



HOW TO GET WHAT YOU NEED IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

A RESOURCE GUIDE
FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH A
CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITION

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All phone numbers listed in this Guide are in the NH area code of (603), unless noted otherwise. The area code (802) indicates a Vermont phone number. The following area codes are toll-free calls: (800), (866), (877), (888)

How to Get What You Need in NH: A Guide for People Living with a Chronic Health Condition
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What is a “chronic condition?” Simply, it’s an illness or result of injury that lasts a long time. Long enough that you have to get used to living with it, because even if it can be treated, it won’t go away. A chronic condition can be something you don’t feel, but affects your health (like high blood pressure); it can be something that you feel too much (like chronic pain); it can be something that interferes with your ability to do normal activities of daily life (like multiple sclerosis); or it can be something that interferes with your body’s natural ability to take care of itself (like diabetes). Cancer, Alzheimer’s, HIV, asthma, spinal chord injury, and Parkinson’s are other examples of chronic conditions that force us to change and adapt our lifestyle, and challenge our assumptions about what is “normal.” In almost all cases, you have to do *something* about it, one way or the other.

How do you go about “doing something?” For each person, it’s likely to be different, based on values, desires, diagnoses, options, and resources. The purpose of this resource guide is to help you think about what you might need, and then point you in a direction so you can go about getting it.

FOR STARTERS:

Take Charge

Learning how to advocate for yourself will help you take action in a way that fits your needs and lifestyle. Because you know better than anyone what it’s like to live with your condition, you must let people know what you need or don’t need. You can *not* count on others guessing correctly what that is. Ask for help, and when people offer, suggest specific things they can do.

Educate yourself about your condition

Key to becoming your own advocate is understanding your condition and what’s involved in treating it. The more informed, the less dependent you are on others telling you what you need.

Your Work and Your Income

While costs increase, income may decrease. If you are currently working, you may be concerned about being able to continue, returning to work, employment discrimination, or losing existing disability insurance. The section on Benefits & Work can help guide you in addressing these concerns.

Take Notes and Record Your Findings

While we have provided some space to take notes and record important information, it is important to keep a journal or notebook where you can record information about visits to your provider, lab results, dates when you made calls to various services agencies and other information.

Have Realistic Expectations

Be aware that finding help and connecting with the right person can take time. It is also possible that the kind of help you need simply isn’t available in your area, and your solutions will need to be creative. Set aside the time and place so you can focus, make the calls, and do the follow up that is necessary.

Financial Issues

Chronic health conditions may have a financial impact on you as well as your family. Common concerns include paying for your care, and the likelihood of additional costs for transportation, child care, or housekeeping. There are no easy answers to these concerns, but finding out what’s available and tapping into community-based services may help. Keep in mind that not everything needs to be paid for. Friends, family, and neighbors can often lend a valuable hand.

Things Change

Many of the resources listed in this Guide are either non-profit organizations or government agencies, so funding for things you need may change. Some of the information provided in this Guide may become outdated, and new resources and options might pop up. Please help us keep informed of things you discover (or can no longer find) by contacting us. See the back of this guide for details.

WHEN YOU ARE THE CAREGIVER

If you are using this Guide because you are caring for an adult who is living with a chronic condition, you should know that there are resources to help you—the caregiver—as well. Whether you are a formal or informal caregiver for a spouse, partner, friend, or parent, your task is not an easy one. Below are some questions you can ask yourself to gauge how you are doing in your caregiving role:

- I take care of myself.
- I have a support network of people who understand my challenges and needs.
- I take time each week to do something for myself.
- I let the person I am caring for make decisions, if possible, and respect his or her wishes.
- I am a good listener to the person I am caring for and don't make assumptions about his or her needs.
- I know what community resources exist for the person in my care, as well as for myself.
- I am clear about my roles and responsibilities, and the health care providers understand my role.
- I am knowledgeable about the health condition of the person I am caring for.
- I am reliable, and follow through on what I say I am going to do.
- I am realistic about what I am capable of doing.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

It does not matter for whom you are caring, the first rule of caregiving is “take care of yourself.” You can do this by:

- ❖ Making time to do the things you like on a regular basis.
- ❖ Letting people help you, and helping them know what you really need.
- ❖ Joining a caregiver's support group (on-line or in person).
- ❖ Making deliberate choices about how you are going to be a caregiver, based on what you can reasonably do.
- ❖ Accepting your role as caregiver and not becoming a “victim” of it.
- ❖ Keeping a positive attitude as much as possible.
- ❖ Connecting with the NH Family Caregiver Support Program, which provides information, education and support services for caregivers (800) 351-1888 ext 4687.
- ❖ Contacting the National Family Caregivers Association 800-896-650 or 301-942-6430 or www.nfcacares.org. They have pamphlets and materials that can help you.
- ❖ Visiting the Chronic Conditions Information Network website [www.cc-info.net], which has a variety of on-line resources that can support you in your role as caregiver. CCIN also offers a Health Notebook, which can help you keep track of the medical care of person you are caring for (doctor's and hospital visits, lab work, and medications etc). If you are interested in learning about the Notebook, contact CCIN.

SUPPORT FOR YOU

Many community hospitals and organizations offer caregiver support groups. You can learn about what's available in your community from the patient's medical provider, area hospital, local newspaper, or home health agency.

Don't underestimate the supportive value of family members and friends, even if it's just a weekly phone call.

You are doing a hard job, and most likely, are doing a better job than you appreciate.

LEARNING ABOUT YOUR DIAGNOSIS

There are a variety of places you can go to learn more about your diagnosis—what it means, how it's treated, and how you can take steps to help yourself. Your care provider may give you pamphlets on your condition. You can often find free materials displayed in the waiting area or in the exam room. Books, national organizations (such as the American Heart Association) or the Internet are all places where you can find out more. Many hospitals and health centers have resource rooms with different books, videos, and other materials that other people living with your condition have found helpful. In some places, a computer with Internet access is available. Be sure to ask your provider if there is a resource center you can access. Don't forget about your public library; most libraries in Vermont and New Hampshire have internet access.

FINDING HEALTH INFORMATION ON THE WEB

Following these tips will help you find reliable and accurate information that's right for you.

Look for sites from highly regarded organizations or experts such as sites ending with...

- ◆ .gov (government- run, such as National Institutes of Health)
- ◆ .edu (created by a medical school or university).
- ◆ .org (run by an organization that teaches the public about a condition, such as the American Diabetes Association or CCIN of VT & NH).

Be careful when visiting sites that...

- ◆ End in .com. These are commercial sites that may be promoting a product.
- ◆ Do not indicate when the website was last updated.
- ◆ Offer a "miracle cure" that involves purchasing a product.
- ◆ Will treat you online without seeing you.
- ◆ Ask for personal information about you.

Use sites with reliable content. Good sites have:

- ◆ Information based on facts, and tell you the source of those facts.
- ◆ Information about who they are, how they are funded, and how to contact them.
- ◆ Authors whose expertise is explained.
- ◆ Information that can also be found at another respected website.

Good places to start:

- ◆ **CCIN of VT & NH:** www.cc-info.net. Links to local, regional, and national organizations.
- ◆ **MedLinePlus:** Health information provided by the National Library of Medicine. www.medlineplus.gov
- ◆ **Local Chapters** of National Associations and Organizations. See the listings on page 10.

A Note about Phone Numbers in this Guide

All phone numbers listed in this Guide are in the NH area code of (603), unless noted otherwise. Phone numbers beginning with 271 indicate phone numbers for State Offices.

The area code (802) indicates a Vermont phone number.

The following area codes indicate toll-free calls: (800), (866), (877), (888)

Some phone numbers are followed by the letters TTY or TTD. These indicate that the phone can work with a TeleTYpewriter (TTY) and a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD), which enable people who cannot speak or hear to use a telephone.

ADVOCATING FOR YOURSELF

Learning how to advocate (speak up) for yourself may be hard, since for many generations, people were encouraged to “do what the doctor ordered,” not ask questions, and trust that things would be taken care of. But...

Gone are the days when the neighborhood doctor made house calls, knew everything about you, and kept track of your health needs. Of course, gone *also* are the days when most health problems were acute; you either got better or you lived a shorter life than you’d planned.

With improved therapies, more advanced technologies, and specialized care, the opportunity to live much longer—with a *chronic* health problem—makes health care more complex. Often, several doctors are involved, diagnostic and follow-up tests are ongoing, and treatments change. With all these professionals and activities involved, who, actually is taking care of you, and making sure you are getting what you need?

The fact is, you are. So, speaking up is important. Here are a few pointers:

Ask questions.

Ask for help if you need it.

Ask for results of your tests, treatments, or other medical information.

Decisions: You are in charge of deciding what you want to happen, and what you will actually Do.

Don’t pretend you understand if you don’t.

Don’t stay with a provider if you don’t feel comfortable with him or her.

