

[Click to view this email in a browser](#)

January 31, 2014



Speaking out for people with intellectual & developmental disabilities



www.vor.net



/VOR



@VOR_NET



VOR4Choice



info@vor.net

**Reminders:
Help VOR Grow!**

VOR Weekly News Update

News and views for VOR Advocates

[About VOR](#) * [Refer a Friend](#) * [Donate](#)
[Registration is now open for VOR's Annual Conference and Initiative. Details are available on VOR's Website.](#)

Table of Contents

VOR and You

1. **VOR Board Member Speaks Out:** Save New Jersey's centers for the disabled.
2. [VOR Background, Observations, Advocacy Opportunities and Overview](#) of the new federal rule relating to Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services
3. [Be a Sponsor. Get a Sponsor!](#) Sponsorship opportunities for VOR's Annual Conference and Initiative now available online.
4. [ANNUAL CONFERENCE: We would love to have you join us!](#) Please register today

State News

5. **Kentucky:** Adult abuse registry would protect elderly and disabled
6. **Washington State:** Senate Bill seeks to open admissions at state operated residential facility; expands respite care opportunities
7. **Pennsylvania:** Quality in the Community? Disabled man kept virtual hostage
8. **North Carolina:** CenterPoint says mandate on housing for the mentally ill is too hard to meet

Federal News

9. **Senator Schumer** Proposes 'Avonte's Law'

About VOR

Make a Lasting
Impact with a
Will Bequest

Reminders:
Help VOR Grow!

to Protect Children With Autism

Social Media Update

10. Facebook Growth: 4 Key Steps

Quotable, by Thomas Foxwell Buxton

Coming soon: Speaker Features - more about the terrific speakers who will make [VOR's Annual Conference](#) great.

Calendar Reminders

VOR and YOU

1. VOR Board Member Speaks Out: Save New Jersey's centers for the disabled

The Star-Ledger * January 28, 2014 * Op/Ed by Guest Columnists Joanne St. Amand (VOR Board Member) and Sam Friedman

We each have a sister living in one of New Jersey's developmental centers for the disabled slated for closure. Our sisters are both in their 50s, and as their guardians, we have been watching out for their health, well-being and best interests since the passing of our parents.

As New Jersey moves forward, against the will of the families, to close the two developmental centers in the northern part of the state where our most severely disabled residents live, we wish to point out a few facts underlying this large-scale transfer.

[Read more, comment and share](#)

2. VOR Background, Observations, Advocacy Opportunities and Overview of the new federal rule relating to Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services

About VOR

Make a Lasting
Impact with a
Will Bequest

On January 10, 2014, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released a long-awaited final rule (regulation) about home and community-based services (HCBS) provided through Medicaid's 1915(c) HCBS Waiver program, 1915(i) HCBS State Plan Option, and 1915(k) Community First Choice.

The [final rule](#) (CMS-2249-F/CMS-2296-F) is the result of multiple proposed rules and public comments over the past five years.

The rule and related CMS fact sheets are available at www.medicaid.gov/HCBS.

Medicaid Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICFs/IID) are not directly affected by this rule; however, the rule continues to demonstrate an ideological bias against disabled people who find friendships and benefits from living together and accessing services and amenities "under one roof."

To read additional [VOR Background, Observations, Advocacy Opportunities, and an Overview of Key Provisions](#), please visit VOR's website.

3. Be a Sponsor. Get a Sponsor! **Sponsorship opportunities for VOR's Annual Conference and Initiative now available online**

Sponsors of VOR's Annual Conference and Initiative provide critical financial support for VOR's pinnacle annual event and, in exchange, benefit from tremendous recognition opportunities.

Sponsors of certain levels will receive free space in *EP Magazine*, which reaches 300,000 readers.

All Sponsors will be recognized by VOR in

our publications, social media, website and signage.

[Please consider being a sponsor today, or help make this sponsorship opportunity known to other individuals, organizations and businesses.](#)

Thank you!

4. [ANNUAL CONFERENCE: We would love to have you join us! Please register today](#)

State News

5. Kentucky: Adult abuse registry would protect elderly and disabled

The Courier Journal * January 25, 2014

While Kentucky maintains a registry of people found to have abused or neglected children, disability advocates say there is no accessible system to track personal caregivers who abuse, neglect or exploit elderly or disabled adults.

Since 2009, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services has substantiated more than 7,400 such allegations, state figures show. But most do not result in criminal charges, and the findings aren't accessible to potential employers, according to the Kentucky Protection and Advocacy Division.

