

July 3, 2015



Speaking out for people with intellectual & developmental disabilities



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**Reminders:  
Help VOR Grow!**

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## VOR Weekly News Update

*News and views for VOR Advocates*

VOR promises to empower you to make and protect quality of life choices for individuals with developmental disabilities

VOR is a one-of-a-kind nonprofit organization. If you value our work, please help support it by [donating](#) now.

[About VOR](#) \* [Refer a Friend](#) \* [Donate](#)

### VOR and YOU

1. **Monthly Donations to VOR: Giving made easy, one month at a time**

### STATE NEWS

2. **Virginia:** Virginia starts overhaul of Medicaid Waivers

3. **Maine:** Report on the Impact of conversion from Sheltered Workshops to Integrated Employment

4. **Michigan:** Michigan limits use of the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) assessment

### OTHER NEWS

5. At Home, Many Seniors Are Imprisoned by Their Independence

**QUOTABLE**, from *Senator Elizabeth Warren*

### VOR and YOU

1. **Monthly Donations to VOR: Giving made easy, one month at a time**

33 years ago. VOR was formed around a kitchen table

## About VOR

in Illinois. Who would have known that today and in the future that the fight to protect all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) would be more important now than ever! We must fight for quality care and upholding the Supreme Court Olmstead decision. Together we will continue the fight.

Please consider [committing to VOR with a monthly donation](#) and help us to continue to protect your loved ones.

Your monthly donation helps form a predictable source of income we can count on to fund our mission.

It's the easiest way to give and ensure that VOR receives your ongoing support. Your recurring monthly donation means, together, we will help families and your loved ones.

Your recurring online donation is secure and flexible. You choose the amount you wish to give each month and you can change, or cancel, your pledge at any time. Sign up now and make your first [donation](#) by credit card online.

Your monthly donation will mean so much. Please become a [Monthly Donor](#) today.

**Thank you for your loyalty and support!**

### **STATE NEWS**

#### **2. Virginia starts overhaul of Medicaid waivers for those with disabilities** [The Daily Press](#) \* June 17, 2015

More than 10,000 Virginia residents with disabilities are on waiting lists for needed services. Almost half are designated by the state's Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services as in "urgent" need.

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To meet this need and to comply with a 2012 U.S. Department of Justice settlement that ordered the state to provide more services in the community, Virginia has started a redesign of the Medicaid waiver system. ("Waiver" is the term applied to the provision of services.) The phase-in would start in mid-2016 and lead to full implementation in 2019.

[Read More...](#)

### 3. Maine: Report on the Impact of the Conversion from Sheltered Workshops to Integrated Employment

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[ACCSES](#), June 23, 2015

Key findings in the report include:

- People who had been employed in sheltered workshops have seen their hours worked per week decline. 2/3rds of those previously employed are no longer employed and those who are working earn less per week because of the reduction in the number of hours worked.
  - In 2008, the year Maine Public Law Chapter 101 went into effect, 39.5% of people with disabilities were employed. That number dropped to 34.1% by 2012.
  - Sheltered workshops in Maine were employing 558 people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) in 2001. There were no people employed in sheltered workshops in 2010. The number of people with IDD who were served in integrated employment in Maine also declined during the years from 2001 to 2014.
  - Employment data for people with intellectual disabilities in Maine show an average of only 12 hours worked per week in 2011, the lowest in the nation.
  - After the passage of the law, non-work placements increased dramatically from 550 to 3,178.
  - Level of disability was one characteristic commonly cited as a factor impeding placements for some people who are no longer employed.
- ACCSES, the voice of more than 1,200 disability service providers across the nation, urges lawmakers and the public to learn more about the impact of eliminating work opportunities.

[READ MORE...](#)

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**4. Michigan: Michigan issues guidance for use  
of the Supports Intensity Scale**  
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from the ARC Michigan [Friday Mail](#)

[The Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) is an assessment instrument from the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). The test measures an individual's support needs in personal, work-related, and social activities in order to identify and describe the types and intensity of the supports an individual requires. Some families who have been made aware of the assessment do not believe it is appropriate for all levels of disability. Others have found it helpful for person-centered planning.]

The attached file ([Waldrop v. New Mexico Human Services](#)), contains the findings from a SIS lawsuit that was filed in New Mexico. It says that if the state wants to use the SIS to determine services (which is what it is not supposed to be used for in Michigan), then individuals are entitled to advanced notice and Medicaid Fair Hearings.

Earlier this week Thomas Renwick, Director of the Bureau of Community Based Services, BHDDA, issued a clarification on use of the Michigan Supports Implementation Scale (SIS). In his memo, Mr. Renwick indicated that "The SIS should be used to enhance and support the person-centered planning process. As with all assessments, the SIS is voluntary and should not be tied to determinations of medical necessity and the authorization of behavioral health services. Supports and services cannot be denied, reduced or discontinued if a consumer and/or guardian refuse to cooperate with the assessment process."...

**OTHER NEWS**

**5. At Home, Many Seniors Are Imprisoned by  
Their Independence**

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bv Paula Span. [New York Times. June 19. 2015](#)

To keep older people in their homes, as Medicaid and other programs increasingly try to do, represents a laudable goal but an inadequate one. Aging in place also requires a variety of supportive services; creating or expanding them involves money, time and many moving parts.

Remaining at home, however difficult or isolating that becomes, gives older people a sense of control that may prove illusory, Ms. Murray said. "They feel like they have their freedom even though they don't, really."

[Read More...](#)

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### **QUOTABLE**

*on how Washington works...  
"If you don't have a seat at the table, you're probably  
on the menu..."*

*Senator Elizabeth Warren*

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#### **Calendar Reminders:**

**Sunday, October 4, 2015 \* San Antonio, Texas:**  
**[Leading the Charge for Compassionate Care: A  
Day for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities  
Residential Services Providers](#)**

Sponsored by the American Health Care Association  
and the National Council on Assisted Living

**October 21-23, 2015 \* Misericordia Campus,  
Chicago, IL A National Conference to Unite our  
Voices**

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#### **Archives:**

**\* Thursday, March 20, 2014**

**[VOR's "Regional Meetings: The Need for Advocates to Act  
Global and Local" Webinar.](#)**

**\*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.

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