Voice your concerns.

Verify that what you *think* your doctor said is what he or she meant.

Organize a personal health record and keep it up to date.

Communicate with your provider, family and friends. Be specific.

Communicating includes listening.

Consider your priorities-what is it that you need and want.

Call your providers when you need to. Know how to reach them in case of emergency.

Consider a second opinion, and remember that you have choices.

Advocate: Ask a family member or friend to help you get what you need, if you don’t feel you can do it on your own.

Appointments: Keep them.

Talk to others: Join a support group.

Team: You and your provider are a team. Treat them with respect, but you are the captain.

Take notes, tape meetings; do what you need, to remember what your provider has said.

Think about questions in advance and write them down.

Take your time in making serious decisions, and take responsibility for them.

Educate yourself and others about your condition. Learn about local resources that can help you.

Expert: You are the expert on your needs.

There are a number of advocacy groups in NH that can provide you with the tools and resources you need. Page 10 directs you to some of these.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A PATIENT

The following Patients' Bill of Rights was issued by the Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in Health Care Industry. More information can be obtained from their Website: www.consumer.gov/qualityhealth/rights.htm.

I. Information Disclosure

You have the right to receive accurate and easily understood information about your health plan, health care professionals, and health care facilities. If you speak another language, have a physical or mental disability, or just don't understand something, assistance should be provided so you can make informed health care decisions.

II. Access to Emergency Services

If you have severe pain, an injury, or sudden illness that convinces you that your health is in serious jeopardy, you have the right to receive screening and stabilization emergency services whenever and wherever needed, without prior authorization or financial penalty.

III. Participation in Treatment Decisions

You have the right to know all your treatment options and to participate in decisions about your care. Parents, guardians, family members, or other individuals whom you designate can represent you if you cannot make your own decisions.

IV. Respect and Nondiscrimination

You have a right to considerate, respectful and nondiscriminatory care from your doctors, health plan representatives, and other health care providers.

V. Confidentiality of Health Information

You have the right to talk in confidence with health care providers and to have your health care information protected. You also have the right to review and copy your own medical record and request that your physician amend your record if it is not accurate, relevant, or complete.

VI. Complaints and Appeals

You have the right to a fair, fast, and objective review of any complaint you have against your health plan, doctors, hospitals or other health care personnel. This includes complaints about waiting times, operating hours, the conduct of health care personnel, and the adequacy of health care facilities.

VII. Choice of Providers and Plans

You have the right to a choice of health care providers that is sufficient to provide you with access to appropriate high-quality health care.

More Information about Patients' Rights

Confidentiality Violations: The National Coalition for Patient Rights: 207-774-8800

Federal Acts & Laws:

The Age Discrimination Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination based on age by any institution or health care provider who accepts Federal funds.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination against individuals with real or perceived disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations, communications and employer-provided health insurance.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 prohibits the exclusion of an individual from the group insurance market for more than twelve months based on a preexisting medical condition.

The Mental Health Parity Act of 1996 prohibits lifetime or annual caps on coverage for physical and mental illness in certain situations.

PATIENT PRIVACY PROTECTION UNDER HIPAA

(Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act)

In April 2003, the Federal government established privacy standards to protect patients' medical records and other health information provided to health plans, doctors, hospitals and other health care providers. These standards offer patients access to their medical records and more control over how their personal health information is used and disclosed. HIPAA gives you the right to have your medical record; you can request that changes be made when errors are noted. All health care providers are expected to let their patients know about HIPAA. Fact sheets and more information can be obtained from the following Website:

www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/

In the effort to protect your privacy, one outcome of HIPAA is that friends or family members can no longer talk to your doctor or hospital staff without your permission. For this reason, if there are non-professionals who you want to be involved in your care, you must specifically name them.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDERS

Just as you want your provider to listen, and treat you with respect, you are responsible for the following:

- ◆ Provide information about past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications, treatments and other matters relating to your health.
- ◆ Let the clinic or provider know if you have changes in your condition or care situation.
- ◆ Follow the medical treatment plan. If you don't think you can follow it, be honest with your doctor, so you can discuss what will work for you.
- ◆ Accept responsibility for what you choose to do or not do.
- ◆ Pay your bills as quickly as you can. Provide correct information for billing, insurance as well as ability to pay your bill. If you are unable to pay your bill, let your provider know immediately. There are payment programs that may help.
- ◆ If you are not able to keep an appointment, let the clinic know as soon as possible.
- ◆ Provide a copy of your advance directive to your doctor and to the hospital where you go (see page 12).

Protect Your Medicare/Medicaid Benefits

The Protecting Quality Health Care program works in partnership with the New Hampshire Help Line to bring you quality information on health care fraud and abuse. You can learn what you need to know to protect your health care benefits, how to identify common types of Medicare/Medicaid fraud, and the best way to report Medicare and Medicaid fraud and abuse.

For more information, call the Community Services Council of NH at 225-9694, or 1-800-852-3388. Website: www.cscnh.org/pqhc.cfm

NOTES

(IF IT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE...IT PROBABLY IS)

People with chronic/life threatening conditions may be the target of fraud. The fact that illness can cause suffering and present an uncertain future has led to the marketing of unproven treatments, some of which appear to work and others which may be fraudulent. In order to protect yourself from being taken advantage of, be suspicious when you hear claims of “cure-all,” “miraculous recovery,” “exclusive treatment,” or “money-back guarantees.” There may well be things you can do to help your condition that haven’t been scientifically proven, but if someone makes grand claims, asks for your money up front, or can’t offer much proof beyond a few anecdotes, you should be cautious.

STOP HEALTH FRAUD

- ◆ Contact the NH Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, Medicaid, Healthcare Fraud Unit. 271-1246.
- ◆ Contact the FDA office closest to you. The NH FDA office is: 225-1511

If you believe you have received improper treatment by a licensed practitioner, you can contact:

- ◆ The NH Medical Society: (800) 564-1909
- ◆ Your local hospital (if practitioner is a staff member).
- ◆ NH Board of Registration in Medicine (603) 271-1203; or www.state.nh.us/medicine
- ◆ National Council Against Health Fraud Task Force on Victim Redress (978) 532-9383, Website: www.ncahf.org

If you have received inappropriate treatment by an unlicensed individual you can contact:

- ◆ The State Attorney General’s office: (603) 271-3641.
- ◆ The NH Fraud Hotline: (800) 368-5779
- ◆ National Council Against Health Fraud Task Force on Victim Redress (978) 532-9383, Website: www.ncahf.org

NOTES

GETTING SUPPORT

Studies show that people with chronic illnesses do much better, and even live longer, if they have a support network in place. In addition to getting support, there seems to be a benefit to *giving* it as well. Support groups can help you connect with others who are facing similar issues, and you can often learn important skills, strategies, and information from each other.

WAYS TO FIND A SUPPORT GROUP

- ◆ Check your local newspaper, or the resource section of your local phone book.
- ◆ Contact your doctor, nurse, local hospital or clinic. Check out bulletin boards, notices in waiting rooms, or newsletters.
- ◆ Contact the NH chapter of the national organization that deals with your condition (below).
- ◆ On-line support groups or message boards can often give you opportunities to connect with others on the internet. The regional associations (below) and national web-based resources are a good start to finding an on-line resource.

NOT ABLE TO GO GROUP MEETINGS?

There are a number of ways to develop your own informal support network:

- ◆ Family, friends, and neighbors are often more than willing to be called on to be there for you.
- ◆ If you are part of a 12-step or recovery program, talk with some of the members. You can arrange to have them meet at your home for a meeting from time to time.
- ◆ If you are part of a faith community, social group, or a community organization, talk to those you trust about your situation.
- ◆ Old-fashioned networking works, too: ask your friends if they'd be willing to help you connect with someone they know who faces similar challenges.

Support groups can help you meet others and reduce feelings of being alone. They can also be a source for a ride to the hospital, help with household chores and getting the right treatment you need. Even though there are many organizations around that offer services, you might not be eligible for them, or, in some cases, that might not have the funding to help you. Therefore, it's important to build a strong support network.

NH CHAPTERS OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Health associations are a good source of information about your condition, community resources, support groups, and treatment.