After a handful of failed attempts in recently years, advocates and several lawmakers are undertaking a new push in this year's legislature with two bills to create an Adult Abuse Registry, aimed at keeping abusers from moving from job to job among group homes, personal care companies and families who hire such workers.

[**Senate Bill 98 \(SB 98\)**](#), is sponsored by Senator Sara Beth Gregory of Monticello and co-sponsored by Senator Denise Harper Angel of Louisville.

About VOR

**Make a Lasting
Impact with a
Will Bequest**

[House Bill 256 \(HB 256\)](#), is sponsored by Representative Ruth Ann Palumbo of Lexington.

[Read more, comment and share](#)

[Highlights of KY Adult Protection Registry Bill](#)

[Related Editorial in support of the Registry](#)

Related news: "KARES":

Several years ago the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) was awarded \$3 million federal grant (matched with \$1 million in state funds) to provide national fingerprint background checks for caregivers. In 2013, the Interim Joint Committee on Health and Welfare adopted the Kentucky Applicant Registry and Employment Screening Program (KARES) regulation, [906 KRS 1:190](#), to implement fingerprint background check program; KARES was officially implemented by the Governor implemented on December 10, 2013.

KARES adoption is mandatory for all state-operated and owned long-term care providers. It is voluntary for all privately-operated facilities (e.g., nursing homes and 3-bed community homes), although there is much pressure for these to fall in line. The Adult Protection Registry legislation, if passed, would make it mandatory for them. [Update: At press, it was learned that a [state bill](#) has been introduced which proposed to codify KARES regulation into state law].

6. Washington State: Senate Bill seeks to opens admissions at state operated residential facility; expands respite care opportunities

Yakima Valley School was designated as a

Nursing Facility in 1994. Currently, about 260 direct care and support staff provide 24-hour nursing care, a full spectrum of clinical and therapeutic programs, and recreation and activities to about 108 individuals who reside on campus. Yakima Valley School also offers planned respite services, which include medical, nursing, dental, therapeutic, dietary, psychiatric, and recreation programs. Beginning on August 24, 2011, new admissions, other than short-term respite or crisis stabilization services, have not been permitted to Yakima Valley School. Yakima Valley School continues to operate until the number of permanent residents reaches 16 people.

Washington State Senate Bill 5962 proposes to (a) allow new admissions to Yakima Valley School and expressly remove the new admission restrictions; and (b) remove the requirement that Yakima Valley School close when the population reaches 16 persons is removed. SB 5962 also requires that the Developmental Disabilities Administration within the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to continue to provide respite services in all state operated Residential Habilitation Centers (RHCs)(state-operated Intermediate Care Facilities and Nursing Facilities) and continue to develop respite care in the community so that clients are able to access services where they choose.

[Read the Senate Bill Report for SB 5962, which includes statements of support and opposition.](#)

[Read SB 5962](#)

**7. Pennsylvania: Quality in the Community?
Disabled man kept virtual hostage**

The Daily News (Philadelphia) * January 30, 2014

Clarence Shuford's prison was one without bars. There was no escape from the hands of his "caretaker."

Whenever the frail and timid Shuford, who is intellectually disabled, tried to leave — once by trying to jump out a second-floor window — Barbara Floods allegedly beat him with belts, sticks, electrical cords or her bare fists.

For years, Floods, 48, not only controlled Shuford, 47, she controlled his money. Because Social Security had named Floods as Shuford's "representative payee," she collected Shuford's monthly disability benefits.

Barbara Floods, who had her first child at 14 and uses several aliases - Flood, Mickens and Gary - has a long, and in some cases violent, criminal record. She'd been arrested at least seven times in Philadelphia between 1996 and 2011, when she was found guilty of possession of crack cocaine.

In 1998, she pleaded guilty to carjacking and terroristic threats, and was sentenced to a maximum of 23 months in prison. In that case, she claimed that she had a gun and threatened to blow the victim's head off, according to a court transcript.

[Read more, comment and share](#)

8. North Carolina: CenterPoint says mandate on housing for the mentally ill is too hard to meet

Winston-Salem Journal * January 26, 2014

CenterPoint Human Services, a provider, wants the state to help it get relief from a federal mandate for moving eligible people with mental health issues into independent community housing.

The initiative is the latest development in the Olmstead legal case, which involves the U.S.

Justice Department and the integration aspect of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). That aspect is intended to provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to live their lives like individuals without disabilities.

CenterPoint chairman Bryan Thompson said fulfilling the three individuals a month mandate is challenging.

Thompson acknowledges that while the settlement “is non-negotiable,” the committee has possible solutions to five “identified concerns” it has with the agreement. He said CenterPoint’s territory may be too small, particularly limited in available housing, to support the three monthly placements standard.

