

Published by
THE MARYLAND TRUST FOR RETARDED CITIZENS

VOLUME 18, No. 4

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2003

MTRC'S Annual Meeting and Luncheon is October 25th

The plans have been made. The invitations have been mailed. MTRC's Annual Meeting and Luncheon will be held on Saturday, October 25, 2003, at 10:00 a.m. at Snyder's Willow Grove Restaurant, conveniently located off of Exit 8 of the Baltimore Beltway.

The purpose of this year's panel discussion is to explain how the team works together to effectively provide services for your son or daughter. The panel will include a representative from Service Coordination Systems, attorney/parent (Mr. James Phillips, Esquire), sibling (Mr. Dean Hoffman), service provider (Mr. Joseph Anastasio), and MTRC Case Manager (Ms. Marilyn Folus). Gregory Sobel will moderate the discussion.

Board Members and staff from MTRC will be available throughout the day to answer questions you may have about the MTRC program. There will be plenty of time to meet other family members facing similar issues concerning the service delivery system in Maryland.

Don't delay – the RSVP deadline is October 15th. Snyder's Willow Grove is well known for their delightful atmosphere and famous buffet. They are also located within a convenient driving distance for most of our families. Snyder's Restaurant is only 35 minutes from Rockville, Bethesda, Silver Spring, Westminster, and Bel Air. It is less than 30 minutes from points in Annapolis, Towson, Baltimore, Columbia, and Laurel. Hagerstown and Frederick visitors are less than one hour away.

Please invite family, friends, your Resource Coordinator, and other Service Providers to join us in learning more about how to support your son or daughter effectively.

If you haven't mailed back your RSVP card, do it today. Or, call our office at 1-800-323-9407 for additional information.

Help Us Decide on a New Name for the MTRC Newsletter

Progress is being made to finalize the documents required to change the Maryland Trust from Retarded Citizens from a non-profit Trust to a Non-Profit Charitable Corporation. With the change in status, MTRC's newsletter will need a new name.

Help us select a name. Suggestions will be greatly appreciated. Kindly call our office on the Baltimore line at 410-876-1836, or toll free at 1-800-323-9407, or send an email to us at mtrc@ix.netcom.com.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Birthday greeting to the active clients who had birthdays in July, August, and September
Jan, Linda, Mary, Lynn, Tim, Jimmy, Todd, Marie, Tom, Anne, Latrail, Robert, Mike & Marshall

The following article is in response to a question posed by sponsors preparing their Letter of Intent. What happens if there is no immediate family member able to make medical decisions for my son or daughter when I am no longer here? Excerpts to address this question were taken from "The Guardianship Handbook, A Guide to Adult Guardianship and Guardianship Alternatives in Maryland", published by the Law and Health Care Program, University of Maryland School of Law.

Medical Decision Making What Happens When You're Not Here?

Doctors and other health professionals generally must have a patient's informed consent before giving medical treatment. Informed consent means that before a physician can treat a patient: (1) the doctor must explain the pros and cons and the alternatives to the treatment; (2) the patient must agree to be treated, unless the situation is an emergency; (3) the patient must understand the nature of the treatment, the dangers, and the possible side effects; and (4) the patient must give consent freely, without pressure to do so.

If a person is not able to make decisions for him or herself and cannot understand the doctor's explanation, the doctor must obtain informed consent from someone else. That person may be a guardian of the person appointed by a court. However, there are other alternatives for consenting to medical treatment. The Maryland Health Care Decisions Act, passed in 1993, provides two ways that someone else can consent to medical treatment for a mentally incompetent person.

ADVANCE DIRECTIVE

A person who is ment theTw 11

For example, this sometimes happens when those with mental retardation refuse to allow a dentist to work on their teeth. If any of these limitations occur, it would be necessary to ask a court to appoint a guardian to consent to treatment.

WHAT ABOUT EMERGENCIES?

Maryland law allows doctors to give emergency medical treatment to an incompetent person without consent if there is a substantial risk of death or immediate and serious bodily harm to the patient, and delay in treating the person would be harmful to the patient.

When the situation is urgent, and a guardian of the person must be appointed immediately, the law provides for the appointment of an emergency guardian. Sometimes a person needs medical treatment which is not urgent, but should not be delayed the two to three months that it takes to appoint a guardian. In this situation, an emergency guardianship may be the best solution. In some instances, the judge may confer with the doctors on the telephone to expedite matters. The court order appointing an emergency guardian lasts for 144 hours, or 6 days. After that the order expires unless the court extends it until a permanent guardian can be appointed.

