



MONADNOCK
DEVELOPMENTAL
SERVICES

HELPING PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
LIVE AND WORK IN THEIR COMMUNITIES



Summer 2021 Edition



THE CLIPBOARD

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The mission of MDS is to work toward inclusion, participation and mutual relationships for all people who are at risk of isolation from their community.

www.mds-nh.org
Inclusion
Participation
Mutual Relationships



From the Desk of Alan Greene CSNI Update: NH Budget Signed Into Law

Here is an update on the state budget from Community Support Network, Inc. (CSNI) which is the association for New Hampshire's 10 Area Agencies.

Most disappointing to our community is that the funding for an adult dental benefit was vetoed by the House and thus didn't get included in this biennial budget. However, it will be taken up for discussion later this year by both the House and the Senate. We will be in touch with any news.

State Budget Approved—Report from CSNI—July 2021

The final regularly scheduled House and Senate sessions for the 2021 legislative session were held in late June. With many compromises, HB 1 and HB 2 (state budget) were approved in the House and Senate, and both were sent to the Governor who signed them into law.

As a reminder, the Developmental Services (BDS) budget remains unchanged from the Governor's recommendation on February 15.

Of note:

The State Senate had included funding to begin a new adult dental benefit in the next biennium in HB 2. This funding was essentially vetoed by the House members of the committee of conference. This is not included in the budget that passed.

A 5% rate increase to the Choices for Independence (CFI) waiver was retained in the final version. The CFI funding line has been underspending in recent years. As a result, a rate increase was possible without appropriating new funding.

Retained/Re-Referred Bills for Later Consideration

This year, the House and Senate retained or re-referred 232 bills (190 retained in the House, 42 re-referred in the Senate). Currently, no committees have meetings scheduled to review these bills, so most or all of them will be taken up in the late summer or early fall.

Some of the bills that may be of interest.

- HB 103-FN, establishing a dental benefit under the state Medicaid program.
- HB 149-FN, extending certain civil immunity to public and private entities during major public health emergencies
- HB 540, relative to supported decision-making as an alternative to guardianship.
- HB 602-FN, relative to reimbursements for telemedicine.
- HB 613-FN-L, relative to state aid to school districts with special education pupils and relative to pooled risk management for unanticipated special education cost recovery.
- SB 44, establishing the New Hampshire workforce pathway program.
- SB 63, relative to business liability protection for exposure to coronavirus and COVID-19.

(continued on next page)

THE CLIPBOARD



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The Clipboard is an agency-wide MDS newsletter. All departments, individuals, families, and community organizations are invited to submit items to be included in the publication. The opinions expressed in articles are those of the people who have written and submitted the material. Therefore, the information contained in these articles is not necessarily the opinion of MDS.

Your suggestions are welcome. Send your comments or articles to:

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Legislative Liaison Update

MDS is pleased to introduce Sue Walthour, Legislative Liaison for MDS. This position focuses on families and individuals supported by MDS and how they can best be advocates on important issues. Sue will be reaching out to families in our region in coming months. Her role at MDS is to:



Welcome to Sue Walthour,
MDS Legislative Liaison.

- Build relationships with MDS individuals, families and legislators.
- Keep track of legislation that directly affects MDS families and individuals.
- Share legislative and advocacy information with families.
- Meet with legislators to encourage them to learn more about MDS and other organizations that support people with disabilities.
- Show legislators how their decisions affect families.

Sue, a native Pennsylvanian, is a long-time resident of NH and a 25-year resident of Keene. She recently retired from Keene State College, where she held several positions over the course of eight years. Sue has worked with the DD community since she was a teenager, first as a babysitter of a boy who experienced multiple disabilities, then as a dorm/cottage aide at the Brandon Training School in Brandon, VT. She has worked as a DSP, a respite care provider, and is now happy to be serving as Legislative Liaison for MDS.

In her free time, Sue enjoys spending time with her elderly parents, hiking and skiing with friends, caring for her 20-year-old cat, her home, reading, and truly being grateful for each day. Sue is looking forward to meeting everyone at MDS!

From the Desk of Alan Greene *(continued from page 1)*

Retained and re-referred bills will not be the only legislative activity between now and next January. The legislature also created about 20 study committees and commissions that will begin work in the late summer or early fall.

There is a meaningful difference between a study committee and a study commission—it is not just a matter of word choice. A study committee consists solely of legislators—typically one or two senators and three to five representatives—although it can solicit information and testimony from non-legislators. A study commission includes a few legislators and some number of non-legislators representing parties that have an interest in the subject matter.