- ❖ Alzheimer's Association 226-5868 or (800) 536-8864 www.alzvtnh.org
- ❖ American Cancer Society 472-8899 www.cancer.org
- ❖ American Diabetes Association 627-9579 or (888) 342-2383 www.diabetes.org
- ❖ American Heart Association 669-5833 or (800) AHA-USA1 www.americanheart.org
- ❖ American Lung Association NH 669-2411 or (800) LUNGUSA www.nhlung.org
- ❖ Arthritis Foundation Northern NE Chapter 224-9322 or (800) 639-2113 www.arthritis.org
- ❖ Brain Injury Association of NH 225-8400 or (800) 773-8400 www.bianh.org
- ❖ Cystic Fibrosis Foundation: Northern NE Chapter 598-8191 or (800) 757-0203 www.cff.org/Chapters/newengland
- ❖ Easter Seals (800) 870-8728 www.nh.easter-seals.org
- ❖ Epilepsy Foundation (800) 332-1000 www.efa.org
- ❖ Leukemia & Lymphoma Society 800-688-6572 www.leukemia-lymphoma.org
- ❖ Lupus Foundation of America 424-0111 www.dwellings.com/lupus/pages/join.html
- ❖ March of Dimes Foundation 228-0317 www.marchofdimes.com/newhampshire
- ❖ NAMI NH (Alliance of Mental Illness) 225-5359 or (800) 242-6264 www.naminh.org
- ❖ National Kidney Foundation of MA, RI, NH & VT 634-0030 or (800) 542-4001 www.kidneyhealth.org
- ❖ NH Association for the Blind (800) 464-3075 or 224-4039 www.sightcenter.com
- ❖ NH Spinal Cord Injury Association 479-0560 www.nhspinal.org
- ❖ Multiple Sclerosis Society Central New England Chapter (781) 890-4990 or (800) 493-9255 www.msnewengland.org

This is a tough issue, but the fact is that every human condition—regardless of whether it’s chronic, acute, or healthy—ultimately results in death. Our modern, “can do” culture tends to ignore this “can’t avoid” fact, and we’re often caught off-guard when the inevitable arises. In addition to thinking about end-of-life care (see the legal checklist on the next page), it may be wise to think about after-death care. Treatment of the body after death and how the life is celebrated or memorialized is unique to each family and a very individual decision. Planning ahead will help your family avoid making difficult (and possibly expensive) decisions during an emotional and stressful time. The following resources will help you get started:

◆ **Funeral Consumers Alliance:**

This is a national non-profit education organization dedicated to a consumer’s right to choose a dignified, meaningful, affordable funeral.

National Office: (800) 765-0107

Website: www.funerals.org

The Vermont affiliate, Funeral Consumers Alliance of Vermont offers a number of benefits to its members.

Phone: (802) 476-4300.

Website: www.funerals.org/vermont.

◆ **Cremation Society of NH:**

Provides low cost cremation services, without having to go through a funeral home.

622-1800 or (800) 493-8001

Website: www.csnh.com

◆ **Burial Assistance in New Hampshire:**

State, city and town welfare departments all provide benefits for deceased residents who are indigent, or whose families cannot pay for their funerals. For more information contact a local funeral home or Community Action Agency (see page 22).

◆ **Hospice**

Hospice is an excellent resource for those facing end-of-life issues, providing both information and services.

- The National Hospice and Palliative Care website: www.caringinfo.org covers an array of related topics.
- The Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice of Vermont & New Hampshire will direct you to Hospice services in your community. Phone: (800) 575-5162

Help in Decision Making

There are many books and publications that can help you think through these difficult choices.

One very thoughtful booklet, written by a nursing home chaplain, Hank Dunn, is

“Hard Choices for Loving People: CPR, Artificial Feeding, Comfort Care and the Patient with a Life Threatening Illness”

This can be obtained on-line at www.hardchoices.com or ordered from:

A & A Publishers, Inc, PO Box 1098, Herndon, VA 20172-1098

The price of the 80-page booklet is \$4

NOTES

LEGAL PLANNING

Your will, the power of attorney (both financial and medical), and planning for your (and your family's) future are all things you should take care of *before* a crisis occurs. Planning is best done when you can take your time and think things through clearly. Getting appropriate advice and input from family as well as a professional (i.e. lawyer, banker, financial advisor) is also important. The checklist below will help you think through what types of advance planning to do. Be advised that this is not legal advice. It's recommended that you consult with a lawyer as you make your plans.

Legal Checklist & Definition of Common Terms

Check off each of the items as you complete them

WILL

A will is a legal document that describes what you want done with your things and property after you have died. Copies of your will should be filed with your lawyer and power of attorney.

Name of Lawyer: _____

Phone Number: _____

Location of Will _____

LIVING WILL

A Living Will, or Advanced Directive gives directions about your medical care in case if you are no longer able to communicate. It reflects what you think about life support, continued treatment, and being let go. Copies of your living will should definitely be given to your doctor, and the hospital where you are likely to go. A copy should also be given to the person who holds your Power of Attorney for Health Care and/or a family member.

Location of Living Will: _____

Doctor _____

Hospital _____

Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care _____

Relative _____

DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR HEALTH CARE

This is the person you have designated to make health decisions for you if you can't. You will need to let your doctor know who this person is.

Person with Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care _____

Phone Number: _____

Does this person know you have named him or her?

POWER OF ATTORNEY

This person can make financial and legal decisions for you and do other things, such as use money from a bank account and pay bills if you are unable to do so. Once this document is signed, the person named has immediate access to all financial (money) information.

Person named Power of Attorney (Financial/Legal) _____

Phone Number: _____

Does this person know you have named him or her?

LEGAL GUARDIAN

In the event you would be unable to care for your child or other dependent adult, this would assign custody to a person of your choice. If you have made legal arrangements for the care of your children or dependent adult, a copy of this information can be placed here.

Name of Legal Guardian(s): _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Does this person know you have named him or her?

LEGAL SERVICES

The following may be available to you if you do not have an attorney and you need legal help.

New Hampshire Legal Assistance (NHLA)

A statewide program for low income or senior citizens that provides legal advice and representation without charge to eligible New Hampshire citizens. Regional offices, below. Website: www.nhla.org.

- ◆ **Claremont** 542-8795 or (800) 562-3994
- ◆ **Littleton** 444-8000 or (800) 548-1886
- ◆ **Manchester** 668-2900 or (800) 562-3174
- ◆ **Portsmouth** 431-7411 or (800) 334-3135

NHLA offers a number of specialized services:

- ◆ Senior Citizens Law Project, Senior Advice Line. Free Civil Legal Services for Clients over 65 years.
624-6000 or (888) 353-9944.
Website: www.nhla.org/scfp.htm.
- ◆ Fair Housing Project. Addresses housing discrimination issues
669-4960 or (800)-921-1115

New Hampshire Bar Association

Offers information pamphlets, links to legal resources, and a Lawyer referral service. 229-0002.

Website: www.nhbar.org.

The “Law Line”

The NH Bar Association offers free telephone legal advice a few hours every month, for you to talk to a lawyer for free. Currently, the Law Line is open on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, from 6-8 pm. The number is (800) 868-1212.

Legal Advice and Referral Center.

A cooperative effort of the Legal Services Agencies serving New Hampshire’s low income population. 224-3333 or (800) 639- 5290. Website: www.larchnh.org.

NH Disabilities Rights Center

Provides information, advice, legal representation and advocacy to individuals with disabilities.
228-0432 ext.37 or (800) 834-1721 www.drcnh.org

ADVOCACY RESOURCES

Several agencies and organizations operate to help individuals to advocate on their own behalf, and provide resources to help you.

Granite State Independent Living (GSIL)

GSIL offers a wide range of programs and services that individuals can use to live life independently and on their terms. GSIL’s Main Office in Concord can direct you to the regional office nearest you. Call 228-9680, or (800) 826-3700. (888)-396-3459 (TTY). Their website offers a rich supply of tools, publications, and listing of services. www.gsil.org.

- ◆ Concord (Satellite Office) 244-1130
- ◆ Franconia 823-5772 or 800-588-5772
- ◆ Keene 355-1208 or 877-680-4826
- ◆ Manchester 624-0600
- ◆ Nashua 881-7144

People First of New Hampshire

A statewide self-advocacy organization for people with disabilities, with 14 chapters throughout the state.

(800) 566-2128 or 568-2128

www.peoplefirstofnh.org

NH Commission for Human Rights

A state agency that addresses employment, housing, and public accommodation discrimination. 271-2767.

Website outlines the rules on disability discrimination, American Disabilities Act, and information services.
www.state.nh.us/hrc/disability.html.

NH Civil Liberties Union

Primarily deals with legal issues that involve violations of individual rights by the government. 225-3080
www.nhclu.org

A Reminder about Phone Numbers

All phone numbers listed in this Guide are in NH’s area code of (603), unless noted otherwise.

The area code (802) indicates a Vermont number.

The following area codes indicate toll-free calls: (800), (866), (877), (888)

BENEFITS & WORK ISSUES

Whether you are currently employed, on disability, thinking you may not be able to work much longer, or considering returning to the work force, there are a variety of resources in the state that can be of help.

Understanding the impact of earnings on your benefits can help you make informed choices on employment. Granite State independent Living (GSIL) offers a Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach (BPAO) Program, in which benefits specialists work one-on-one with individuals to outline available options. You are eligible for the BPAO Program if you are:

- ◆ Age 16 to 64, and are working, ready to work, or considering working and
- ◆ Receive federal benefits, such as Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and/or
- ◆ Receive state benefits, such as Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and housing subsidies.

