



Nevada News CONSUMER DIRECT

Toll free: 1-877-786-4999 www.ConsumerDirectOnline.net

Union Targets Consumer Direct

As all of you know by now, SEIU Local 775NW has targeted Consumer Direct for unionization. They launched their 5-state simultaneous campaign against caregivers on a Friday evening over a month ago.

Reports are that the union organizers have been very aggressive in approaching caregivers in their homes to solicit their support. We have heard from several caregivers who don't appreciate SEIU's visits and who don't appreciate SEIU's methods.

The union is attempting to convince caregivers to sign authorization cards, which is the first step in the union election process.

To date, SEIU has asked the National Labor Relations Board for an election in 2 locations - Roswell and Las Vegas, NM - but then SEIU withdrew their request for an election due to a possible lack of caregiver interest.

The union has now started a website dedicated to organizing Consumer Direct and is making inaccurate, negative statements about the Company and its President, Bill Woody. But then you can't really expect an out-of-state union to know much about the company.

Many caregivers have come forward to publicly pronounce their support for Consumer Direct and their opposition to SEIU and its organizers. Those organizers simply can't take "No" for an answer.

The Company believes that, in the states where it does business, it pays and treats its caregivers better than caregivers working with our competitors who are unionized with SEIU. As far as we know, Consumer Direct caregivers are currently earning from \$1 to \$2 more per hour.

We are committed to educating caregivers and consumers about the SEIU and why unionization is not in anyone's best interests.

We will try to keep you updated on what's going on. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Steve Richards at 1-866-438-8591.

Thanks for all the great work you do!

Nevada Welcomes New Team Members

HOT AUGUST NIGHTS will give way to COOL FALL FUN before we know it! Team Nevada has seen a few Team members (Kim, Joan, Allison, and Eva C) move on to other opportunities this summer.

Fortunately, we've already welcomed two wonderful new Team members: Lisa Hernandez, Program Coordinator for Las Vegas, and Cynthia Padilla, Bilingual Field Coordinator for Las Vegas.

Our Elko Support Broker, Pam Wynes, is now also a Program Coordinator. Pam will be specializing in taking care of the needs of our consumers and caregivers in rural and frontier areas of Northern Nevada.

We are busy preparing for a tough legislative session. As you know, Nevada has already had to face some very tough budget decisions and more difficult choices are ahead.

Consumer Direct, as always, is working with advocacy groups to protect Self-Directed programs, fair Caregiver wages, and keep the focus on supporting people who want to receive the help they need at home.

Be sure to read on for information about Home Safety, addressing Caregiver issues, and our upcoming Consumer Advisory Council /Understanding Seizures Training, too.

Enjoy these last days of summer and Take Care! Remember, we are here for YOU!

Team Nevada

Caregiver Corner

I am the manager for Consumer Direct in Nevada and I am also a family caregiver. I understand how hard it is to juggle bills and the needs of others while caring for someone you love.

I just want to make sure you all know that Consumer Direct and I are fighting for you. We continue to cover the costs associated with required training, and maintain the highest possible wage, although the reimbursement rate from Medicaid has dropped to 2003 levels.

This may become even more challenging as Medicaid and the legislature attempt to share an even smaller "pie" of state money among a great number of essential programs.

I am also a member of the Caregiver Coalition. Our coalition's mission is to improve the lives of caregivers through training, advocacy, and recognition. We work year-round to recognize caregiver's efforts and raise



Program Manager
Laura Cogor

community awareness of caregiver issues.

Each November (National Caregiver Month), we also recognize caregivers at the Linda Carr caregiver awards luncheon. Our coalition understands your high priority issues.

We know caregivers desperately need health benefits and we are always working to improve wages.

too. We have learned that a very large percentage of caregivers also struggle with depression. We are looking for ways to help with this critical issue.

It is more important now than ever to make sure your voice is heard. We would love to hear any ideas, issues, or concerns you may have. Please email: infonv@consumerdirectonline.net or call 1-877-786-4999.

If you like, I would be happy to share your comments with the Caregiver Coalition and several other organizations who would love to help.

**THANKS FOR ALL
YOU DO!**

Consumer Corner

Team Nevada wants to remind all consumers: *We Are Here for YOU!* Our goal is to make sure you get whatever support you need to stay in your home and Self Direct your care. We are assisting consumers and caregivers from 3 offices now: Elko, Reno, and Las Vegas. We are also always working on your behalf to protect and expand Self Directed options, protect wages and expand benefits for caregivers, and ensure people in every part of the state are able to access services they need at home.

You are invited!

