

ANCOR CELEBRATES MEDICAID TURNING 40!

Saluting the Difference That Medicaid Has Made in the Lives of People with Disabilities

The Health and Human Services headquarters building in Washington, D.C., is dedicated to Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, a giant in advocating on behalf of others. A 1976 quote from him graces the main entrance and reads: 'The moral test of a government is how it treats those who are at the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the aged; and those who are in the shadow of life, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped.' Medicaid is the touchstone of our society's commitment to its citizens, regardless of circumstance. Its 40-year track record of success, filling in where no other support system exists, is truly remarkable. It's time we celebrate that success without reservation. Happy Birthday Medicaid!
Renee Pietrangelo, ANCOR CEO.

Success demands a lot, but it is partnership and collaboration that make our communities and our society at large relevant and enduring and our work rich. Medicaid is a solid example of partnership and collaboration between the federal government, the states and local communities, private providers and people with disabilities and their families. Medicaid is a tribute to the common and important values that drive this collaboration, often against all odds. Happy 40th Birthday Medicaid. *Fred Romkema is the ANCOR President and Executive Director of Northern Hills Training Center in Spearfish, South Dakota.*

Medicaid works and has worked for all of us for 40 years. Four decades of supporting families, children, seniors and persons with disabilities. As a program - it has been a great partnership between the states and the federal government. Just as importantly, Medicaid is about the ties that bind us as a society. It is about our obligations to each other. It is about the importance of improving the lives of millions of Americans with dis-



abilities. As a statement about the importance of caring for all of our citizens, Medicaid has succeeded magnificently. I am proud to be part of the ANCOR membership that speaks-up for persons with disabilities. At the MENTOR Network we are also proud to take up the challenge to support and refine Medicaid for another 40 years of caring. *David Doth is Vice-President for REM Minnesota Operations of the Mentor Network.*

Wow! It's hard to believe that Medicaid is 40 years old! ANCOR members were some of the first to see its value as a funding source for people with disabilities at a time when many advocates were warning people away from the program because it was too 'medically-oriented.' With the help of a lot of innovative providers, State DD Directors and some really good people within HCFA (now CMS), we convinced others to instead modify the rules so that Medicaid would become a valuable resource for personalized community supports. Creative use of existing definitions enabled providers first to develop small ICFs/MR for four or more people and then to embrace the Home and Community-based Waiver program when it came along. I don't know what we would have done without it! It is Medicaid that has almost single-handedly supported the system of community services and growing reliance on the private sector! *Joni Fritz, former Executive Director, worked for ANCOR from 1972-1999 and is presently ANCOR's Wage and Hour Specialist.*

As a newcomer to the field in 1989, many of the people we supported in Maryland already had access to reasonable health care thanks to Medicaid and the waiver (although a far cry from when our first participants joined our program in 1947). However, the living options in the community were still limited primarily to traditional group home arrangements. In the 16 years I have been associated with supporting people with barriers to independent living, I have seen the changes Medicaid has made in their lives. With the expansion and restructuring of the waiver today, Medicaid empowers people so they can choose from a variety of community options. This expansion of options is the genius of the system. *Martin Lampner is CFO of The Chimes, one of ANCOR's oldest member agencies for over 30 years.*

Happy Birthday Medicaid and thanks for being born!!! Because you came into the lives of people with disabilities all over America from Maine to California, from Alaska to Hawaii you have also given new life to thousands of Americans who never had a life! Your birth allowed Norman to become a school crossing guard. Before you were born, he lived in impoverished, restricted circumstances. Your birth allowed Pauline and her friends to move from an institution built at the turn of the last century to their own homes where they work at real jobs for real pay, volunteer in hospitals and contribute to the economic and social well being of their communities. Some thought you would be but another child who failed to thrive—you proved them wrong and have achieved the acclaim of a nation of people with disabilities and of those of us who care about them. May you live forever! *Bonnie-Jean Brooks is President/CEO of OHI in Hermon, Maine, a past President of ANCOR, and an ANCOR member for over 25 years.*

(continued on back)

Birthday Greetings and Well Wishes from ANCOR Providers

Birthday Greetings *(continued)*

It is an honor to participate in the 40th birthday celebration of Medicaid. Medicaid is an example of a compassionate, successful state/federal program. An example of the giving, caring attitude of the American citizenry.

