

# NJ Human Services In the Community

## COMMISSIONER'S WELCOME

The Murphy Administration is committed to a stronger and fairer New Jersey. In our early months on the job, the team at the Department of Human Services has taken important steps to help realize that goal including:



- Improving Medicaid benefits to address pressing public health issues like combatting the opioid epidemic, preventing diabetes, expanding family planning, and treating hepatitis C;
- Covering certain in-patient, residential care for individuals with substance use disorders – including opioid use disorder – under Medicaid for the first time.
- Leveraging the Governor's \$100 million budget investment in combatting the opioid epidemic to expand outpatient treatment options;
- Making new investments to support parents who need assistance with child care in order to succeed at work, school or training programs;
- Launching the NJ ABLE program to help individuals with disabilities better save for their needs through tax-advantaged savings accounts;
- Securing additional resources to support the community needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities;
- Implementing a new law to help ensure the health and safety of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities;
- Making food assistance more readily available to those who need it by expanding the reach of our Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), through waivers;
- Implementing new increases in our income assistance programs to help families with low-incomes get the hand up they need;
- Expanding our efforts to make sure older NJ residents with low incomes know how we can help them with drug costs and their Medicare premiums and co-pays;
- Assisting individuals from Puerto Rico dislocated by Hurricane Maria and living in New Jersey in connecting with social services to help meet their immediate needs;
- Increasing our investment and outreach to help individuals with hearing loss and lower incomes access refurbished hearing aids; and,
- Amplifying our public outreach on vision awareness by partnering with local leaders on community vision screening events throughout the State.

The Department is committed to expanding on this work in the weeks and months ahead as we continue to identify opportunities to help New Jersey's families. We look forward to engaging with community leaders throughout the State as we build on these early efforts. Together, we can help New Jerseyans thrive.

State of New Jersey



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## MODERNIZING MEDICAID

The Department of Human Services has announced an exciting new initiative to strengthen, update, and modernize New Jersey's Medicaid Program while removing unnecessary barriers to care. This means better health care options for the 1.7 million New Jerseyans enrolled in this vital health care program. New and expanded benefits will help support children with autism by adding \$17 million in new state and federal funds to cover Autism Spectrum Disorder benefits in Medicaid. The budget gives young people with Medicaid coverage access to appropriate screening and treatment.

The budget also adds new Medicaid coverage of diabetes self-management education and training, medical nutrition therapy, the National Diabetes Prevention Program, and supplies and equipment to the Medicaid program. These services and programs are designed to better prevent, treat and manage one of the leading chronic diseases in our state.

We are expanding family planning benefits and adding Medicaid coverage for post-partum coverage of long-acting reversible contraception, allowing New Jersey to remove a restriction limiting access to one of the most effective forms of contraception.

Medicaid will also begin to offer a more complete benefit package to assist those who are battling opioid and other substance use disorders. In addition to new services like detox and residential treatment, the budget includes new investments in outpatient treatment.

Restrictions will be lifted on access to drugs that can cure hepatitis C, allowing individuals to receive this curative treatment when they are diagnosed rather than having to wait until they experience liver damage.

And, we'll do more to help people quit tobacco. Medicaid enrollees will no longer need to wait for health plan approval to get access to medications to help them quit tobacco. Going forward, the Murphy Administration will continue building a stronger and fairer New Jersey for all residents including ensuring that Medicaid works for New Jersey families.



## GOVERNOR MURPHY RETURNS THE DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



On June 21st, Governor Phil Murphy announced his plan to return the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to the Department of Human Services (DHS). This reverses a decision made by the prior administration to move the division to the Department of Health.

