



# Tuesday Morning Memo

**Tuesday, March 23, 2010**

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## **WHAT JUST HAPPENED?**

Earlier today, President Obama signed health care reform into law. After a several days of intense debate, the U.S. House of Representatives voted in favor of the health care reform proposal. It will take some time to get a better idea of how the proposal will impact people with developmental disabilities. However, here is a summary of a few of the major provisions:

- Private health insurance cannot exclude people due to pre-existing conditions;
- Private insurance policies cannot have annual or lifetime benefit caps;
- Expand Medicaid eligibility to individuals with incomes of up to 133% of the federal poverty level;
- Provide funding to help improve training of health professionals on how to more effectively serve people with disabilities;
- Require collection of data related to access of people with disabilities to primary health services;
- Require prevention programs to include focus on people with disabilities;
- Increase federal share of Medicaid – Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) – for home and community based services and during periods of economic downturn;
- Create a national long-term care insurance program through the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) Act. This will assist many people in meeting long-term care needs by providing a daily cash benefit without the need to “spend down” into Medicaid eligibility;
- Lessen the institutional bias in Medicaid through the Community First Choice Option that would encourage states to help cover personal care services under a state optional service plan instead of through the waiver system by offering a 6% increase in federal matching funds for such services.

The dust is still settling on all of this. As things become more clear, The Arc-Wisconsin will provide updates in these memos and on The Arc-Wisconsin website at: <http://www.arc-wisconsin.org/>

## **SPRING TRAINING**

The Brewers aren't the only ones deeply involved in spring training. Information about several training opportunities has been posted on The Arc-Wisconsin website at:

<http://www.arc-wisconsin.org/arcwisconsin/upcoming+events+trainings+and+presentations/default.asp>

Recent additions include:

- *Head Toe Physical Assessment For Non-Professionals*, March 31, Sturtevant
- *InfoShare – The Art of Living Creatively*, April 30, Madison
- *Caring For People With Diabetes*, May 26, Milwaukee