IPs to add to the Registry. The Registry sends lists of pre-screened and vetted IPs to IHSS consumers who need a provider.

Medical, dental, and vision benefits are available for only \$25 per month for IHSS IPs working more than 35 hours monthly. All IHSS IPs are eligible for a free VTA SmartPass to use buses and light rails in Santa Clara County and are offered free training classes to improve caregiving skills. IHSS IPs are paid \$17.62 per hour.

[Members of the Registry must complete the enrollment process, which includes a background check. Those interested in becoming a Registry IP can learn more by visiting the Registry page at pascc.org.](#)

Internet Explorer Cannot Access the ESP

By Virginia Ballantyne, LCSW, IHSS Management Analyst

Since February 18, 2022, the Electronic Services Portal (ESP) can no longer be reached using the Microsoft Internet Explorer web browser. If you use Internet Explorer, you are no longer able to access the electronic timesheets, download W-2s, or make changes to contact information using the ESP.

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If you have been using Internet Explorer, you will need to switch to a different browser, such as Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome to use the ESP. Downloading a new web browser is simple and free. Simply visit the web browser's site, such as microsoft.com/en-us/edge or google.com/chrome/ and click on 'Download Edge' or 'Download Chrome'.

If you were not using Internet Explorer to access the ESP, no action is needed.

It is important to keep your contact information up-to-date in the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) system. While it is still acceptable to mail a Change of Address and/or Telephone form, IHSS care providers and consumers using the ESP to access timesheets can easily make changes to their address and/or telephone number within the ESP.

The IHSS Service Desk is available to recipients and providers who need assistance with the Electronic Services Portal website. The Service Desk is available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding national holidays at (866) 376-7066.

NAMI Supports Mental Health

By Ryan Gallagher



Millions of Americans face challenges with mental health in any given year; affecting anyone regardless of age, race, and social class. For many individuals, the COVID-19 pandemic has only increased stressors that may induce anxiety and depression.

Fortunately, there is an agency that offers help for Americans affected by mental illness. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Santa Clara County is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1975. Their mission is to assist people living with mental illness and their families.

During May—Mental Health Month—NAMI focuses on reducing stigmas associated with mental illness. Stigmas create environments of shame, fear and silence which may prevent people from seeking help. Fighting stigmas and reaching out to organizations like NAMI can help individuals find much needed support and guidance.

NAMI volunteers are available year-round to provide education and support, promote research, and advocate for adequate health insurance, housing, rehabilitation, and jobs for those affected by mental illnesses.

NAMI Santa Clara County provides support groups, education programs, and resources to consumers and their loved ones. To take advantage of this valuable resource, call (408) 453-0400 or visit: namisantaclara.org.

Be Scam Savvy

By Shannin Prather

Trust is a powerful and valuable commodity. While most people are good and will not cheat or take advantage of others, there are those who seek opportunities to do just that. Scammers are individuals who lie and take advantage of people whom they consider easy targets. These smooth-talking swindlers cheat and steal from unsuspecting consumers.

Know how to protect yourself from scammers by recognizing possible scams when you see them. Below is a list of some of the most common scams and how to avoid becoming a victim.

Telemarketing

Perhaps the most common scheme; scammers use fake telemarketing calls to prey on unsuspecting victims.

Tips: Do not give out your social security number, credit card information, or shopping account login information—such as an Amazon account. If you receive a call, text, or email claiming an account has been frozen or there has been a false charge on an account, do not respond or click on any links. Contact the company using verified contact information to investigate the claims yourself.

Email scams

Email messages may appear to be from a real company or institution, asking targets to “update” or “verify” their personal information. For instance, an email can appear to be from the IRS, a bank, or an online shopping account.

Tips: The IRS does not email you to ask for personal information. Do not click on any links in a suspicious email. Instead, contact the company or organization yourself to investigate the claims.

Sweepstakes & lottery scams

Scammers inform their mark that they have won a lottery or sweepstakes but need to make some form of payment to access the prize money. The target mails a check to pay the “fee”, which is cashed by the scammers. The target is sent a check for the “prize”, making it seem real. However, the fake “prize” check is eventually rejected by the bank.

Tips: If you win a prize, you do not have to pay for it. Also, you cannot win a lottery or sweepstakes if you did not enter one.

Consider putting your name and phone number on the National Do Not Call Registry. This is a free service and will help stop telemarketers from contacting you. Visit donotcall.gov

If you suspect that you are being targeted for a scam you can call the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) toll-free helpline at (877) 908-3360. Learn more about common scams by visiting aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/.

