

the **Vision** and **Voice** of the San Francisco IHSS Public Authority



CIRCULATION 34,000 IHSS CONSUMERS AND WORKERS

Worldwide Disability Rights Movement

“got RIGHTS? Fulfilling the Promise of Human and Civil Rights for People with Disabilities”

The San Francisco IHSS Public Authority is trying to **MAKE REAL** the promise of human and civil rights for people with disabilities. “Rights” expressed in law are empty words unless the society that proclaims them actually “delivers” such rights. How does the Public Authority presume to aim at delivering a U.S. Constitutional right? In everything we do—from mere philosophical words to hiring

and sending employees to certain IHSS consumers with emergency needs—we are tangibly supporting people in obtaining or maintaining their unique level of ability to live **INTEGRATED** in the life and community they choose.

IHSS is not the only support service that allows independent living for people who have lost some capacity for self-care. But being able to hire a person of your own choice to assist you with

getting out of bed and getting dressed **IS** a crucial support for life in the community, where people are more likely to engage in activities of personal interest than if they lived in a nursing home. However good an institution might be at caring for people, the necessary restrictions of institutional life impinge on the daily individual freedoms most of us take for granted: What time do I have to wake up? What’s for lunch? Can I

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photo by Terry Schmitt

The got RIGHTS? symposium featured a spirited dialogue between those on the dais and those in the overflow crowd.

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The San Francisco IHSS Public Authority provides five major services:

- We operate a **Central Registry** that matches independent providers (IP's) of home care services looking for work with IHSS consumers who need to hire someone to assist them.
- Through our **On-Call Program**, we provide immediate assistance to consumers in urgent need of personal care when their regular provider is not available, they suddenly need a worker but don't yet have one, or when they're discharged from the hospital or some other facility without anyone scheduled to help them make the transition back to their own residence.

In addition to these services, we also sponsor:

- **Worker trainings.** In March 2004, the Public Authority formally launched its Worker Training Program. The program includes a Homecare Skills Development Training, Intensive Homecare Training (IHT) and a series of continuing education workshops. Workers receive a stipend for all trainings attended.
- **Consumer conferences.** One of the Public Authority's most popular programs is its *Where there's a Will, there's a Way* conference. At this free, consumer-oriented event, older adults and people with disabilities explore and discuss issues relating to home care. In workshops,

What We Do... We Do for You!

- We are the “**employer of record**” for the IP workforce. This means that we are formally appointed to negotiate wages and benefits with SEIU United Healthcare Workers (UHW), the union that represents our home care workers.
- We offer benefits for well over **14,000 IP's** through our health and dental plans. Currently, almost **9,800 IP's** are enrolled in one or both plans. Our Benefits Coordinator, and the Administrative Assistant who helps her, handle on average over 1000 calls and requests a month relating to Coverage, Eligibility Status, Enrollment, Insurance Cards, Termination Service, Reinstatement and other services for IP health and dental benefits.
- We **educate** the community and various policy-makers (e.g., Board of Supervisors) about IHSS and consumer-directed services and **advocate** for consumers, their workers and related causes.

The mission of San Francisco's IHSS Public Authority is to provide and promote a service delivery model of consumer-directed in-home support that maximizes the potential of older adults and people with disabilities to live independently and participate in their communities.

IHSS recipients can learn about how to interview potential providers, how to manage their workers and avoid possible problems, and how to handle all the paperwork involved in the process. Our 5th conference was held at St. Mary's Cathedral Conference Center in September 2006 and attracted hundreds of consumers and providers.

- **Forums and Symposiums.** In October 2006, we held our first Consumer Open Forum Luncheon for over two dozen IHSS consumers and several of their providers at the Mission Creek Senior Community. Consumers raised questions about and spoke on issues, including assessment of hours, income eligibility, training of workers, communication/language problems and transportation challenges. In July 2007, we sponsored the *got RIGHTS? Fulfilling the Promise of Human and Civil Rights for People with Disabilities* symposium at the Hilton San Francisco. The symposium attracted over 200 federal, state and Bay Area policymakers, legislators, IHSS directors, agency representatives, consumer advocates, home care workers, and city and state department officials, who came together to share ideas about how best to fulfill our nation's legal and moral obligations to people with disabilities.