One new study of interest to CSNI and the Area Agencies is the Social Security Act Waiver Programs which will study achieving parity in reimbursement among organizations that provide Social Security Act Section 1915(c) waiver programs. These waiver programs provide nearly all of the funding that the Area Agencies use to provide services. The committee will report its findings and any recommendations for proposed legislation on or before November 15, 2022.

** This update provided by Community Support Network, Inc. (CSNI) is a nonprofit organization that works in support of the 10 Area Agencies in NH, providing administrative and financial services to the Area Agencies, establishing policy positions on legislative or regulatory issues, and serving as the communication center on issues and services related to developmental disability issues.*

News & Notes

Double Your SNAP Benefits This Summer

The Granite State Market Match program allows SNAP recipients to double the value of their benefits when shopping at participating farmers markets, CSAs, and farm stands in NH. For example, spend \$10 in SNAP benefits at a farmers market and receive an additional \$10 to spend of fresh, locally-grown vegetables and fruit!

Granite State Market Match benefits farmers by expanding their client base and benefits community members by making healthy food more affordable.

Local groups honoring this offer include the **Keene, Hinsdale, Winchester and Jaffrey Farmers Markets** as well as the **Monadnock Food Co-op** and the **Stonewall Farm Store**.

Antioch NE Helps Launch the MDS Garden



Susan Shaw and Dawn Fenner are among those helping create the MDS Community Garden on Railroad Street.

MDS once again has a small community garden on Railroad Street behind the MDS office. **Ruzzel Zullo** has coordinated the effort, with the help of Abby Schneider at Antioch’s CGC program, which graciously donated \$150 and physical labor to get things going. Here’s to a productive season!

Summer Achievers in the MDS Community



Bessie Cuming (center) receives a Lifetime of Kindness degree, presented by Emma-Rose Mellon BSN and Vicki Mellon BSN.

Bessie Cuming has always struggled when others graduate and this year would be especially challenging as two family members were set to receive degrees. Her relatives responded to the challenge by conferring on Bessie her very own degree—complete with cap and gown! Please help us congratulate Bessie for earning the Lifetime of Kindness degree from Life University and The World. Bravo!

This summer **Aron St. Peter** participated in the Best Buddies Walk. Congratulations to Aron.



Aron St. Peter finishes the Best Buddies Walk.

Family Council

Family Council Picnic in June is a Big Hit



Once again, the MDS Family Council and the Partners in Health Family Council partnered in sponsoring the annual picnic. On a bright sunny day in June, 95 people gathered at The Inn at East Hill Farm in Troy, NH to enjoy good food, gorgeous views of Mt. Monadnock, company and fun! It was hot this year but two swimming pools, shade and a constant breeze made it comfortable for most. A close runner up in popularity to swimming was the drumming activity with Youth Beatz. Children and adults alike rocked equality, teamwork, creativity, support and belief with Mr. Rich. To find out more about Youth Beatz, visit youth-beatz.com.



Family Council Helps MDS Families During COVID

Recognizing that the Covid-19 pandemic presented new and unique challenges for families, the Family Council sought to relieve some of those pressures. Responding to families' requests, these funds helped to make life at home a bit easier.

Take a look at some of the ways Family Council funds have been used and their impact:

Wii Fit: "Lots of fitness games and a few mental strategy games as well! Thank you."

Bike Purchase: A 15 year-old is able to bike to his first part-time job

Swing: "It will be so nice to be able to bring her outside and have her in it. Not too heavy so we can move it around!"



Help with Karate Lessons: "Thank you so much, this is awesome!!"

Gift Cards: Movie theater and mini golf passes for grandparents who are raising their grandson and supporting their daughter. Both grandmother and adult daughter are having chemo treatments for cancer.

Support for an Inclusive Camp

Help with Van Modification

Assistance with an Adaptive Bike



Profile

Writing Music Together Provides Hope and Joy

We wanted to share author Terry Farish's recent story from InDepthNH.org that shines a light on how two people at a shared-living residence turned to music during the pandemic. Catherine FitzPatrick and Michael Furlong have worked together for many decades since Michael left the Laconia State School, where he had lived for 10 years. Recent years have brought two big changes. First, Michael's elderly adoptive mother died. Then life shut down with COVID-19. Grief and isolation set in.

Catherine works for Psalm 33, Inc., a home care residential program in Greenfield, NH that serves people as one of MDS's providers. Catherine's sister, Mary FitzPatrick, is the director of Psalm 33, Inc. Michael moved there a few days before his nineteenth birthday, when he came out of the Laconia State School. He is now 56.