He said the initiative should focus foremost on those individuals “with clinical characteristics that lead to the highest probability for successful independent living.”

Thompson said CenterPoint’s concern is that the potential client list “includes a very high percentage of psychiatrically fragile individuals who are quite dependent upon the structure of their current environment.” He said they lack the skill to successfully live independently and are “at a very high risk of decompensating.”

Thompson expressed concern that transitioned individuals living by themselves may become isolated and experience increased levels of stress, as compared to their life within a supportive residential community.

[Read more, comment and share](#)

Federal News

[See also, "[VOR Background, Observations, Advocacy Opportunities and Overview of the new federal rule relating to Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services](#)," item 2, above]

9. Senator Schumer Proposes ‘Avonte’s Law’ to Protect Children With Autism

***New York Times* * January 26, 2014**

The day after the funeral of Avonte Oquendo, the boy with autism whose remains were found this month after he disappeared at age 14 from his school in October, his mother and grandmother stood with Senator Charles E. Schumer as he announced a proposal for a new law. Called "Avonte's law," it would finance a program to provide optional electronic tracking devices to be worn by children with autism.

"Avonte's running away was not an isolated incident," Mr. Schumer, Democrat of New York, said at a news conference on Sunday morning in his office on the East Side of Manhattan. "This is a high-tech solution to an age-old problem."

[Read more, comment and share](#)

Related news: [Feds to Fund Tracking Devices for Kids with Autism](#)

Social Media Update

10. Facebook Growth: 4 Key Steps

***Vertical Response* * January 21, 2014**

Editor's note: Facebook is an excellent social media tool for VOR advocates and its affiliate organizations. VOR regularly posts issues of interest to I/DD advocates and families on its [Facebook page](#), often drawing from our affiliates' Facebook pages. Excerpts from an interesting article about maximizing the potential of Facebook follows. The [original article](#) featured 7 key steps, some geared toward for-profit businesses. The following 4 steps are more universal and good ideas for non-profit organizations and individuals that maintain Facebook pages for a cause.

Remember to "Like" VOR on

[Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter!](#)

Facebook Growth: 4 Key Steps

Step #1: Identify your audience.

Step #2: Use a lot of photos

Facebook is a visual medium even though it's not a photo site like Pinterest: posts with images tend to do well with a broad swathe of users. You can post interesting photos on their own, or pair images with text and memes [idea, style or action which spreads, often as mimicry, from person to person] that are trending.

Step #3: Time your posts right

Facebook now lets you schedule your posts in advance. Consider timing photos and content that you can gather in advance to "roll out" through the week and at an opportune time of the day helping your content get seen on Facebook when people are active but competition for their eyeballs is lower, e.g., early in the morning before regular users start to post to their feeds ("sometimes publishing at 6AM will get you traction all day"), right before lunch, early evening and just before bedtime.

Step #4: Vary your content

Make sure to share more than images on your Facebook page. Consider including funny or inspiring quotes, and links to relevant articles in your industry.

Quotable

"With ordinary talent and extraordinary perseverance, all things are attainable." ~ Thomas Foxwell Buxton

=====

Calendar Reminders:

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

AHCA/NCAL's fifth annual "ID/DD Residential

[Services Providers Hill Fly-In.](#) Questions? Dana Halvorson, dhalvorson@ahca.org.

June 8, 2014

VOR 2014 Annual Conference and Initiative:

“Making it Happen: Reforming Policy and Law in Support of Person-Centered Quality and Choice”; Hyatt Regency, Washington, D.C.

Register today!

Week of June 9, 2013

VOR 2014 Congressional Initiative: Families and advocates visit Capitol Hill.

Sunday, October 5, 2014

American Health Care Association's 2014 ID/DD Residential Services Day during AHCA/NCAL's 65th Annual Convention & Expo at the Gaylord National Harbor just outside of Washington, DC. Registration will open in Spring 2014.

Archives

***Social Media Strengths: Using Facebook and Twitter to Advance Your Cause (VOR, July 2013).** [Visit VOR's website for a copy of the powerpoint presentation and an audio of the event.](#)

*** How Congress Works Webinar:** [Recorded - Listen Here.](#) Tuesday, April 23, 2013 - 12:00 pm central / 1:00 pm eastern. How Congress Works: The Basics. Hosted by Peter Kinzler and Larry Innis.

VOR
836 S. Arlington Heights Rd., #351
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007

Tel: (605) 399-1624
Toll Free: (877) 399-4867
Fax: (605) 399-1631
Email: info@vor.net

JOIN VOR. DONATE TO VOR. MAKE A DIFFERENCE