For more information, please contact the Public Authority at 415-243-4477 (TTY: 415-243-4430) or visit our website at www.sfibsspa.org.

Governing Body

The Public Authority Governing Body determines policy and makes legally binding decisions on the Authority's behalf. Its members are both older (55+) and younger consumers, public agency representatives and a worker representative. Board members during 2007:

Anita Aaron	DAAS Commissioner	3/2006-7/2007
Vincent Behan	Senior Consumer	3/1998-3/2007
Mike Boyd	Younger Consumer	
Sharon Brunn	Senior Consumer	Treasurer
Rosie Byers	SEIU-UHW Representative	
Kelly Dearman	DHS Commissioner	
Elizabeth Grigsby	MDC Representative	
Elva M. Hernandez	Worker Representative	
Jim Illig	DPH Commissioner	President
José Quintana	Worker Representative	3/2004-3/2007
Patricia Webb	Younger Consumer	Secretary
Alice Wong	Younger Consumer	Vice President

(Note: Dept. of Aging & Adult Services=DAAS, Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers=SEIU-UHW, Dept. of Human Services=DHS, Mayor's Disability Council=MDC, Dept. of Public Health=DPH)

Who We Are

Staff

The Public Authority's executive, administrative, operations and program staff operate the Central Registry, manage fiscal affairs, monitor state and local policy affecting IHSS, and collaborate with other organizations to improve IHSS for San Francisco consumers and workers. During 2007 they were:

Shelia J. Auzenne	Support Services/On-Call Counselor
Donna Calame	Executive Director
Luis Calderon	Project Coordinator
Shirley Chan	Benefits Coordinator
Rachel Cukierman	Fiscal & Operations Manager (<i>Left for New Position 9/07</i>)
Yvonne Cunningham	Program Assistant/Receptionist
Cheryl Durley	Payroll Coordinator/Administrative Assistant
Paul Dunn	Training Specialist
Vladimir Etalis	Support Services/On-Call Counselor
Claudia Grubler	Support Services Counselor
Patrick Hoctel	Executive Assistant
Esther Libenstein	Support Services Counselor (<i>Retired 3/07</i>)
Carolina Martinez	Receptionist/Admin. Asst. (<i>Left for New Position 8/07</i>)
Sophie Milton	On-Call Coordinator (<i>Left for Graduate School 6/07</i>)
Amy Mo	Support Services/On-Call Counselor
Laura Molina	Support Services/On-Call Counselor
María A. Olivares	Program Manager
Irina Selskaya	Support Services/On-Call Counselor
Moon Van	Support Services Counselor

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enroll in a college class today?
Can I take my friend to
dinner and a movie tonight?

Over 200 people from around California attended the *got RIGHTS?* forum planned by the IHSS Public Authority. Mayor Newsom proclaimed July 19th “Got Rights Day,” and attendees included federal, state and Bay Area policymakers and legislators, agency and union representatives, city and state department officials, IHSS directors, consumer advocates and home health care providers.

A major inspiration for *got RIGHTS?* was the *U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and the growing global movement to recognize that disability is inherently part of human experience. (Although over 100 countries have now signed on to the *U.N. Convention*, our own U.S. State Department has



photo by Terry Schmitt

Conference attendee Jene McCovey from Humboldt County comments during the first question-and-answer session.

declined, citing “the complexity of regulations and enforcement mechanisms needed to ensure equal opportunity for those with disabilities.”)

Two conversations followed the keynote address by former California Department of Rehabilitation Director Catherine Campisi. The first focused on *The Experience of People with Disabilities Within the Context of the Human and Civil Rights Movements* and was moderated by Alice Wong

(Center for Personal Assistance Services at UCSF), with Alana Theriault (Express Independence), Carol Patterson (Berkeley Mental Health) and Mary Lou Breslin (Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund). The second addressed *The Challenge of Delivering Full Human and Civil Rights to People with Disabilities Through Policies and Programs*. Paul Longmore (Institute on Disability at SF State University) moderated, with Mike Oxford (Topeka, KS Independent Living Resource Center), Rachel Stewart (California Health Incentives Improvement Project) and Tom Heinz (East Bay Innovations).