Catherine and Michael couldn't talk through the losses of the pandemic. Michael, who experiences disabilities including severe autism, doesn't have verbal language. He loves music — his favorites include Chick Corea, Mozart, bird calls, and 99.5 WCRB on the radio. Catherine is a composer who studied composition at the New England Conservatory and the Berklee College of Music. So, in imagining what they could share to express the grief and solace, it was natural for them both to turn to music.

Michael has always loved to listen to Catherine play the piano. During the pandemic, Catherine demonstrated to him how a composer makes choices in a chord progression. She invited him to make choices between two chords. Would he like a melody to go up or go down? Blinking meant yes. A blank face meant no.

They added "Creating Music" to Michael's goals for his yearly plan with his care team that includes his MDS Service Coordinator, Ryann LaBombard. Catherine hoped inviting Michael to write a song could help him make his feelings known in a new way.

A black music notebook became key to their work. That's where Catherine jotted their ideas, like character sketches. Michael had a planning board on which he selected the day's activities. He often selected "Music, Breakfast, Write New Music" on his planning board. "Write new music" meant, get the black notebook.

Catherine played a chord, then wrote notations for the chords that Michael had chosen. They experimented. "What if we put the end of the song at the beginning? What if we repeat at the beginning? At the end? What is the music trying to say? Where does the song end?"

During the pandemic, in and out of quarantine, Catherine and Michael composed eight songs, including one inspired by the memory of Michael's mother called "Mothers and Sons."

They are working on their ninth song. Catherine says, "Right now it's called, 'That Song That Makes You Go and Get the Black Notebook.'"

Catherine talked about their journey with Michael. "We really feel he is brilliant," she said. "We work on ways for him to learn how to ask for what he needs so that we can connect with his reality."

Older sister Mary muses: "Catherine has a gift. Her creativity, perseverance, determination and vision are second to none, particularly for people who do not use words to communicate." That's high praise coming from someone who herself has worked diligently with remarkable results on behalf of people with disabilities.



Catherine and Michael work together on a song to help express grief and create solace in a nonverbal way.

Photo by Terry Farish

We're grateful to author Terry Farish and InDepthNH.org for allowing MDS to share an adapted version of this inspiring story with our staff, individuals, families and friends.

Community Support

Grateful for Community Support

Coming through the pandemic, MDS has had tremendous support to replenish critical funds for unmet needs of individuals and families served by MDS.

May's **Hilltop Golf Course Fundraiser** for MDS brought in nearly \$1,000. Golfers and non-golfers could play for MDS and order a Tito's beverage, with a portion going to MDS. A group of staff and friends gathered on a sunny May afternoon, with several teams taking on the 9-hole course challenge. Others putted for MDS while enjoying refreshing cocktails on the deck. We're grateful to Annie Card for allowing MDS to take the lead in this new fundraising (and friend-raising) initiative.



Above, Mary-Anne Wisell thanks Annie Card for Hilltop Golf's gift to MDS.

Left, putters Ruzzel Zullo, Becky Ragazzo, Sheila Mahon and Lisa Beaudoin take to the putting green.

Avid golfers Mary-Anne and Julie Tewksbury head out for 9 holes (below).

In April **Ocean State Job Lot** provided gift cards to MDS to use for individuals and families in need, as part of their program.

In May the **Peterborough Kiwanis Club** gave a donation to the MDS Children's Services department, as a result of a presentation by Anna Lake to the group on the importance of childhood early intervention.

In June **Clark-Mortenson** presented a generous gift to MDS, through one of its partners, **MMG Insurance**. MMG has a Community Outreach Initiative to support organizations in local communities. Clark-Mortenson nominated MDS for the program, who was selected as a \$1,000 dollar recipient.

Also in June MDS was the recipient of two grants, one from the Smith-Morison Fund and the other from the David Weir Fund, both part of the **New Hampshire Charitable Foundation**.

We're also pleased to report that two local companies have provided grants this summer to **Partners in Health**, a program at MDS. **C&S Wholesale Grocers** and **Keene's More Than a Thrift Store** provided funds to support respite for Partners in Health families. Together these generous grants will make it possible for families with children with chronic health conditions to take a few hours to go to their own appointments, tend to other family members, or just take a break from the very stressful daily caregiving tasks.



Alan Green accepts gift cards from the Ocean State Job Lot team in Peterborough.



Joel Fitzpatrick receives a check from MMG and Clark-Mortenson.

