This week I had the pleasure of meeting the two recipients of the NDCPD Access Scholarship for the 2013-2014 academic year. Peter Gravdahl and L’Tanya Flythe were both awarded scholarship funds by the NDCPD Consumer Advisory Council. The CAC and previous NDCPD Executive Director Dr. Bryce Fifield established the Access Scholarship to support students with significant disabilities so they could attend Minot State University. Over the past ten years NDCPD and the CAC have awarded nearly $7,000 in scholarship support to 12 students.

Having a disability and attending college can present challenges for some students. There is certainly the new adventure for some students in leaving home and living on their own. Making friends, going to class, completing assignments on time, and having a social life also can be a challenge for those who need to budget their time. In some cases, the challenges are fiscal. There are often extra costs while attending college such as having personal attendants, accessible transportation and assorted study aids. Sometimes these are covered by other funds. In many cases, they are not. And that is where the scholarship comes in.

The Students
Peter Gravdahl attends MSU and the NDCPD A-STEP (Adult Student Transition to Education Project) program. He is kept busy with a full slate of both MSU and Dakota College of Bottineau classes. He said the Access Scholarship has helped him with books and tuition. Peter also stated he will be able to keep money in his checking account too! Peter grew up in Northwood, ND and graduated from high school in 2012. He enjoys 1960-1990’s mystery and horror movies and books. He likes to write and is currently writing a book titled Roses for Henry. Peter would like to major in Special Education and someday write books and work in special education as a behavior psychologist.
CONTINUED …

L’Tanya majors in business management and marketing and is a track and field participant. She said the Access Scholarship allows her to fulfill her desire to earn a college degree and be successful as an adult. L’Tanya graduated from Minot High School in 2011. She comes from a military family who has lived in Minot for 10 years. She is a member of MSU’s Student Athlete Advisory Committee and would like to market or advertise for a corporation or a small business involving domestic or international travel.

**L’Tanya Flythe and Brent Askvig**

**Supporting the Vision**

Today more than ever, a university degree allows youth to attain better jobs and have the skills necessary for a successful career. The NDCPD CAC’s intent in this scholarship was to assure that students with disabilities could and would attend college. With tuition and other associated costs always on the rise, there was concern that some students with disabilities might forego college. The CAC did not want the financial aspect to be a large burden for these students.

NDCPD’s Vision Statement says

- **People with disabilities have the right to expect that services they receive will appropriately promote their independence, productivity, integration and inclusion.**
- **People with disabilities have the same rights as all citizens.**
- **People with all abilities will be included in all aspects of life and receive services they need.**

By assuring that some students at MSU who have significant disabilities can attend college, participate in university life, earn a degree, and become successful adults, the NDCPD CAC is not only supporting the vision, they are living the vision!

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**For more information on NDCPD’s Access Scholarship, visit [www.ndcpd.org](http://www.ndcpd.org), click on RESOURCES tab and ACCESS Scholarship link**
Medicare Beneficiaries – Don’t Be Scammed by Confusion with the Health Insurance Exchanges

by Linda Madsen, Project Director

Obama Care. Health Insurance Marketplace. Navigators. Exchanges. Could it get much more confusing? These are all terms associated with the Affordable Care Act and con artists are capitalizing on the confusion over health care reform.

On October 1, 2013, open enrollment in the health insurance exchanges started taking place. People who are uninsured or who buy their own coverage can sign up for health insurance through the Health Insurance Marketplace. Officials and advocates warn that the national health reform law is expected to open the door for identity theft and insurance scams when millions of uninsured Americans begin enrolling in coverage this fall.

Seniors are one of the major targets of telemarketing scams and the scam artists are using the term "Obama Care" to trick them. Open enrollment for the health insurance exchange starts during the same time frame as Medicare Open Enrollment in October. Scam artists will use this enrollment period to their advantage. They will target seniors and try to confuse them into believing they need to enroll in the new health insurance program and thereby trick the senior into revealing their Medicare number.

Seniors have benefited from the Affordable Care Act by receiving more help with prescription drug costs, a free annual wellness visit and prevention plan, and preventative services. However, it is important to understand that the insurance exchange does not impact their Medicare in any way and they need to hang up on people who try to tell them differently.

One scam already making the rounds involves a caller promising to send an Obama Care healthcare card if the person reveals personal and financial information. Another company has used the health reform law to promise huge savings on medical costs and scam consumers into buying fake insurance.