Response to the conference was overwhelmingly positive. Disability rights activist and consultant Bill Bruckner wrote that “*got RIGHTS?* [highlighted] the issues of health care, benefits, housing and employment rights, without which people with disabilities will remain in institutions or homeless, with



photo by Terry Schmitt

The Conversation I presenters share a lighthearted moment as moderator Alice Wong (left) keeps the discussion moving.



photo by Terry Schmitt

Conversation II moderator Paul Longmore (left) takes a question from the audience.

their human rights and freedom of choice systematically violated every day. The panelists brought up some refreshing approaches for working toward these rights, and...renewed motivation to continue this work in these difficult times.” Meg Cooch, Planning for Elders Executive Director, commented, “The

conference was incredibly interesting because it offered a different framework to think about disability and service provision. [Speakers] highlighted the movements we have made toward equity and increased access and how much more needs to be done.” Susan Mizner, Mayor’s Office on Disability Director, noted that “*got RIGHTS?* was such a wonderful event. ... The disability community

has learned so much from, and benefited so much from, the civil rights struggles and victories from other marginalized groups. *The conference also planted the seed that the disability community may be in the best position to move us all forward on the concept of cultural and economic rights* (emphasis added). We are well-positioned to blow-up the ‘welfare state’ mentality, in which everyone is a supplicant and has to jump through a million hoops to get basic economic support and health care.”

Perhaps most importantly, many consumers, agency representatives and officials expressed a desire to get together after *got RIGHTS?* and continue these conversations and strategizing. Hopefully, the work begun by the conference will, as one participant put it, “have ripple effects long into the future.” 🙌



photo by Terry Schmitt

Public Authority Executive Director Donna Calame (right) greets founding board member Ethel Richardson at the July 19th event.



photo by Terry Schmitt

The registration tables outside the symposium were a center of activity for most of the afternoon.

The Center for Personal Assistance Services (CPAS) is based out of the Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences at University of California at San Francisco (UCSF). CPAS provides research, training, distribution of information and technical assistance on issues of personal assistance services (PAS) in the U.S.

PAS refer to help provided to people with disabilities to assist them with tasks essential for daily living (e.g., bathing, dressing, toileting and eating) by home care workers, such as the approximately 15,000 IHSS workers in San Francisco. PAS, along with assistive technology (AT), such as wheelchairs, hearing aids and text readers, help people with disabilities to participate in activities at home, at work and in the community.

At the Center, the staff, which includes Public Authority Governing Body Vice President Alice Wong (see accompanying article), works on issues involving the relationship between formal and informal PAS and caregiving support; the role of AT in improving PAS; policies and programs, barriers and new models for PAS in the home and community; PAS workforce development, recruitment, retention and benefits; and Workplace PAS.



photo by Terry Schmitt

Alice Wong served as moderator for the first conversation at the recent got RIGHTS? symposium.

helping someone with eating, drinking or using the restroom.


A Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee of PAS users, disability advocates, business leaders, independent living center leaders and academics provides guidance to the Center, its faculty and staff, and its many projects. Committee members include Professor Paul Longmore from the Institute on Disability at San Francisco State University (SFSU), Sonoma

Center Stage

CPAS Improves Lives for Consumers and Workers

Workplace Personal Assistance Services is gaining momentum now in the disability rights movement, as many, especially younger, people with disabilities push for their right to work and reasonable accommodation in the workplace. Workplace PAS may include task-related assistance, such as readers, interpreters, helping with lifting or reaching, re-assignment of non-essential duties to co-workers and other help related to performing work tasks. Workplace PAS may also include personal care-related assistance, such as

County IHSS Public Authority Manager Michael Humphrey, National Council on Disability Executive Director Michael C. Collins and Fernando Torres-Gil from UCLA's Social Welfare and Policy Studies Department.

For more information on the Center for Personal Assistance Services, please visit its website at www.PAScenter.org. You can also contact the Center by email at PAS@ucsf.edu or phone at 866-PAS-9577 (866-727-9577), 415-502-7190 or TDD: 415-502-5216. 