GSIL can provide information on work incentives and health care options, including Medicaid for Employed Adults with Disabilities and keeping benefits while working. Contact (800) 826-3700 or (888) 396-3459 (TTY).

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

If You Are Currently Receiving Disability

Income benefits such as Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), State Disability Insurance (SDI), Long Term Disability (LTD), and/or Short Term Disability (STD) are all things you should understand.

If you Need Assistance to Remain in Your Current Job

If you are currently employed but are finding it difficult to keep up with the demands of your job, or find that you are in need of some modifications at your job site, contact the NH Vocational Rehabilitation program (800) 299-1647 or 271-3471

If You Are Seeking Employment

Starting a new job may be the perfect opportunity to acquire valuable private disability insurance benefits. The first step is understanding what benefits to look for, such as Short Term Disability coverage, Long Term Disability coverage and Life Insurance. It is also important to understand what benefits are available to you without “evidence of insurability.” In other words, can you get disability insurance or life insurance without providing any medical information to the insurance companies? Is it possible to increase your Long Term Disability or Life Insurance coverage with only a small payroll deduction?

Employers often offer a variety of health coverage options. When choosing a plan you need to understand which plans have preexisting condition limitations. If they do, will it apply to you or have you already satisfied that requirement?

If You Can No Longer Work and Need to Consider Disability Benefits

Disability coverage may be available to you from several sources: Employer, Social Security, or Veterans Administration.

Employer

Contact your employer’s benefits representative to find out what your company may have as far as disability coverage or another program that may be of assistance to you.

Social Security

You can apply for Social Security disability benefits by calling the toll-free number, 800-772-1213 or 800-325-0778 (TTY). The local NH office is 224-1939. The representatives there can make an appointment for your application to be taken over the telephone or at a conveniently located Social Security office. The claims process for disability benefits is generally longer than for other types of Social Security benefits, from 60 to 90 days. Website: www.ssa.gov/disability

Veterans Administration

If you have served in the military, you may qualify for disability. To learn more about eligibility call (800) 941-8387.

NH VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

If you have a disability as a result of your illness or injury, yet want to work, New Hampshire's Vocational Rehabilitation (NHVR) is an agency that helps persons with disabilities help themselves to get a job, keep the job, and develop a lifelong career. NHVR has seven regional offices throughout the state designed to assist persons who have physical, mental, emotional and learning disabilities.

Website: www.ed.state.nh.us/VR

You will be eligible for NHVR services if you have a disability, and your disability creates substantial problems in preparing for a job, getting a job, or keeping a job, and you require VR services to become employed or to stay employed. If you are interested in applying for VR services, call your local VR office. Tell them you have a disability and need help getting a job.

Vocational Rehabilitation offers a broad range of individualized services including:

- Vocational assessment of your unique strengths, interests, and needs.
- Help in identifying and solving problems that prevent you from getting or keeping a job.
- Assistance in accessing local services.
- Education and training: technical training or courses related to your employment goal.
- Transportation assistance.
- Worksite accommodations.
- Equipment that helps you adapt to your environment
- Transition services: support for students transitioning from school to work.
- Job placement: support or train you to write a resume, practice for an interview, follow up job leads.

Regional Offices

BERLIN REGIONAL OFFICE

3 12th Street, Unit A Berlin
752-2271(V/TTY) 888-300-9550

CONCORD REGIONAL OFFICE

2 Industrial Park Drive, Concord
271-2327(V/TTY) 800-299-1647

KEENE REGIONAL OFFICE

103 Roxbury Street Keene
357-0266(V/TTY) 800-620-7688

LEBANON/HANOVER AREA

85 Mechanic St., #260A
Lebanon 448-5793(V/TTY) 800-621-7876

MANCHESTER REGIONAL OFFICE

Mill West Corporate Center
195 McGregor Street Suite 120 Manchester
669-8733(V/TTY) 800-627-9304

NASHUA REGIONAL OFFICE

25 Riverside Drive, Suite 102, Nashua
889-6844(V/TTY) 800-635-9614

PORTSMOUTH REGIONAL OFFICE

30 Maplewood Avenue, Portsmouth
436-8884(V/TTY) 800-882-2744

MEDICAID FOR EMPLOYED ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

A Medicaid coverage group that allows adults with disabilities to work to their fullest potential, save money, and still qualify for Medicaid.

(800) 826-3700 or (888) 396-3459 (TTY)

THE US VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

The VA offers vocational rehabilitation to those who have served in the military (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, National Guard.). You may obtain more information by calling 800-827-1000, or contacting the VA facility in Manchester or White River Jct. (see p. 25.)

WORK: KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Regardless of your current work status, it's important that you understand what your rights are. If you are afraid of losing your job because of lost time due to medical treatment, being sick or doctor's visits, you should be aware that you are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA guarantees that Americans with any disability, including a chronic disease, have the same legal protection against discrimination as that provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex and religion.

The protection provided by the ADA is not limited to those who are currently impaired. Rather, those who once had a disability, such as cancer or heart disease, but are no longer disabled, are still protected. The ADA also protects individuals who are perceived as disabled even if they are not, such as those with severe facial burns.

People with a hidden disability, such as a learning disability or the HIV virus, are considered disabled under the ADA if they are substantially limited in a major life activity. Finally, people who are not themselves disabled, but who are discriminated against because they are associated with someone who has a disability (e.g., the spouse of a person with muscular dystrophy or parent of someone with AIDS) are also protected.

You are not required by law to disclose what your medical condition is to your supervisor or those you work with. Use your best judgment in deciding who should know the specifics about your health situation.

If you find that you need to have reduced hours, would like a leave of absence while you go through a course of treatment, or have other reasons why you can't work your normal schedule, you need to speak with your supervisor about your situation. You do not have to disclose the nature of your health condition, just that your current medical situation requires adjustments in your schedule.

You do not have to disclose the nature of your health condition, only that your current medical situation requires adjustments in your schedule.

NATIONAL AND LOCAL RESOURCES

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

Addresses Federal laws prohibiting job discrimination: Questions and answers; How to file a charge of employment discrimination; Mediation.
800 669-4000 (TTY) (800) 669-6820).
Website: www.eeoc.gov

OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY

If you need information on your rights in the workplace, understanding the ADA, or even effective interviewing techniques ODEP can be of assistance.
Website: www.dol.gov/odep

JOB ACCOMMODATION NETWORK (JAN)

A one-stop service to get information on making workplace accommodations for people with disabilities.
800-526-7234, 800-526-7234 (TTY).
Website: www.jan.wvu.edu

A WEBSITE GUIDE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

Website: www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/workta.htm

THE GRANITE STATE INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (GSIL) AND THE STATE INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM.

There are regional offices throughout the state. If you call the toll-free number, they can direct you to the office nearest you. 800-826-3700, 888-396-3459 (TTY).
Website: www.gsil.org

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

Information line addressing employment, disabilities, and accommodations. 800-514-0301 or 800--514-0383 (TTY). Website: www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm

There's no question that health issues can have a significant affect on your finances. Whether it's being able to afford to pay for medical care, your ability to earn the income you need, or the result of having to pay people to do what you would otherwise be able to do for yourself, money can end up being one of your biggest concerns.

Unfortunately, there aren't easy answers; there isn't much in this world that you get for free, and often, assistance comes with strings attached. Furthermore, there may be waiting lists for some of the services that seem to be available. This is where it is helpful to have your priorities clear in your own mind. Many of the programs and services listed in this Guide have advisors who can help you identify where your priorities lie. Most likely, you will need to piece together a variety of supports and assistance from the agencies and organizations listed in the following pages in order to get what you need most. Persistence, patience, and "please and thank-you's" will help.

Personal Finances

If you are having difficulties with credit cards, money management, and other forms of debt, you may find it helpful to talk with a certified credit counselor. Consumer Credit Counseling Services of New Hampshire and Vermont has offices throughout both states, which provide confidential counseling and assistance on home budgeting, managing debt, and use of credit. This counseling is a free service with no eligibility guidelines.

Call (800) 327-6778 to find the location nearest you, or go online to www.ccsnh-vt.org.

If you cannot locate a nonprofit service in your community, contact the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (800) 388-2227, or check the website at www.nfcc.org.

PAYING FOR HEALTH CARE

Health care costs fall into two categories: direct medical costs, and nonmedical expenses.

Direct Costs

Direct costs resulting from treatment such as doctor's fees, hospital expenses, and pharmacy bills are often covered by health insurance. In addition to private insurance, NH has a variety of health insurance programs, as well as Community Health Centers (see page 20). If you have served in the military (Army, Navy, Marines etc.), you may be eligible for health care benefits through them. Contact the Veterans Administration for benefits and/or medical information (877) 222-8387. A list of VA Medical Centers and Community Based Resources begins on page 20.