You can also receive guidance on scams by visiting the Protection & Security webpage by Sourcewise at mysourcewise.com/category/protection-security/.



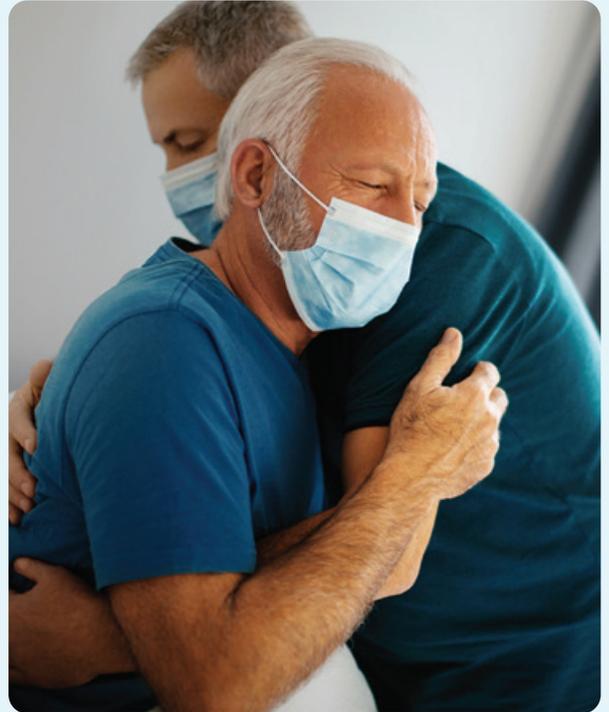
Connect with LGBTQ+ Support and Resources

By Shannin Prather

More than 39 million people in the U.S. are 65 years of age or older, including 2.4 million who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ+) or other non-heterosexual/cisgender orientation. In addition to facing the same challenges many people do as they age, LGBTQ+ older adults encounter unique challenges and barriers that can stand in the way of a healthy and rewarding life.

According to SAGE Advocacy & Services for LGBTQ+ Elders, aging LGBTQ+ individuals are less likely than their heterosexual peers to reach out to senior centers, meal programs, and other services because they fear discrimination and harassment.

Santa Clara County is committed to creating a social climate of inclusion that supports the diversity of the community, provides quality services, and promotes a healthy, safe, and prosperous community for all.



If you or someone you know in the LGBTQ+ community needs support, these resources, among others, are available:

The Q Corner

Supports LGBTQ+ community members and allies to access resources, referrals, mentoring, and social activities.

sccbhsd.org/theQCorner (408) 977-8800

LGBTQ Wellness

Provides peer support for social, emotional, and mental health for LGBTQ+ adults in Santa Clara County.

lgbtqwell.org (408) 841-4300

Avenidas Rainbow Collective – LGBTQ Seniors Initiative

Programs and services of socialization for LGBTQ+ older adults.

avenidas.org/programs/lgbtq-seniors-initiative (650) 289-5417

Billy DeFrank LGBTQ+ Community Center

Provides community, leadership, advocacy, services, and support to LGBTQ+ people and their allies.

defrankcenter.org (408) 293-3040

SAGE National LGBT Elder Hotline

Speak confidentially with peers who offer support, answer questions, and provide information about community resources. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in English and Spanish with translation in 180 languages.

sageusa.org/ (877) 360-5428



Public Authority Services

by Sourcewise



Public Authority Services by Sourcewise www.pascc.org
Phone: (408) 350-3206 Fax: (408) 296-8340 E-mail: info@pascc.org

Important Phone Numbers

Public Authority Services by Sourcewise

Information concerning provider benefits, bus pass, training or other services of the Public Authority.
(408) 350-3206

Public Authority Services Registry

Call the Registry, if you need help finding an IHSS care provider.
(408) 350-3251

IHSS Social Services

Information regarding authorized hours and services or to speak with a social worker.
(408) 792-1600

IHSS Payroll

Call for any payroll or timesheet matters.
(408) 792-1600

UNION SEIU Local 2015

Representing providers. Call for information about the Union and payroll deductions.
(855) 810-2015

Adult Protective Services

24-hour Hotline. Call for help, if you or someone you know suspect abuse of a senior or dependent adult.
(408) 975-4900
(800) 414-2002

Sourcewise Information & Awareness

Information on available services in Santa Clara County.
(408) 350-3200, option 1

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