Consumer Advisory Council Meeting September 2, 2010 at 10:30 a.m.

UNDERSTANDING SEIZURES TRAINING

with Marcia O'Malley, Director, Family Ties of Nevada

You can join us in person at any of our offices or by calling 1-866-414-2828, then enter participant code 994658#. Try it -you'll like it! Consumer Advisory meetings are really casual, fun, and a great chance for you and your caregiver(s) to learn something new, and share ideas or concerns you may have with other consumers and caregivers and with Team Nevada.

Consumer Direct Team Nevada

Program Coordinators:

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Janet Hatch, Tonopah
Kathleen Barrette, Caliente
Cynthia Padilla, Las Vegas
Shirley McCoy, Battle Mountain

Choosing a Medical Alert Service

by Russ Copeland

“Mr. Copeland, this is Lifeline calling. Betty’s home medical alert system has indicated that there may be a problem. We have tried contacting her but we cannot get an answer. Can you go to her house right away and check on her?”

As I drove across town, I naturally feared the worst and wondered what kind of situation I might be walking into. My mother-in-law, Betty, lives alone and the thought of her possibly falling due to her age and osteoporosis had bothered our family. Even though we check in on her regularly, we also knew it may be a while before someone found her if she was injured and unable to make it to a phone or call for help.

We had a home medical alert system installed a few months earlier and had made sure the alert button and communicator would work in all areas of the house including her garage.

Our family situation is not unique. People 85 and older are now the fastest growing segment of our society. Millions of our elderly seniors live alone, take medications for chronic health problems, spend several hours a day on their own, and use some kind of aid (i.e., cane, walker) to help get around their homes. Many seniors experience some loss in vision, hearing and can have slower reaction times.

Medication or dosage mistakes can happen with our seniors. Hospitals are also releasing their patients sooner so they can recuperate at home. All these factors are indicators that a home alert system may be a good precaution.

While many different services and features are available from different companies, the basic home medical alert system has:

- ◆ ***an alert button worn around the neck or on the wrist by the client***
- ◆ ***a two-way communicator that automatically calls a response center when the alert button is pushed***

We also made sure Betty has an easy-to-use cell phone at her disposal, but did not want to rely on it in case of an emergency. We were concerned we may not be home if she tried to call, that the batteries may be low or recharging when needed, that she may not have it with her at the time of an accident, or she may be unable to dial or give accurate



Your home medical alert service should be tested onsite to ensure it will work in your favorite places. Photo courtesy of Lifeline.

information to a 911 call center if injured. We decided there were too many potential situations where a cell phone may not be the best solution.

Some home medical alert systems do not have their own response centers and rely on forwarding calls to family then onto emergency services if no one responds. The advantage of a private response center is that they will have the client’s phone and address as well as their family contacts and

medical information handy so

if the client calls and cannot speak, they know right away who to call, where to send the help, and what may be wrong.

It is a good idea to work with a company that will come to your location and will set up and thoroughly test the equipment for you. You can then ensure the transmitter and communicator will all work properly on site, especially in a garage, on a second story or in the basement. The person using the system may have special requirements, have questions about services, or need some training on how to properly use or reset the equipment in case of a power outage.

Some home alert companies require expensive up-front equipment fees or long-term contracts, so it pays to research and compare the best features and system that work best for you. If you have access to the internet, online websites like <http://www.medicalalertreviews.com> can be very helpful in comparing the leading companies. The website also offers customer reviews of many different home alert systems.

Thankfully, Betty answered the door when I arrived. The problem turned out to be a disconnected phone line due to an area construction project. The Lifeline system had detected a problem and notified me when they could not contact Betty through the in-house communicator or by her phones. I called the phone company and her phone line was promptly repaired.

When a person is having increasing problems maintaining their independence, or is fearful of having an accident at home, a home medical alert system can be an aid that can give them several more years of independent living. The peace of mind it gives our family is well worth the investment.



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Four Easy Steps For Getting Paid on Time

- 1.** Timesheets are due in your local office by midnight on Monday. Any timesheets that are turned in after midnight on Monday will be marked "late" and may not make payroll in time.
- 2.** Always check tasks against the sample provided by Consumer Direct Personal Care. Make sure all tasks on your timesheet are authorized on your consumer's service plan.
- 3.** If you don't have Direct Deposit this would be a good time to sign up. With Direct Deposit your money is deposited straight into your bank account. If you have a pay issue it is easier to resolve. It does not have to be a checking account, it can be a savings account.
- 4.** When you are sending someone to pick up your check we need to have written permission from you. The person picking up your check will need to show proof of ID when they come in.