There are also false enrollment websites. The best way to find one's state exchange is to go to the official website at www.healthcare.gov. Do not do a search as that will turn up a lot of fake websites. Be safe and make sure you are on the correct website. Do not enter personal information in pop-up windows and be suspicious of unsolicited inquiries.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is also warning consumers not to disclose private medical or financial information in response to unsolicited calls, emails or visits and to beware of offers that seem too good to be true.

Tips to remember:

♦ The government is NOT issuing new federal health insurance cards under the health care reform law. There is NOT an Obama Care card nor are there new Medicare cards.
♦ You will NOT lose Medicare coverage. Coverage will NOT be discontinued, do NOT provide your bank account and routing number if someone tries to tell you this information is needed for a direct-deposit of entitled reimbursements.
♦ A representative from Medicare will NOT call you demanding you disclose personal financial information to continue your medical eligibility.
♦ If someone is trying to sell you “Obama Care” insurance hang up the phone or shut the door. Do NOT give out personal information to anyone who refers to health care reform or the Affordable Care Act as Obama Care, they are NOT legitimate insurance representatives.
♦ Scam artists are trying to steal your medical identity – your address, Social Security number, Medicare number and medical history. Do NOT give this information out to people who call or show up at your door trying to sell you insurance.
Continued …

Report anything suspicious! If you suspect fraud, report it! Call the Health Insurance Marketplace consumer call center at 1-800-318-2596, or contact local, state, or federal law enforcement agencies or the state insurance department. If you suspect identity theft, or feel like you gave your personal information to someone you shouldn’t have, call your local police department and the Federal Trade Commission’s ID Theft Hotline at 1-877-438-4338. Visit www.ftc.gov/idtheft to learn more about identity theft.

The ND Senior Medicare Patrol provides Medicare beneficiaries with the information they need to PROTECT themselves from Medicare errors, fraud and abuse; DETECT potential errors, fraud and abuse; and REPORT their concerns. SMPs use trained senior volunteers to help educate and empower older adults in the fight against health care fraud. ND SMP helps beneficiaries with questions, concerns or complaints about potential fraud and abuse issues, as well as providing information and speakers for your facility. ND SMP can be contacted at 1-800-233-1737 or 858-3580.

Great Plains Interdisciplinary Diagnostic Clinic (GPIC)

The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities was recently awarded funding from the Department of Health’s Children’s Special Health Services for the Great Plains Interdisciplinary Autism Diagnostic Clinic (GPIC). This funding will allow professionals ranging in the fields of Occupational Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, Education and Pediatric Medicine to work together as an interdisciplinary team to evaluate children, aged 18 months to 21 years, who are suspected of having an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

GPIC was awarded monies to cover six diagnostic clinics over the course of two years in the towns of Minot and Williston. Previously, the clinics were held in Minot and Jamestown. However, team members recognized the growing need for evaluations and services in the Western part of the state, particularly Williston.

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) is a complex neuro-developmental disorder with prevalence rates as high as 1 in 88 children identified with an ASD. With this funding, more children will have access to a diagnostic evaluation in North Dakota. Referrals can be made by parents, educators, or medical professionals for children suspected of having an ASD. To make a referral or for more information on the clinics, please contact Hilory Liccini at 1-800-233-1737 or hilory.liccini@minotstateu.edu.
The ND Disability Health II Project is excited to announce the development of two new videos promoting accessibility of health care facilities and emergency shelters. In partnership with KAT Communications of Bismarck, the videos were produced and disseminated to more than 300 health care facilities throughout North Dakota. Dissemination plans also include emergency shelter personnel over the next few months.

The videos emphasize the message that “accessibility is more than just a ramp”. It is often assumed that a ramp and an automatic door opener makes a facility accessible to all people, however, this is only part of accessibility. Many people with disabilities experience barriers to accessing health care including lack of braille or large print, no designated relief area for service animals, or no sign language interpreters. Often overlooked are people with “hidden” disabilities such as mental illness, deaf or hard of hearing, and intellectual disabilities.

The videos share solutions, one of which is adopting the principles of universal design. The term “universal design” was coined by architect Ronald L. Mace to describe the concept of designing all products and the built environment to be aesthetic and usable to the greatest extent possible by everyone, regardless of their age, ability, or status in life. Think about all of the people that benefit from curb cuts: a mother pushing a stroller, an elderly person using a walker, a man with a broken leg using crutches, a child with cerebral palsy using a wheelchair, a woman recovering from a stroke with an unsteady gait. These are all situations, some temporary or permanent, in which universal design is helpful.