People at MDS

MDS welcomes the following new staff members:

Paul Frain of Hinsdale has joined the PDMS Department as a Self-Directed Services (SDS) Coordinator. Paul has worked many years in mental and behavioral health, at the Brattleboro Retreat for the past 10 years and before that, in Maine and Massachusetts. Paul also works with an individual with developmental disabilities through Families First and has been with them for many years now.

Nicole Dubriske of Troy comes to MDS as a Job Developer for MCST. She most recently worked as a paraprofessional with SAU 93. Prior to that, Nicole was the resident services coordinator for Keene Housing Authority as well as a community job specialist in Manchester for Southern NH Services. Nicole is a graduate of Franklin Pierce University with a Bachelor of Arts in Human Services.

Sue Walthour joins MDS as Legislative Liaison. She recently retired from Keene State College, where she held several positions over the course of eight years. Sue has worked with the DD community since she was a teenager, first as a babysitter of a boy who experienced multiple disabilities, then as a dorm/cottage aide at the Brandon Training School in Brandon, VT. She has worked as a DSP and a respite care provider. Sue is a long-time resident of New Hampshire, and a 25-year resident of Keene.

A Significant Anniversary at MDS

MDS sends out huge congratulations and many thank-yous to **Dale Miner**, who celebrated her 30th year at MDS in June of 2021. Her many roles at MDS have included

Respite Coordinator, Family Advocate, and Adult and Children Service Coordination. As MDS Intake Coordinator for the past 16 years, Dale has gracefully helped local families determine eligibility



for services, and then guided them through the intake process. Her kindness, compassion and sincerity has helped thousands of families over the years. Thank you for your service.

Run~Walk~Smile 5K/10K/1-Mi
Saturday, October 30, 2021
Raising Funds for Adult Dental Care



5K/1-Mile/10K
10.30.2021

Registration is OPEN! Sign up soon!

5K Run or Walk

Flat, fast 3.1 mile course on Keene Bike Path and through east Keene neighborhoods.

1-Mile Fun Run/Walk

Family friendly walk/run along the Keene Bike Path.

10K Chapman Challenge

Challenging 6.2 mile course on Keene Bike Path, with uphill run on Chapman Road (runners only).

Prizes, Giveaways, Family Activities at the Event

Saturday, October 30, 2021 @ 10:00 a.m.
Railroad St & Community Way in Keene

Cost:

- \$25 per 5K or 10K entry
- \$15 for 1-Mile Fun Run
- \$15 age 12 and under
- Family Rate: 25% discount 4+ family members
- Free age 3 and under

Online race registration now open! Go to mids-nh.org. Processing fees covered by Raynor Dental.

Free T-shirts for first 100 registrants—must register before September 20, 2021.

Run~Walk~Smile will follow local and national COVID-19 safety protocols in effect at the time.

Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH Graduation

Congratulations to the 2021 graduates of Project SEARCH – **Krysten Collins**, **Madison Pearsall** and **Michael Roberge**. Project SEARCH is an employment training program at Cheshire Medical Center/Dartmouth Hitchcock (CMC/DH). The graduates spent the last ten months learning real world skills training through a series of internships and classroom learning, all designed to teach marketable skills that will transfer to a variety of employment settings.

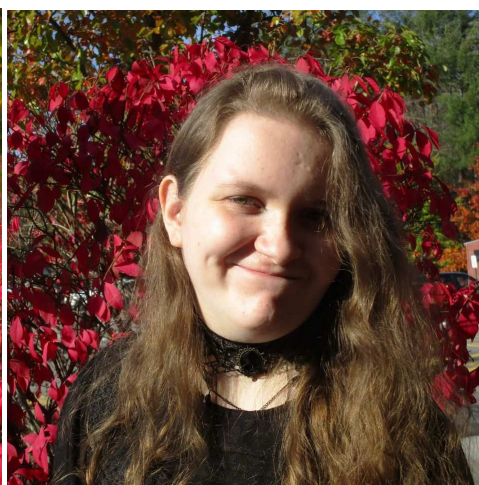
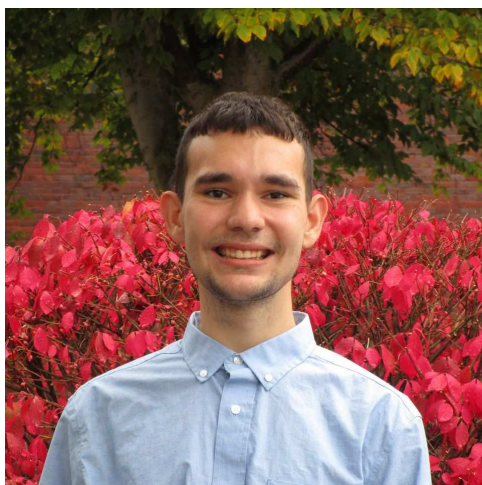
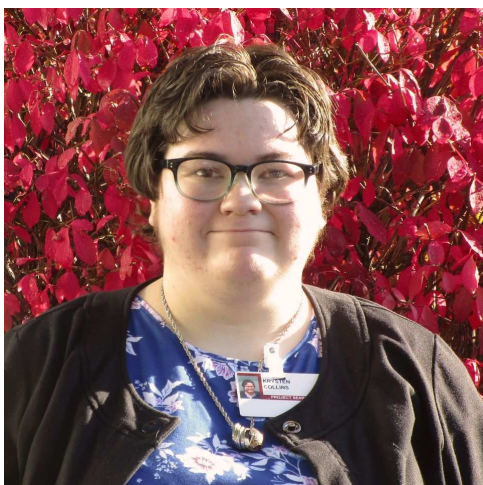
This year's trio of interns studied hard in the classroom and via Zoom. Their internship time included working in medical records, de-linting, assembling packets, in laundry, the mailroom, supply chain, and transport. Each of them also worked as greeters at the hospital.