An example of an ever evolving program that looks to enhance the freedom of citizens with disabilities. Happy Birthday Medicaid! *Than Johnson is CEO of CRSI in Urbana, Ohio, ANCOR's immediate past president, and currently President of the Ohio Provider Resource Association.*

You are truly amazing! Unfortunately, you have usually been taken for granted and now you are being unfairly criticized. The fact is, most of us would simply not be here, if it were not for you. It is hard to image how different our lives, and those we serve, would be without your existence these past 40 years. Since I know you well, a couple of words of 'friendly' advice to you birthday. You have just taken on more than you can handle and done the work others should be doing. Take some time and reflect on what is really important to you and focus your priorities. Finally, please understand that not all who 'want to be your friend and help you, have your best interests in mind.' Thank you and I am confident you will take the necessary steps that enable you to continue being a vital resource for our most vulnerable citizens. *Ken Lovan, Vice President of Government Relations for ResCare, ANCOR's Vice President for Government Relations, and a 20-year member of ANCOR.*

On its 40th birthday, Medicaid continues to be the best program that ever happened for people with disabilities, providing them with essential supports that allow them to live in and be part of their communities. We are at a crossroads regarding our national priorities and whether or not we will maintain this important program that is the life-blood for the nearly 300 people our organiza-

tion supports. There is not likely a person in this country that does not know someone who depends on Medicaid for his or her day-to-day supports. Medicaid works, and maintaining Medicaid is a moral issue! *Rod Braun is Executive Director of Christian Opportunity Center in Pella, Iowa, a former ANCOR Board member, whose agency has been a member of ANCOR for 20 years.*

Medicaid's anniversary comes at an especially crucial time as Congress faces a requirement to make up to \$10 billion in cuts to the program over the next five years, states Jim Richardson, ANCOR's Medicaid Subcommittee Co-chair. It seems to me that most of the news I tend to read about Medicaid is negative, when, in reality, Medicaid, more than any other government program, has improved the lives of millions of persons with severe mental retardation and other developmental disabilities. I believe it is vital for me, and other ANCOR members, to share 'good news' stories about Medicaid so that others can hear that Medicaid makes a tremendous difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities. *Jim Richardson is President of Cedar Lake in Louisville, Kentucky, serves as ANCOR's Medicaid Subcommittee Chair, and has been an ANCOR member since 1978.*

For thirty years I have seen the journey of the Medicaid program for people with disabilities....through the times of NAPRFMR to ANCOR. The journey has resulted in new opportunities for people with disabilities. In the 70's Medicaid staff came from Washington to Minnesota and we "walked the talk" about people living in 1-6 person homes in the community, being involved with their family, going to workshops and participating in life more fully than it was possible in an institution. Today we are working to continue that journey of inclusion. Bob Wardwell, former HCFA Medicaid Director, would come to ANCOR meetings and encourage us as providers to keep on the journey. He shared his passion for people with us and

we knew that there was a chance that our ideas would be heard and change was possible. Life is better today for people with disabilities because Medicaid was a philosophy of supports and not a fixed method that had to be unchanged through the decades. Therefore people, one at a time, could participate more fully in life. May we never lose the ability to innovate so all Americans can participate in living the American dream. *Wayne Larson is Executive Director of Mount Olivet Rolling Acres, Inc. in Victoria, Minnesota, a current member of the ANCOR Board of Directors, and a member of ANCOR for 30 years.*

For those of us, in the MR/DD community, who have been with Medicaid almost from its beginning, we recognize Medicaid as the cornerstone of the progress that we have made. Medicaid forced strict standards of care in the ICFs-MR in the 1970s which, in large measure, prompted the first wave of deinstitutionalization. The lack of funding to support individuals in the community then generated the support for the initial phase of Home and Community Based Waivers. Advocates, providers such as ANCOR members, and state officials have led and been led by Medicaid to change the landscape and possibilities for individuals with MR/DD. It has been a productive partnership for 40 years—we look forward to the next 40 years and the potential that we will realize. *Jennifer Fidura was previously Deputy Commissioner of Virginia's Department of MH/MR/SAS, is now President/CEO of Fidura and Associates, and serves on ANCOR's Board of Representatives.*

Thanks to Tammi and Scott for sharing their photo with us. Both live in the community due to Medicaid supports. Thanks and happy birthday Medicaid!

Birthday Greetings and Well Wishes from ANCOR Providers