Related Non-medical Expenses

Nonmedical expenses, such as travel to and from treatment, childcare, cleaning, and home care products are usually not covered by insurance. However, there are community resources which can help you. While the type and amount of financial assistance available varies from community to community, the following are good places to start:

- The state organization for your condition (for example, the American Cancer Society, American Diabetes Association (see page 10 for list of organizations))
- The Community Action Agency for your area (see page 21 for agency closest to you)
- NH Division of Elderly and Adult Services (800) 351-1888, if you are over 65 and/or disabled
- NH Helpline (800) 852-3383 or 225-9000
- NH Minority Health Coalition 627-7703 or 866/460-9933 or www.nhhealthequity.org
- Your place of worship, church, synagogue or temple
- Your labor union
- Social clubs in which you participate

BenefitsCheckUp:

This Web-based service was launched by the National Council on the Aging to help seniors (65+) and caregivers connect to government (federal, state) and private programs that can help pay for prescription drugs, health care, utilities, and other needs. Users who complete a confidential 20-30 minute detailed questionnaire receive a personalized report that lists the programs they may be eligible for and provides information on how to enroll.

Website: www.BenefitsCheckUp.org

Patient Advocate Foundation:

This national foundation provides education and legal counseling about managed care, insurance, and financial issues. Their "Money Matters" within the Resources section points to both state and national programs ranging from fuel and food relief to medication assistance. (800) 532-5274.

Website: www.patientadvocate.org

PAYING FOR MEDICATIONS

Benefits Check Up Rx: A service of the National Council on the Aging. Provides assistance to persons 55 and up who are paying for prescriptions. Offers information about enrolling in government and private programs that can save money on health care and prescription drugs.

Website: www.benefitscheckuprx.org

Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Card:

The Medicare-approved drug discount card, which could cost up to \$30 per year, will be offered until December 31, 2005. In addition to the discount card, there is also a \$600 credit available for low income individuals with Medicare. Phone: (800)633-4227. Website: www.medicare.gov

Needy Meds: A clearinghouse for free information about patient assistance programs which provide no cost prescription medications to eligible participants.

Website: www.needymeds.com

NH Medication Bridge Program: An initiative to help low-income persons access needed medications from pharmaceutical companies. 225-0900

New Hampshire Medicine Cabinet: An online resource to locate NH pharmacies and compare prescription drug prices. Provides helpful tips about purchasing and managing medication.

Website: www.egov.nh.gov/medicine-cabinet

NH Senior Prescription Drug Discount Program: This discount card program is for NH residents age 65 and over who enroll in the program. A discount card is used at participating pharmacies for discounts up to 15% on brand name medications and up to 40% on generic medications. Currently, there are no financial eligibility requirements and no membership fees. Mail order is also available.

Phone: (888) 580-8902

Partnership for Prescription Assistance NH (PPARxNH)

Sponsored by the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, this web site is designed to help low-income, uninsured New Hampshire residents get free or discounted brand-name medicines.

To access the Partnership for Prescription Assistance by phone, call (888) 477-2669. Website: www.pparxnh.org

RxAssist: Although this website targets physicians and other health care providers who are interested in accessing the pharmaceutical companies' patient assistance programs, it has information that is of interest to patients, as well.

RxAssist provides links to Rx Outreach, a Patient Assistance Program that provides qualified low-income individuals and families with access to generic versions of brand name medications. Website: www.rxassist.org

Veterans Administration New England Health Care:

United States veterans who were honorably discharged from active military service are eligible for discounted medications. Phone: (800) 892-8384, ext 6073

Purchasing prescriptions from Canada:

Although still controversial, some clinics and health providers in VT and NH have been able to assist their patients in obtaining prescription medications from Canada, at lower cost. If you are interested in this possibility, speak with your doctor. Vermont recently joined I-Save RX, a prescription drug program which enables Vermont residents to access selected brand drugs from pharmacies in Canada.

Website: www.I-SaveRX.net

There are two types of insurance, private and public. Private, or indemnity, is insurance you purchase yourself, or is provided to you by an employer or union. Public insurance is that which is provided by the state or federal government, such as Medicaid and Medicare. However, NH has a number of special programs that you may also qualify for.

PRIVATE INSURANCE

New Hampshire offers a variety of ways to obtain private insurance, including medical savings accounts, health savings accounts, individual insurance, group insurance and long term care policies. If you are trying to purchase insurance for yourself, consider the following:

- ◆ If you are employed, see if your employer offers health insurance and if you can be part of a group.
- ◆ If you are having to stop work and your insurance is through work, talk to your employer about continuing your health insurance through COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act), which is a law containing provisions giving certain former employees, retirees, spouses and dependent children the right to temporary continuation of health coverage at group rates. This coverage is only available in specific instances, is usually more expensive than health coverage for active employees but less expensive than individual health coverage, and applies only to certain types of employers. For more information about COBRA, check the US Department of Labor's Website: www.dol.gov/ebsa/newsroom/fscobra.html
- ◆ If you do not qualify for any of the state, federal or employee health insurance programs, go to an insurance agent who can help you determine which policy may be best for you.

PUBLIC INSURANCE PROGRAMS & SERVICES AVAILABLE IN NH

State program offices are open 8am - 4:30pm, Monday - Friday. General information about NH State programs can be found on the website: www.dhhs.nh.gov/dhhs/medicaidprogram

Medicaid:

A federal and state funded program that serves needy individuals and families who meet financial and other eligibility requirements and certain other individuals who lack adequate resources to pay for medical care. Provides payment for medical services. (800) 852-3345 ext. 5254, or 271-5254.

Medicaid for Employed Adults with Disabilities

A Medicaid program that allows people with a disability to work without jeopardizing their Medicaid eligibility. Contact 228-9680 or (800) 826-3700. Website: www.gsil.org/MEAD.html

Medicare

A federal health insurance program for people 65 and over or with certain disabilities. Although it does not cover *all* medical expenses, it does assist with the cost of basic health care, such as inpatient hospital care, home health, hospice, and outpatient expenses. NH State office: 271-4238. Website: www.medicare.gov

Healthy Kids

Provides health care access to NH's uninsured children (up to age 19) (877) 464-2477 or register at their Website: www.nhhealthykids.com

"Let No Woman Be Overlooked"

Offers free breast and cervical cancer screenings for women age 18-64, and those over 65 without Medicare Part B. The program pays for mammograms, breast and pelvic exams, Pap tests and breast care. Eligibility is based on income and one of the following: No insurance or Insurance doesn't cover test. (800) 852-3388.

NH Health Insurance Counseling, Education, and Assistance Services:

Statewide service, providing free and confidential counseling for those persons with questions about Medicare, Medigap, Medicaid, and long term care insurance. (800) 852-3388.

The New Hampshire Health Plan

NHHP was established as the insurer of last resort, to provide comprehensive benefits options to NH residents who are declined coverage through the private market, have a pre-qualifying condition or are otherwise eligible. (877) 888-6447 or visit their Website: www.nhhealthplan.org

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

The Community Health Centers and clinics listed below have fees based on sliding scale. For more information about health care services to medically underserved persons in NH, visit the Bi-State Primary Care Association website: www.bistatepca.org

COOS COUNTY

Ammonoosuc Community Health Services

14 King's Square, Whitefield 837-2333

Coos County Family Health Services, Inc.

Berlin:

RESPONSE & WIC 54 Willow Street 752-3669

59 Page Hill 752-2900

133 Pleasant Street 752-2040

Gorham: 2 Broadway 466-2741

Indian Stream Clinic

2 Corliss Lane, Colebrook 237-8783

GRAFTON COUNTY

Speare Medical Associates

859 Lake Street, Bristol 744-6200

20 Highland Street, Plymouth 536-3890

Ammonoosuc Community Health Services

155 Main Street, Franconia 823-7078

Mt. Eustis Road, Littleton 444-2464

40 Railroad Street, Woodsville 747-3990

Family Planning Program

258 Highland Street, Plymouth 536-3584

Mt. Mooselauke Health Center

Route 25, Main Street, Warren 764-5704

Planned Parenthood Health Center

89 South Main Street, West Lebanon 298-7766

ROCKINGHAM & STRAFFORD COUNTY

Planned Parenthood Health Center

4 Birch Street, Derry 434-1354

108 High Street, Exeter 772-9315

167 High Street, Portsmouth 431-6803

Lamprey Health Care

207 South Main Street, Newmarket 659-2494

Route 27, Raymond 895-3351

Families First Health and Support Center

100 Campus Drive, Suite 12, Portsmouth 422-8208

Avis Goodwin Community Health Center

19 Old Rollinsford Road, Dover 749-2346

South Main Street, Rochester 749-2346

BELKNAP & CARROLL COUNTY

Lakes Region Family Center

Belmont Road, Laconia 524-5453

White Mountain Community Health Center

298 White Mountain Highway, Conway 447-8900

Family Planning and Prenatal Programs

127 Route 28, Ossipee 539-7552

CHESHIRE & SULLIVAN COUNTY

Planned Parenthood Health Center

8 Middle Street, Keene 352-6898

241 Elm Street, Claremont 542-4568

Newport Clinic

11 John Stark Highway, Newport 863-4100

Partners in Health of Sullivan County

167 Summer Street, Newport 543-6960

HILLSBOROUGH & MERRIMACK COUNTY

Hillsboro Family Health

462 West Main Street, Hillsboro 478-3141

Health Care for the Homeless Project

195 McGregor Street, Manchester 663-8716

Manchester Community Health Center

1415 Elm Street, Manchester 626-9500

Planned Parenthood Health Center

24 Pennacook Street, Manchester 669-7321

Nashua Area Health Center

10 Prospect Street, Suite 102, Nashua 881-5996

Capital Region Family Health Center

250 Pleasant Street, Concord 227-7000

Health First Family Care Center

841 Central Street, Franklin 934-0177

New London Hospital

273 County Road, New London 526-2911

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England

Provides services to women on a sliding scale fee. To find the closest Planned Parenthood office to you call 800-230-PLAN or www.ppnne.org