"This administration is fully committed to ensuring that government delivers programs and services to our residents in the most effective and efficient manner possible. That means restoring DMHAS at the Department of Human Services so that we put mental health and substance use disorder services back where they belong and under the same roof as Medicaid and social services." **said Governor Murphy.**

"I join Governor Murphy in his strong commitment to supporting high quality prevention, treatment and recovery services to address mental health and substance use disorders," **said DHS Commissioner Carole Johnson.** "I am delighted that the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services will be returning home to the Department of Human Services where it will once again be in the same place as Medicaid and the social services programs that are critical to supporting individuals in need and their families."

## NJ DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES LAUNCHES NJ ABLE SAVINGS ACCOUNTS



Commissioner Carole Johnson announced the launch of a major new program to help individuals with disabilities become more independent and better thrive in their communities. With the newly launched NJ ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) program, individuals with disabilities can save tax-free for eligible expenses such as education, housing and transportation without losing eligibility for Medicaid and other public benefits.

"This is an exciting new program for New Jersey that gives individuals with disabilities and their families the opportunity to improve their financial security," **Commissioner Johnson said.**

"They deserve the peace of mind that comes with being able to save for vital day-to-day expenses. Individuals with disabilities can do anything – and NJ ABLE is now another tool to help them live full and independent lives."

New Jerseyans can visit [here](#) to learn more about the program and begin saving.

## THE STEPHEN KOMNINOS' LAW TAKES EFFECT

The Stephen Komninos' Law took effect May 1, 2018. It strengthens protections for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who reside in or participate in DHS programs.

It also recognizes the important role of guardians and family members in the lives of adults with developmental disabilities.

To learn more, visit our [Stephen Komninos' Law Website.](#)



## GROW NJ KIDS



Grow NJ Kids is a NJ Human Services initiative to raise the quality of child care and early learning throughout New Jersey.

Grow NJ Kids gives child care and early learning programs resources to assess and improve their programs, while providing parents with information that allows them to evaluate the quality of programs and make the best choices for their child. The goal is to create a system that encourages ongoing improvement.

All types of programs can participate in Grow NJ Kids – a child care center, a school- or center-based preschool program, a Head Start program, as well as a registered family child care provider caring for children in his/her home.

To learn more about Grow NJ Kids, visit: [www.grownjkids.gov](#)



## Are you Register Ready?

### New Jersey's Special Needs Registry for Disasters

NJ Register Ready was created to help individuals with disabilities. Residents with special needs are encouraged to add their personal information to this registry, which will be shared with emergency response agencies. This will allow responders to assist and be better equipped to serve registrants in the event of an emergency or evacuation in their area. No one else will have access to the information and registration is completely voluntary.

To keep this registry current, people are asked to update their registration information each year. Visit Register Ready today to sign up:

[Click here for more information.](#)



# PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

*Our newsletter will regularly shine a spotlight on NJ Human Services programs and the hard-working employees behind these initiatives.*

*This edition highlights the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired's Project BEST vision screening program and the Division of Aging Services' State Health Insurance Assistance Program's work to educate older residents about the new Medicare replacement cards.*

## THE COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED'S PROJECT BEST EYE SCREENINGS

Project BEST (Better Eye-Health Services and Treatment) is part of an ongoing effort by the DHS Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired to reduce the incidence of blindness. The program provides eye health education and safety by offering no-cost vision screenings for adults and children throughout the state.

The Commission works to help individuals with low incomes, older adults, individuals with diabetes, migrant workers, and individuals with special needs get screened. Those individuals identified as needing additional care or services are referred to local resources or to the Commission's services or both. The Commission offers education, vocational rehabilitation and independent living assistance to help people adjust to vision loss and remain or become self-sufficient. **For more information, call toll-free at (877) 685-8878 or e-mail [AskCBVI@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:AskCBVI@dhs.state.nj.us).**

Representatives from DHS' Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing also have participated in these community events to demonstrate telecommunication and home safety assistive technology for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. **For information, call toll free at (800) 792-8339 or visit <https://nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/addc/>**

Check out our video [here](#).