WHAT IS A PUBLIC GUARDIAN?

In a **public** guardianship, the director of the local Department of Social Services or the director of the local agency on aging is appointed to serve as guardian of the person. Public guardians may only serve as guardian of the person, not as guardian of the property.

A public guardian is appointed only when there is no family member or friend willing or able to serve as guardian. In these cases, a staff person from the agency fills the role of the guardian, visiting the disabled person on a regular basis and making sure that his or her needs are met. The public guardian can sign consent forms for medical care. An Adult Public Guardianship Review Board is established in each county of Maryland and the City of Baltimore to review each of the public guardianships twice a year.

WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

Now is the time to consider who will assist your son or daughter in the future with medical decisions. If your son or daughter is mentally competent enough to understand and sign an Advance Directive, consider asking a relative or friend to be the Agent. Make sure the document is properly written and witnessed (legal advice is recommended). We suggest that a copy of the Advance Directive be filed with the Service Provider and family physician. If an Advance Directive is not possible, consider someone to be the surrogate decision maker. Talk with that person to determine if he or she is willing to serve.

Either decision (Advance Directive or Surrogate Decision Maker) should be documented in the Letter of Intent that you have filed with MTRC so that our Case Managers are aware of your decisions.

(This article contains general information for educational purposes. Detail has often been sacrificed for the sake of brevity. It is not intended to constitute legal advice. Families and individuals are strongly encouraged to consult with appropriate legal professionals to obtain a fuller explanation and to discuss their individual situations and options.)

Consider MTRC when making your charitable contributions. Enclosed is my tax deductible contribution. I would like my contribution to be used for the following purpose:

- ACTIVE CLIENT ADVOCACY FUND**
- GENERAL FUND**
- OTHER PURPOSE: Annual Sponsors Meeting and Luncheon on October 25, 2003**

I do not want my name printed as a contributor in *the Trustee*.

MTRC is a 501(c)3 charity and donations are tax deductible. A copy of our current financial statement is available upon request by contacting our office. Documents and information submitted to the state of Maryland under the Maryland Charitable Solicitation Act are available from the Office of the Secretary of State for the cost of copying and postage.

Prescription Drug Assistance Plans for Seniors

If you are a Medicare recipient on a limited income there may be prescription assistance available. For more information, contact your local Senior Center.

GlaxoSmithKline Orange Card: (Call: 888-672-6436)

Discount card offered to seniors, providing about 30% discount on all GSK products at participating pharmacies. Card holders must be 65+, Medicare recipients, have income below \$26,000 for singles or \$35,000 for couples, and have no other prescription drug coverage.

Lilly Answers Card: (877-RX-LILLY).

Provides 1 month supply of any Lilly prescription for flat fee of \$12. Medicare recipients (65+ or disabled on Medicare); income below \$18,000 (singles) \$24,000 (couples), and have no other prescription coverage. Visit www.lillyanswers.com.

Novartis Care Card: (866-974-2273)

For Medicare recipients 65+ or disabled, income below \$26,000 (singles) or \$35,000 (couples) and no other prescription coverage. Visit www.novartis.com for information.

Pfizer Share Card: (800-717-6005)

Discount card providing 1 month supply for flat fee of \$15 at participating pharmacies. For Medicare recipients 65+ or disabled, income below \$18,000 for singles or \$24,000 for couples, and no other prescription coverage. See www.pfizer.com.

Together Rx Card: (800-865-7211)

Provides discounts on drugs offered by several different companies, all under one card. Participating companies include Abbott, AstraZeneca, Aventis, Bristol-Myers Squibb, GlaxoSmithKline, Janssen, Novartis, and Ortho McNeil. Must have Medicare, have income below \$28,000 (singles) or \$38,000 (couples) and have no other drug coverage. Visit: www.together-rx.com.

MTRC'S Contribution Update

MTRC gratefully acknowledges gifts received from our friends listed below, and from those who did not wish their names listed. Your continued support means so very much to the success of the MTRC program. On behalf of those enrolled in the MTRC program, thank you.

Participants of the Maryland Charity Campaign
Participants of the Combined Charity Campaign
James B. Eisel
Mildred Miller, in memory of Ethel Dailey