Free Clinics

While there are no free clinics in New Hampshire, in Vermont, a number of free clinics located in the Connecticut River Valley do serve people who live in New Hampshire. These clinics are staffed by physicians and other health providers who volunteer their time to care for people who do not have the means to pay.

Putney: Putney Walk-in Clinic (802) 387-2120

Springfield: Precision Valley Free Clinic (802) 885-1616

White River Junction: Good Neighbor Health Clinic (802) 295-1868; Red Logan Dental Clinic (802) 295-7573

Windsor: Windsor community Clinic (802) 674-7213

COMMUNITY-BASED RESOURCES & SERVICES

Most communities have public and private resources available that can meet your needs relating to living with a chronic health condition. A few are listed here. Another resource is your local phone book, which will list the agencies and services in your area. Assistance might also be available through your place of worship.

Please see the note on page 5 regarding phone numbers

THE NH HELPLINE

The NH Helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide you with a list of available services in your community. You will need to provide the name of your community and what services you are in need of. If you have access to the Internet, you may use the NH Helpline's searchable database www.nhhelpline.org.

225-9000 or (800) 852-3388.

For a listing of Minority
Health Resources,
see page 24

OTHER NH HELP LINES

ServiceLink-The New Hampshire Network:

Provides community based information for elders, adults living with disabilities and their families. The toll free number is (866) 634-9412.

Website: www.state.nh.us/servicelink/links.html

Carroll County Health Line

9-4 pm Monday-Friday (800) 499-4171 or 539-4171

Info Bank Manchester

Greater Manchester & Northern Hillsborough County: 668-8600. Website: www.info-bridge.com

Info Bank Nashua

Greater Nashua & Southern Hillsborough County: 883-9330. Website: www.info-bridge.com/InfoBank

Monadnock Community Network Team

Cheshire County: (800) 368-4357 or 352-1999

Rockingham/Strafford Information & Referral

8-6 pm Monday-Friday (888) 499-2525.
Website: www.infolinknh.org

VERMONT HELPLINES

For services in neighboring Vermont, call (866) 652-4636 (GET-INFO), or visit the Vermont 211 website: www.vermont211.org

CHRONIC CONDITIONS INFORMATION NETWORK

Serving both Vermont & New Hampshire, this website provides links to a wide array of services and resources in the region, as well as electronic versions of CCIN's publications. Website: www.cc-info.net

FAITH-BASED SERVICES

Religious organizations have a long tradition of providing services to their congregations and communities. Many offer services to people in need, regardless of their faith. Because each is unique, it is impossible to generalize and list all the services that may be available. If you are looking for assistance, it may be best to start with your local church, temple, or synagogue.

NH Catholic Charities

A statewide service, providing services regardless of sex, race or religion. (800) 562-5249.

HOUSING

NH Housing Finance Authority:

A public benefit corporation whose mission is to promote, finance and support safe, affordable and needed housing and related services for New Hampshire families, individuals and communities. 472-8623, or (800) 640-7239. Website: www.nhhfa.org

Granite State Independent Living (GSIL):

Provides advocacy and services for people with disabilities, enabling them to live more independently and participate more fully. GSIL's Main Office in Concord can direct you to the nearest regional office. 228-9680, or (800) 826-3700; (888)-396-3459 (TTY) Page 13 of this Guide has a listing of regional offices. Website: www.gsil.org

COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS

Community Action Programs (CAP) provide a wide array of services : housing; transportation; weatherization; advocacy; benefits counseling; tax assistance; legal services; food/nutrition; support for families; clothing; budget counseling; and tenant advocacy. These organizations are familiar with programs in their region and can serve as a good referral source even if they do not provide the specific service that you might need. In some case, case management is provided. Some of the Community Action agencies listed below have satellite offices, or services in various towns in their region. For a central listing of all Community Action Agencies and services in NH, visit the Southern NH Services, Inc. Website: www.snhshome.homestead.com/caplinks.html

Belknap-Merrimack Counties CAP

Serves Concord, Franklin, Laconia, Meredith, Suncook, Warner
 Main Number: 225-3295 or (800) 856-5525
 Website: www.bm-cap.org
 Concord 225-6880
 Franklin 934-3444
 Laconia 524-5512
 Meredith 279-4096
 Suncook 485-7824
 Warner 456-2207

Rockingham Community Action

Serves Portsmouth, Salem
 Main Number: (800) 556-9300
 Website: www.rcaction.org
 Salem 898-8435
 Portsmouth 436-3896, or (800) 639-3896

Southern NH Services

Serves Hillisborough County
 Main Number: 668-8010; (800) 322-1073
 Website: www.snh.org
 Nashua 889-3440 or (877) 211-0723
 Manchester 647-4470
 Peterborough 924-9601
 Hillsboro 464-5835 (winter only)
 Milford 673-0756 (winter only)
 Greenville 878-3364 (winter only)

Southwestern Community Services

Serves Cheshire & Sullivan Counties
 (800) 529-0005 Website: www.scs-helps.org
 Keene 352-7512 or 352-7513
 Claremont 543-0148 or 542-9528

Strafford County CAP:

Main Number: 749-1334
www.straffcap.org
 Dover 749-5160 (Outreach Office)
 Farmington 755-9305
 Milton 652-9893
 Rochester 332-3963

Tri County CAP

Serves Coos, Carroll and Grafton Counties
 752-7001 or (800) 552-4617 Website: www.tccap.org

Coos County

Berlin 752-3248
 Colebrook 237-8168
 Lancaster 788-4477

Carroll County

Satellite offices throughout the county (888-842-3835)
 Ossipee 539-4165

Grafton County

Littleton 444-6653
 Plymouth 536-8222
 Woodsville 747-3013
 Lebanon 448-4553

When Agencies Can't Deliver

There are occasions when you find the right agency with the right services, but due to income requirements, an agency having run out of funds, or lengthy waiting lists, you might not be able to get the services you need. It is important that you take the time to develop a support network that can help you in such times. Such sources can include:

- Family, friends, neighbors, co-workers.
- Members of support groups, such as AA. Don't forget to ask for help from on-line support groups.
- Community churches, synagogues, temples (many will provide help to non members).
- Charitable groups within your community such as the Grange, Rotary, Lions Club.
- Condition-specific organizations (see page 10).

ALCOHOL & DRUG TREATMENT PROGRAMS

There are a variety of treatment and support programs for people dealing with addiction in New Hampshire. These include:

Residential treatment services: provides four types of clinically managed substance abuse inpatient treatment services.

- ◆ Clinically managed high intensity residential treatment programs: People referred to a high intensity program are generally experiencing serious problems functioning in a community. Admission is voluntary. The length of stay varies from three months to a year, depending on the needs of the individual.
- ◆ Clinically managed low intensity residential treatment services: designed to provide short-term supportive services to the recovering alcoholic and addict. A program goal is to prepare each resident for self-sufficiency in the community. In order to be eligible for most clinically managed low intensity residential treatment services, a person must have completed a residential program and/or experienced a minimum period of sobriety.
- ◆ Clinically managed medium intensity residential treatment services: (also known as Residential Post-Detoxification Programs) assist individuals who have been substance free for a minimum of 72 hours. Admission is on a voluntary basis. The length of stay averages 28-30 days. Costs vary and are on a sliding fee scale basis.

Do not hesitate to call if you are in need of help.
In an emergency, call 911

- ◆ Clinically managed residential detoxification and sobriety maintenance services: provide short-term residential services in a safe and supportive environment for alcoholics and substance abusers until appropriate treatment becomes available. Services include individual group counseling, educational sessions and introduction to self-help groups. Admission is voluntary. They are typically offered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Outpatient treatment services:

A broad range of services offered in clinics, centers, or offices, by individual practitioners who are certified and specialize in substance abuse treatment.