Making areas accessible does not always mean high cost. Sometimes small, inexpensive changes can make big differences. For example, adjusting the door pressure so the door opens more easily, printing materials using large font, and designating a relief area for services animals greatly increases accessibility at little to no cost. In addition, pre-visit planning done before appointments can identify accommodations needed during the appointment to better prepare the medical staff and the patient.

Scan these QR codes with your cell phone. You may need to download an application from your “store”. Once downloaded, view the videos and learn more about accessibility and the principles of universal design.

Share this information with health care facilities and emergency shelter personnel in your area. Project staff from the ND Disability Health II Project are available to conduct free, on-site accessibility assessments or provide training and/or information to any site within North Dakota. Contact the Disability Health staff at the ND Center for Persons with Disabilities by calling 1-800-233-1737, or visit the project website at www.ndcpd.org/health.
Medical Home Education in North Dakota
by Rhonda Weathers, Project Director

Medical Home Education in North Dakota (MHEND) is a two-year grant funded project from the ND Department of Health Children Special Health Services (CSHS) to North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities at Minot State University. The MHEND project will increase the capacity and knowledge of service providers, social workers, nurses, educators, and families with children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) about Medical Home to assure that all children and youth with special health care needs receive the coordinated care they need.

The self-study, online course titled The Fundamentals of Medical Home for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs, has five modules:

1. Care Coordination
2. Medical Home
3. Health Benefits Counseling
4. Healthy Transitions
5. State and Local Resources for CYSHCN & Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (ID/DD) and their families.

This course will familiarize learners with the basic components of medical home systems and coordinated care for CYSHCN & ID/DD. The MHEND project provides an opportunity for education; creates a network of resources and agencies interested in Medical Home across ND; and, provides involvement of focus groups about Medical Home in communities across ND.

To participate or for more information contact: Rhonda Weathers by calling 1-800-233-1737 ext.3821 or emailing her at rhonda.l.weathers@minotstateu.edu.
Upcoming Trainings

**Promotion of Healthy Oral Health Lifestyles for Individuals with Disabilities across the Life Span**
by Christina A. Demopoulos, DDS, MPH, NSHD State Dental Director/UNLV School of Dental Medicine

November 4 from 2:00-4:00 pm Central Time
Fee: $30.00 per site

Make checks payable to Minot State University and mail to:
Vickie Brabandt
Minot State University
Box 36, 500 University Ave West
Minot, ND 58707

Description: Oral health is an integral part of general health, hence, maintaining a healthy oral health lifestyle is critical to the reduction in mortality/morbidity that is associated with unhealthy behaviors. Access to a health home can provide the necessary healthcare for individuals with disabilities which can further support health behaviors. Program outcomes include:

- Explain oral health and nutritional evidence-based practices that support health/health behaviors and the supplemental management of chronic diseases.
- Explain the importance of preventive oral health practices and steps in promoting routine oral healthcare.
- Identify diet, nutrition, and oral healthcare resources for families, caregivers, professionals, and advocates of individuals with disabilities.
- Identify practical methods of helping to develop/maintain a healthy oral health lifestyle for infants, children, adults, and the geriatric population including motivational interviewing techniques.
- Discuss behavioral support strategies including desensitization techniques for people who are apprehensive or resistive to dental care.

For additional information, email or call
Mary Mercer, mary.mercer@minotstateu.edu, (800) 233-1737 or
Vickie Brabandt, Vickie.brabandt@minotstateu.edu, (800) 233-1737

**NDCPD’s “Ram Good Job” Award**

NDCPD’s “Ram Good Job Award is given to staff members to recognize them for going above and beyond. This award is given by the preceding month’s award recipient and honors the staff member’s work to enhance the lives of people with disabilities and further NDCPD’s mission. Recent recipients are below:

**Suzanne Blessum**
August Recipient

**Cheryl Merck**
September Recipient
The Collaborator is the quarterly newsletter for the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD). NDCPD is a University of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities in Education, Research, and Services at Minot State University. It is part of a network of similar programs at universities throughout the United States.

Our mission:
The mission of NDCPD is to provide service, education, and research with empowers communities to welcome, value and support the well-being and quality of life for people of all ages and abilities.

Vision Statement:
❖ People with disabilities have the right to expect that services they receive will appropriately promote their independence, productivity, integrations, and inclusion.
❖ People with disabilities have the same rights as all citizens
❖ People with all abilities will be included in all aspects of life and receive services they need.

Goal Areas:
❖ Inclusive Communities
❖ Workforce Development
❖ Self Determination
❖ Healthy Citizens

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