



Health Law Unit
199 Water Street
New York, NY 10038
T (212) 577-3300
www.legal-aid.org

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Senator Brad Hoylman
322 Eighth Ave., Ste. 1700
New York, NY 10001

Blaine (Fin) V. Fogg
President

Seymour W. James, Jr.
Attorney-in-Chief

Adriene L. Holder
Attorney-in-Charge
Civil Practice

Rebecca A. Novick
Supervising Attorney
Health Law Unit

Re: Information and training on Long term care options for
Medicare and Medicaid recipients

Dear Senator Hoylman

We are writing to communicate important information for your elderly and disabled constituents who live independently in your community with home care through their Medicaid and/or Medicare benefits or who may be eligible to receive home care. New York State and the Federal Government have authorized a pilot program to establish the Fully Integrated Duals Advantage (FIDA) plans in New York City, Long Island, and Westchester. One hundred thousand individuals in New York City and Nassau County have already received announcement letters about this program. FIDA will impact how these vulnerable constituents access all of their medical services. The Legal Aid Society is part of the Independent Consumer Advocacy Network (ICAN) and we would like to come provide information and training to your staff as soon as possible so they can advise your constituents during the implementation process which is going on now. We will also provide an overview of all of the Medicaid and Medicare programs available to help your constituents get care at home.

Some important facts:

1. *Not all seniors or disabled individuals will be affected in the same way* – only adults over 21 receiving both Medicaid and Medicare who have or need up to 120 days of home attendant help are eligible to be automatically enrolled in the FIDA program.
2. *Enrollment is passive* – Affected individuals have to affirmatively opt-out or they will be placed in a FIDA plan as early as April 1
3. *Appeals and trouble-shooting is different for the FIDA plans* – The pilot is pioneering a new appeals system that has borrowed from our Medicaid NYS Fair Hearing process and the Medicare Federal appeals process.
4. *All out-of-pocket costs are eliminated* – except for amounts related to Medicaid spend-down budgeting, the FIDA plans will not charge recipients any premiums, deductibles, co-pays or co-insurance.

5. *Alphabet Soup of Options* – your constituents are currently getting solicitations form FIDA plans, MLTC and Medicare Advantage Special Needs Plans – each of these options have different characteristics and choosing the right one can be challenging.

These are just a few of the new and/or complex things to learn and the Health Law Unit of The Legal Aid Society would like to come provide more detailed information and training to your constituent services staff and community groups that provide services to your constituents.

We need your help getting the word out during the implementation phase that is taking place now through July 2015. We have developed separate trainings for advocates and caregivers/community members. Please contact Cynthia Hackett at cmhackett@legal-aid.org to schedule a free training before June 30, 2015.

Sincerely,



Adriene Holder
Attorney-in-Charge
Civil Division



Rebecca Novick
Supervising Attorney
Health Law Unit