12 Step Programs:

- **Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous:** A voluntary, worldwide fellowship of men and women from all walks of life who meet together to attain and maintain sobriety. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership (from www.aa.org)
- **AL-ANON and ALATEEN:** Support to friends and family members of problem drinkers. There are no fees. (888)-4AL-ANON (888-425-2666). Website: www.al-anon.alateen.org

TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE TREATMENT AND/OR SUPPORT RESOURCES IN NH:

NH Alcohol, Tobacco and Treatment Program
800-852-3345 X 6100 or 271-6100. They can provide a copy of "The Resource Guide for Alcohol and Drug Prevention and Treatment Services."

New Hampshire Alcoholics Anonymous:
622-6967 Website: www.mv.com/ipusers/nhaa

New Hampshire Narcotics Anonymous:
24 hour helpline 645-4777

NH AL-ANON ALATEEN
(877) 825-2666 Website: www.nhal-anon.org/

Friends of Recovery NH:
647-4629 Website: www.fornh.org

Community Service Council of NH
24 hour substance abuse information and referral service. 228-1959 Website: www.cscnh.org

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Good mental health is something we all want to have, and living with a chronic condition can sometimes challenge our ability to have it. For some, the condition itself can affect the brain chemistry, resulting in a variety of mental health problems. Fortunately, there are a number of resources and services that can help you develop and maintain your mental health.

If you are experiencing a crisis, check your local phone book for the hotline number serving your area, or use the emergency number for the nearest mental health center. If it's really urgent, call 911.

- Call NH NAMI's (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) Information, Support and Referral Service (800) 242-6264 or 225-5359 (M-F, 10-5) www.naminh.org
- For teens, call Headrest's Teen line for VT and NH (800) 639-6095.
- For general information, call the NH Office of Community Mental Health (M-F, 8-4:30) (800) 852-3345 or 603-271-5065. TDD (800) 735-2964.

NH COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTERS

Concord: Riverbend Community Mental Health

228-1551, Emergency : (800) 852-3323

- Concord Office: 228-1600
- Henniker Office: 428-3336
- Franklin Office: 934-3400

Conway: Northern NH Mental Health

447-3347

- Berlin Office: 752-7404
- Conway Office: 447-2111, Emergency: 356-5461
- Groveton Office: 636-2555
- Littleton Office 444-5358
- Wolfeboro Office 569-1884

Dover : Community Partners 335-6470

Keene: Monadnock Family Services 357-6878

Laconia: GENESIS Behavioral Health

524-1100, Emergency: 528-0305

- Plymouth Office: 536-1188

Lebanon: West Central Services

448-01101, Emergency: 542-2578,

Emergency after hours (800) 320-9847

- Claremont Office: 542-2578
- Newport Office: 863-1951

Manchester: The Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester 668-4111

Nashua: Community Council of Nashua

889-6147, Emergency: (800) 762-8191

Portsmouth: Seacoast Mental Health Center

431-6703

Salem: CLM Behavioral Health System

- For an Adult: 434-1577
- For a Child: 893-3548
- Emergency After Hours: 432-2253

MINORITY HEALTH RESOURCES

NH Office of Minority Health

271-3986 or (800) 852-3345, ext. 3986

Web: www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/MHO/default.htm

NH Minority Health Coalition

Non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health of minority populations. Services include medical interpretation, as well as a specific program for Spanish speaking groups.

627-7703 or (866) 460-9933

Website: www.nhhealtheqity.org

International Institute of New Hampshire

Offering comprehensive resettlement services to newcomers (refugees) in New Hampshire. Provides social, health and mental health services. All services are offered free of charge. 647-1500

NH Reach 2010 Initiative

The mission is to improve the health status of African Descendent and Latino communities in New Hampshire, through research, education, and outreach, with a focus on diabetes and hypertension.
627-7703 or (866) 460-9933

US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health

A source of health materials for Asians, African Americans, Native Americans, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Spanish
(800) 444-6472, (301) 230-7199 (TDD)
Website www.omhrc.gov

The NH Hospital Association website [www.nhha.org] provides links to the websites of most of the hospital listed below. Hospital websites can offer a wide array of information about other health related resources in your community.

- Alice Peck Day (Lebanon) 448-3121
- Androscoggin Valley (Berlin) 752-2200
- Catholic Medical Center (Manchester) 668-3545
- Cheshire Medical (Keene) 354-5400
- Concord Hospital (Concord) 225-2711
- Cottage Hospital (Woodsville): 747-2761
- Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC) (Lebanon) 650-5000
- Elliot Hospital (Manchester) 669-5300
- Exeter Hospital (Exeter) 778-7311
- Franklin Regional (Franklin) 934-2060
- Frisbie Memorial (Rochester) 332-5211
- Hampstead Hospital (Hampstead) 329-5311
- Huggins Hospital (Wolfeboro) 569-7500
- Lakes Regional General (Laconia) 524-3211
- Littleton Regional Hospital (Littleton) 444-9000
- Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital (also known as DHMC): (Lebanon): 650-5000
- Memorial Hospital (N. Conway) 356-5461
- Monadnock Community Hospital (Peterborough) 924-7191
- New Hampshire Hospital (Concord) 271-5300
- New London Hospital (New London) 526-2911
- Parkland Medical Center (Derry) 432-1500
- Portsmouth Regional (Portsmouth) 436-5110
- Southern NH Medical Center (Nashua) 577-2000
- Speare Memorial (Plymouth) 536-1120
- St Joseph Hospital (Nashua) 882-3000
- Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital (Colebrook) 237-4971
- Valley Regional (Claremont) 542-7771
- Weeks Medical Center (Lancaster) 788-4911
- Wentworth Douglas (Dover) 742-5252
- Veterans Administration Medical Center (Manchester) 624-4366

A Reminder about Phone Numbers

All phone numbers listed in this Guide are in NH's area code of (603), unless noted otherwise.

The area code (802) indicates a Vermont phone number.

The following area codes indicate toll-free calls: (800), (866), (877), (888)

VERMONT HOSPITALS CLOSE TO NH

- Brattleboro Memorial Hospital (Brattleboro) (802) 257-0341 or www.bmhvt.org
- Brattleboro Retreat (Brattleboro) (802) 257-7785 www.bratreteat.org
- Mt. Ascutney Hospital & Health Center (Windsor) (802) 674-6711
- North Country Hospital (Newport) (802) 334-7331 www.nchsi.org
- Northeastern Vermont Regional (St. Johnsbury) (802) 748-8141 www.nvrh.org
- Springfield Hospital (Springfield) (802) 885-2151 www.springfieldhospital.org
- VA Medical Center (White River Junction) (802) 295-9363

LONG TERM & HOME CARE

Long term care provides a range of services to those who need help with activities of daily living (e.g. bathing, dressing, or eating), household chores, or assistance with medication, finances or transportation. Long term care can take place in a variety of settings including the home, rehabilitation facility, assisted living center, or nursing home.

Home care addresses a wide array of needs. For some, it involves finding the temporary supports and services that are needed for short-term or more lengthy recovery. For many, it reflects the reality that institutional care simply isn't affordable. For others, it reflects the choice to live and die at home. In any case, it is important to be able to think clearly about the options, and know what they are. Fortunately, there are many organizations that help you understand and make informed choices about these difficult decisions. The information below offers a start.

HOME HEALTH SERVICES

These can range from care from skilled professionals (nurses, physical therapists, medical social workers), to support services such as housecleaning, meal preparation, or running errands. For information about services and resources closest to you contact:

- ◆ The Home Care Association of NH, represents licensed agencies that provide in home health care and supportive services to individuals who live in NH., 225-5597.
Website: www.homecarenh.org
- ◆ NH Department of Health and Human Services Home and Community Based Care (800) 351-1888 or 271-4680. Their website [www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/BEAS/home-community.htm], although long, offers a summary of what types of services are offered in the state.
- ◆ The NH Division of Elderly and Adult Services (800) 351-1888

HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE

Hospice and palliative care has to do with offering expert support to people (and their families) facing end-of-life issues. In general, this support takes place in the home.

For program closest to you, contact the Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice of Vermont & New Hampshire: Phone: (800) 575-5162

OTHER HOME SERVICES

For information on Adult Daycare, Homemaker services; respite care; personal care services or case management, contact:

- ◆ NH Department of Health and Human Services Home and Community Based Care (800) 351-1888 or 271-4680
- ◆ The NH Division of Elderly and Adult Services (800) 351-1888
- ◆ Granite State Independent Living Center's Personal Care Services Provider Program. This program teaches eligible individuals and/or their authorized care representative how to select, train, schedule and supervise those who provide personal care services. Contact GSIL (800) 826-3700 (888)-396-3459 (TTY).