### Meet the Project BEST team

**Top L-R:** Field Representative Ahmus Mahmoud, Field Rep. Tracy Barranger, Field Rep. Kalpana Parikh

**Bottom L-R:** Project BEST Supervisor, Sunil Parikh, Field Rep. Barrie Humphrey, Field Rep. Chaitali Shah, CBVI Coordinator of Independent Living and Eye Health Services, Elizabeth DeShields

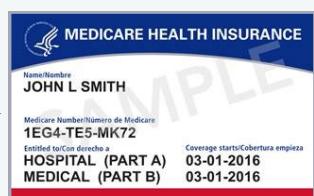
**Staff not shown:** Field Representatives – Barbara Kruichak, Irisdania Pallero; Andrew Pogorelec; Nynfa Sucuzhanay and Support Staff Myra Dennison (Sr. Clerk Transcriber)

## STATE HEALTH INSURANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SHIP)



Meet the SHIP Team  
L-R Christine Dunn,  
Frankie Boykin, Fran Cancro,  
Mary McGahey (SHIP Director),  
and John Siwczak.

The Division of Aging Services' State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) team is working hard to ensure New Jersey's 1.6 million Medicare beneficiaries know they will be getting new Medicare identification cards in the mail.



These new cards were created to protect people's identity, help reduce fraud and offer better safeguards of important health and financial information. The Social Security number on your current card will be replaced with a randomly assigned membership number.

**More information on the new cards can be found [here](#) or by calling the SHIP hotline at 1-800-792-8820.**

## COMMISSIONER VISITS NEW BRUNSWICK COMMUNITY FARMERS MARKET TO HIGHLIGHT NJ SNAP

Commissioner Carole Johnson joined New Brunswick Mayor Jim Cahill for a visit to the New Brunswick Community Farmers' Market in August. The visit highlighted the importance of the New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Access Program, also known as SNAP, which provides critical food assistance to those in need.

During the visit, Commissioner Johnson toured the market grounds and also met with the SNAP and SNAP-Ed teams who were on-hand to educate people about eating healthy and to sign up qualifying residents for SNAP benefits.

Participants can use their SNAP card at participating farmers markets just as they would at their local supermarket to access just-picked seasonal produce and other offerings. The New Brunswick Community Farmers' Market also matches every SNAP dollar spent with Market Bucks up to \$10 per day that shoppers can use towards free fruits and vegetables.

For more information on NJ SNAP, visit our [website](#). Check out our video [here](#).

*"Giving people the option to redeem SNAP benefits at farmers markets is a win-win, enabling customers' access to healthy foods while supporting our local farmers."*

- Carole Johnson DHS Commissioner



## NJ HUMAN SERVICES HOLDS A SERIES OF HURRICANE MARIA EVACUEE SESSIONS



Puerto Rican Evacuee Session  
in Jersey City in March

In 2017, Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico and destroyed the island's power grid. Many evacuees relocated to New Jersey in the aftermath of the storm.

In an effort to get evacuees the assistance they need, NJ Human Services hosted public events in Mount Holly, Perth Amboy, Vineland, Jersey City, Paterson, Camden, and Elizabeth to inform evacuees about our programs and assist with enrollment.

Programs highlighted included shelter, health care (Medicaid), food assistance (SNAP) and cash assistance (TANF, General and Emergency Assistance).

In total, 175 evacuees attended the sessions along with members of the Legislature, local officials, and federal officials from FEMA.

In addition to evacuees, local social services agencies and community stakeholders also attended the events to get information for their local community. NJ Human Services continues to work with FEMA to identify and reach out to evacuees.

## NJ HUMAN SERVICES OPENS ASSISTIVE DEVICE DEMONSTRATION CENTER

The DHS Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on May 16 marked Better Hearing and Speech Month by opening an Assistive Device Demonstration Center at its office at 11A Quakerbridge Plaza in Hamilton.