Behind the Scenes at CPAS

My name is Alice Wong and I've been an IHSS consumer for over 10 years. I also work as a research assistant at the Center for Personal Assistance Services at UC San Francisco. Many of my friends ask me what I actually do day-to-day. I tell them that I help write reports and collect data on various state and federal programs about Personal Assistance Services (PAS), such as Home and Community-Based Medicaid waivers and Home Health and Personal Care Services programs.

Currently, I am working on two projects at the Center: PAS workforce and Home and Community-Based PAS. I look for information from published journals and reports and from state and federal agencies and collect that data for use in reports for our Center. I just finished a report that looks at 13 bills from various states regarding the wages and benefits of home and personal care workers.

My colleagues examine issues and write reports on topics such as expenditures and number of participants in various long-term care programs, including information on PAS consumers and the PAS workforce. I help organize this information by state for our website. For example, we have data and statistics (nationally and for California) available on our website about the number of people with a disability in California and the number of home and personal care workers in California. We also have other reports on a number of subjects that might interest consumers and the PAS workforce.

All of this information is available free on our website (www.pascenter.org). If you are not able to get on the Internet and or have trouble using our website, you can call or write my colleague, Lewis Kraus, Director for Training and Dissemination (InfoUse, 2560 Ninth Street, Suite 320, Berkeley, CA 94710-2566; Voice: (510) 549-6520, Fax: (510) 549-6512 or email: lkraus@infouse.com).

If you do use the Internet, here are a few links from our website that might interest you...

Disability Information, Data and Statistics on California:

www.pascenter.org/state_based_stats/index.php?state=california

For consumers of PAS services: How to be an employer of a Personal Assistant (PA).

www.pascenter.org/pas_users/questions_and_answers.php

For more resources for PAS consumers, go to: www.pascenter.org/pas_users/index.php

For the PAS workforce, including IHSS home care workers: Estimated number of PAS workers and workers per persons with self-care difficulty in California, 2005.

www.pascenter.org/state_based_stats/acs_workforce_state_2005.php?title=Number%20of%20Home%20and%20Personal%20Care%20Workers&state=california

PAS Workforce Library: a list of important publications related to the PAS Workforce with links to abstracts and information about obtaining the complete publication.

www.pascenter.org/publications/library.php?project=workforce

For more resources for the PAS workforce: www.pascenter.org/pas_workforce/index.php



Disaster Planning for You

Public Authority Partners with Institute at SF State

We need your help to plan how to assist IHSS consumers when a disaster, such as an earthquake, shakes all of us up. The IHSS Public Authority is working with the Institute for Civic and Community Engagement (ICCE) at San Francisco State University (SFSU) on two projects related to your disaster preparedness.

The first is a **telephone survey** designed to find out how well you have planned for yourself at this point. Randomly selected consumers will be called and asked to participate in the survey, which is totally voluntary and should only take about 20 minutes to complete. Your responses over the phone to trained SFSU graduate students will provide us with valuable information on the level of IHSS consumer preparedness *and* on what gaps exist when planning to meet your needs. We hope that at least 250 consumers take the time to answer this phone survey.

The second project involves a **home visit**, also conducted by SFSU graduate students. A letter, from Public Authority Executive Director Donna Calame, was sent to over 10,000 IHSS consumers, asking them to allow a face-to-face visit to learn about why enrolling in the *Vial of Life* program is important. The letter included a tear-off permission slip with a return envelope. We want your IHSS home care worker to be present for this onetime visit, where trained students will describe both the *Vial of Life* program and the *Disaster Registry*—both ways for emergency personnel to have information to assist you. Joining the *Disaster Registry* means firefighters should have a list of people with disabilities to check on when a catastrophe occurs. IHSS consumers who take time for a home visit will receive a small gift. Again, the visit is completely voluntary. ICCE and the Authority hope that a lot of you—at least 1000—give permission to schedule a home visit. *(If you would like to be considered for a visit, please call ICCE's Kathy Dalle-Molle at 415-338-3283.)*

When Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans two years ago, its older residents were hit the hardest; 78% of those who died in the storm and its aftermath were over 51 years of age. The Public Authority wants to ensure that such an unnecessary tragedy never occurs in San Francisco. We want to help IHSS consumers be as ready as possible for such an event and for us to have practical plans in place to assist you when you need it most.



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