SURROUNDING STATES' RESOURCES

Maine

Elder and Adult Services (800) 262-2232.
Website: www.maine.gov/dhhs/beas

Massachusetts

Mass Long Term Care (800) CARE-For
Website: www.masslongtermcare.org

Vermont

- ◆ Department of Aging and Independent Living (802) 241-2400 or www.dad.state.vt.us
- ◆ VNA Health Services (800) 713-0893 or (802) 229-0579.
Website: www.vnavt.com
- ◆ Senior Helpline (866) 652-4636, (800) 642-5119 (V/TTY)
Website: www.vermont211.org

INSTITUTIONAL CARE

Institutional care is that which takes place in a licensed facility, with professional staff. There are over 80 nursing homes in New Hampshire. To find the best one for you or your family member, the following will help:

- ◆ NH Division of Elderly and Adult Services (800) 351-1888
- ◆ NH Health Care Association
226-4900 website www.nhhca.org
- ◆ NH Ombudsman (Advocate) for Long Term Care (800) 442-5640 or 271-4375
- ◆ The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has information about nursing homes and their inspection reports. (877) 267-2323
Website: www.medicare.gov/NHCompare
- ◆ The NH Health Care Association's pamphlet "How to Select a Nursing Home," can be obtained by calling 226-4900 or going to their website: www.nhhca.org/selectnh.htm

ASSISTED LIVING

Assisted living offers a home like setting that provides personal care services, 24-hour supervision and assistance, activities and health-related services. It is primarily for those who need help with activities of daily living (meals, bathing, dressing, and taking medication), but don't need the skills of a nursing home.

You can obtain a list of licensed assisted living facilities by contacting: the NH Division of Elderly and Adult Services (800) 351-1888

- ◆ NH Health Care Association
226-4900. Website: www.nhhca.org
- ◆ NH Ombudsman (Advocate) for Long Term Care (800) 442-5640 or 271-4375
- ◆ To help develop your list of questions for reviewing an Assisted Living Home, use The NH Health Care Association's pamphlet "How to Select an Assisted Living Home." Call 226-4900 or visit the website: www.nhhca.org/selectal.htm

REHABILITATION

The goal of rehabilitation is to help an injured or disabled person restore his or her functioning to the highest possible level. Rehabilitation programs can exist in a hospital, nursing home or in a free standing rehabilitation facility. Which one you need will depend on the condition being treated. You can find out about the rehabilitation programs in NH by contacting:

- ◆ NH Division of Elderly and Adult Services (800) 351-1888
- ◆ NH Health Care Association
226-4900 Website www.nhhca.org
- ◆ NH Ombudsman (Advocate) for Long Term Care (800) 442-5640 or 271-4375
- ◆ The NH Hospital Association 225-0900

If rehabilitation is required for a specific condition, such as a brain or spinal cord injury, contact the state chapter of the national organization (such as NH Brain Injury Foundation) about the best places for rehabilitation. These organizations (see page 10) generally supply rehabilitation check lists to help you in making your choice in a rehabilitation facility. It is likely that for more specialized rehab care you will need to go out of state.

NOTES

ADDITIONAL TOOLS, RESOURCES, & GUIDES

There are excellent resource pamphlets and materials available which not only inform you about your condition but also help you keep track of the information you might receive. Here are a few additional sources for accessing information and tools.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

This on-line resource provides you with access to several consumer resources relating to taking medications.
www.talkaboutrx.org

US AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY

Two excellent, free, publications are offered through the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), *Now You Have a Diagnosis, What's Next? Using Healthcare Information to Help Make Treatment Decisions*, and, *Your Medicine, Play it Safe*.

- ◆ You can obtain copies of these publications from the AHRQ by calling (800) 358-9295, or sending an e-mail to ahrqpubs@ahrq.gov, or visiting the website at www.ahrq.gov/consumer.
- ◆ AHRQ also offers "Q-Pack," which includes materials that will help you choose wisely when it comes to your health care. This is currently available only on the Internet, at www.ahrq.gov

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE (NLM)

As noted on page 5, there are several excellent sources for condition-specific information on the web. The NLM offers an extensive listing of disease and health-related topics through the MedLine Plus website: www.medlineplus.gov.

CHECKLISTS

Checklists can help you think through the type of information that will help you in the future. By going through the lists and filling in the blanks, you can see for yourself what you already know and what you might want to figure out.

Several national, state, and local agencies have developed checklists that help you think through what you might need. You may find these resources at health facilities, on some of the websites you visit in the course of exploring the resources covered in this booklet, or through your local social service agencies.

PERSONAL HEALTH JOURNALS

Many people find it very helpful to keep their own personal "medical record," in which they record information, such as medications, treatments, test results, important contacts, medical suppliers, names of professionals involved in their care, and similar important information.

The Chronic Conditions Information Network has recently developed the Personal Health Notebook™, which is specifically designed for people living with chronic conditions, and helps keep information together in one place, so that when you go for a visit to your doctor or service agency, you have everything at your fingertips. Some area hospitals and local associations offer licensed copies for free. Otherwise, the Personal Health Notebook™ can be purchased from CCIN by calling (802) 226-7807, or visiting the website: www.personalhealthnotebook.net

TOLL-FREE NUMBERS FOR HEALTH INFORMATION

Selected toll-free numbers for organizations that provide health-related information, education, and support. Some of the organizations use recorded messages; others provide personalized counseling and referrals. Most offer educational materials; some charge handling fees. Published by the National Health Information Center, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The document is available as a free download from the Internet at www.health.gov/NHIC/Pubs/

To order a printed copy, contact the
ODPHP Communication Support Center, P.O. Box 37366, Washington, DC 20013-7366

ABOUT CCIN

The Chronic Conditions Information Network has been working with health care providers, patients, and community services since 1996, to promote more integrated networks of care, and empower those living with chronic health conditions so that they can successfully live their lives to the fullest. Realizing that most of the time, living with a chronic illness takes place at home or in the community (not the doctor's office or hospital), CCIN views "health care" in the broader context of where people live, work, play, rest, or go to school. With this in mind, CCIN develops materials and offers workshops that enable individuals to successfully care for their health during the 99% of the time that they aren't in the presence of a health care provider. We are, after all, ultimately dependent upon ourselves.

PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ **How to Get What You Need Guides:**
These guides reflect the broad range of needs that often emerge with a chronic health condition, and the value of knowing where and who to go to in order to have them met. The How To Guides are available in PDF format from the CCIN website, for purchase, or through licensing agreements.
- ◆ **Personal Health Notebook™**
A notebook that assists consumers and caregivers in keeping track of their health needs and their health care. The Personal Health Notebook is available for purchase. CCIN also offers licensing opportunities for organizations that wish to produce customized versions for their clients.

NEWS DIGESTS: CCIN offers several free electronic news digests for providers in the region:

- ◆ **CCIN Digest:** Covering asthma, diabetes, hypertension, and cholesterol.
- ◆ **CCIN Round Up:** A calendar of regional events relating to chronic care, along with other resource information which would be useful to providers.

WEBSITES:

- ◆ **CCIN website:**
A free, electronic network of information and resources for those affected by chronic conditions in New Hampshire and Vermont. www.cc-info.net
- ◆ **AsthmaNow**
Developed in conjunction with the NH State Asthma Control Program, the NH Lung Association, and the NH Area Health Education Centers, this site provides a comprehensive resource on asthma treatment, prevention, and care. www.asthmanow.net
- ◆ **HIP-NH**
Collaborating with NH AHEC and the NH Public Libraries, CCIN has been instrumental in recognizing the importance of the public librarian as a pivotal resource in a community as far as medical and social information and referral. www.hipnh.org

CONSULTING

- ◆ CCIN works with state health agencies, medical centers, and social service providers in developing programs, websites, health-related social marketing campaigns, and educational materials that relate to chronic conditions.

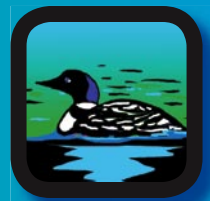
CCIN is an autonomous, non-profit organization, and we pride ourselves in our ability to foster collaborative efforts while maintaining our independent affiliations. CCIN's Board of Directors is comprised of people who represent the populations we serve. Our activities and publications, many of which are available in PDF file from our website, are supported through federal and state grants, Foundation and Corporate sponsors, and private donations.

CCIN

www.cc-info.net
info@cc-info.net
 (802) 226-7807
 PO Box 3, Cavendish VT 05142

About the illustrations

The illustrations used in this guide represent well-known images in New Hampshire. The purple lilac, purple finch, and paper birch are the state flower, bird, and tree. The elusive loon may haunt us with its lonely cry, but its constancy and solidity reflects its deeper strengths. Finally, the heron is a symbol of wisdom & persistence, both of which come into play when living with a chronic condition.



\$12.95



Chronic Conditions Information Network (CCIN) of Vermont and New Hampshire — an independent, non profit organization, bringing information and self-management tools to people living with chronic health conditions.
www.cc-info.net