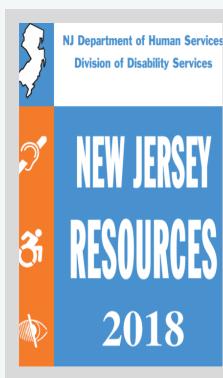
Members of the community and DHS Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira attended a live demonstration of the latest technology for people with hearing loss. The center displays devices such as a videophone, amplified and captioned phones, baby cry alerts, assistive listening devices and smoke detectors.

Consumers, providers and the community-at-large can experience a hands-on demonstration of the items available. Through the division's Equipment Distribution Program, some of this equipment is available for free to residents with low incomes.

**To schedule a visit call 609-588-2648 or  
email [Ddhh.Communications2@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:Ddhh.Communications2@dhs.state.nj.us)**



## NJ HUMAN SERVICES' DIVISION OF DISABILITY SERVICES 2018 RESOURCE GUIDE



The New Jersey Resources 2018 Directory is the annual edition published by the DHS Division of Disability Services. The Directory is intended to be a comprehensive resource identifying programs and services for individuals with disabilities, their families, caregivers, and advocates.

The publication provides access to up-to-date information that individuals with disabilities, along with their families, can use to help them thrive in their physical, professional and recreational lives. The directory is available online here in [English](#), Spanish, and in [audio format](#) so that individuals and agencies can access the services they need.

**A certified Information and Referral Specialist can be reached to discuss any individual concerns and can provide direct assistance by phone at 1-888-285-3036 (toll free)**

## STAY CONNECTED WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

**New Jersey Department of Human Services**

**is on Social Media**

**Follow us on:**





# NJ HUMAN SERVICES IN THE NEWS

## NJ GIVES MEDICAID PATIENTS WITH HEPATITIS C EARLIER ACCESS TO LIFE-SAVING DRUGS

LILO H. STANTON | JULY 11, 2018

Change means severe liver disease patients will now be covered for treatment earlier than previously allowed under Medicaid.

**Disabled people in N.J. just got a benefit they've always wanted**

Hurricane Maria Evacuee Information Session to be Held

June 11 in Paterson

June 6, 2018, 2:48 pm | in

Hurricane Maria Evacuee Information Session to be Held

Federal and state officials on hand to answer questions about assistance

18, 2018

**Murphy budget expands Medicaid, makes N.J. a healthier state | Opinion**

## Murphy to move Mental Health and Addiction Services back to DHS

By Carl DiOrio, June 18, 2018

## STATE GIVES MEDICAID PATIENTS MORE HELP TO QUIT SMOKING

LILO H. STANTON | JULY 17, 2018

Department of Human Services Awards Teens for Creativity in Celebrating Their Family Tree

May 23, 2018, 1:58 pm | in

Department of Human Services

## PUSH TO EXPAND DIABETES EDUCATION PUTS NJ AMONG SMALL GROUP OF STATES

LILO H. STANTON

State YMCAs join push to expand diabetes education access in diverse communities

Health & Fitness

**Department of Human Services to Host Free Eye Screening Thursday**

## NJ Dept. of Human Services Marks Better Hearing and Speech Month

Assistive Device Demonstration Center in Hamilton Also Opened to Public



**Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired Awareness Night at the Trenton Thunder**



**Division of Aging Services Wins PACE Award**



**Commissioner Johnson visits Developmental Disability Day Program**



**Announcement of funding to fight opioid epidemic in NJ**

## NJ Human Services Snapshots



**Commissioner Johnson with Governor Murphy**



**Governor Visits DHS Central Office**



**Division of Disability Services at the Abilities Expo**



**Commissioner Johnson visits child care center to highlight Grow NJ Kids**



**Bubbles 4 Autism**



**Princeton University students visit DHS to discuss Medicaid Policy**



**First Lady Tammy Murphy visits DHS Central Office**



**Division of Family Development Child Care Hearing**



**Developmental Disabilities Self-Advocates at the Capitol**



**Division of Family Development's Teen Media Contest**