Sheila Mahon, MCST Director, sang the praises of these interns at the July 1st graduation ceremony at CMC/DH: "Project SEARCH is hard work. It's stressful to take a chance, to apply for a training program, to learn new skills, and meet new people. Let's not forget that these individuals did this in the midst of a pandemic, in a hospital, the epicenter of a healthcare crisis, and these three thrived."

Sheila continued, "These interns did so because of all of you – families, Project SEARCH and MDS staff, Voc Rehab, and CMC/DH employees. Everyone worked hard together to ensure that they had a rich learning experience, and we thank you."



Congratulations to the Project SEARCH Class of 2021: Krysten Collins, Michael Roberge and Madison Pearsall, pictured left to right.



Project SEARCH is a program at MDS. Partners are Cheshire Medical Center/Dartmouth Hitchcock, MDS, and NH Vocational Rehabilitation. For more information on this employment training program, contact Sheila Mahon at 603-352-1304 or ProjectSEARCH@mds-nh.org.

MDS Strategic Plan 2021-2025

In the coming years, MDS will build on its greatest strengths: a dedicated group of staff and provider agencies, relationship-centered service delivery, and financial stability. We will continue to provide high quality community-based, family-driven services in an environment with continually shifting elements.

This past year's pandemic has brought to the forefront a number of opportunities as well as challenges for the organization. Our mission's watchwords of inclusion, participation and mutual relationships were sorely tested during the pandemic as we tried to find new ways to keep people safe and still connected. We recognize the need to make smarter use of technology to become both internally and externally more effective. Workforce shortages and staff turnover, which are chronic issues, will require focused, deliberate attention, especially as many of our long-term staff approach retirement. Clear stakeholder communication – in service delivery, family support and staff development – will be a crucial part of our success.

External forces over which we have only limited control continue to affect what we do and how we operate. Federal and state regulations create personnel, paper-work and funding challenges, as do changing political climates. Workforce, housing and transportation shortages are broad concerns for everyone in our region; MDS can and should be at the table as these systemic issues are addressed.

Our efforts over the next five years will focus on supporting individuals to be as independent as possible, supporting families, building community relationships, fostering a healthy work environment, and shoring up our internal processes, all so that we can provide innovative, high-quality services for individuals with developmental disabilities. That is why we exist, and these efforts are how we will succeed.

The strategic planning committee gathered information via online survey from stakeholders about our current and future situation, and areas of strength and areas of opportunity for improvement. Based on analysis and discussion of the data, the group pinpointed five areas of overarching focus to guide MDS through the next five years. Strategic areas of focus are of parallel and equal importance, and will have goals that flow through to impact all of the focus areas.

The Strategic Plan was approved by the MDS Board of Directors on May 24, 2021. A full copy is available on the MDS website, www.mds-nh.org.



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Saturday, October 30, 2021

Raising Funds for Adult Dental Care



5K/1-Mile/10K
10.30.2021

Registration is OPEN!

Sign up online—no processing fees!

5K Run or Walk

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Family friendly walk/run along the Keene Bike Path.

10K Chapman Challenge

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Prizes, Giveaways

Free T-Shirts if registered by Sep 20

Fun Family Activities at the Event

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Railroad St & Community Way in Keene

Cost:

- \$25 per 5K or 10K entry
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- Family Rate: 25% discount 4+ family members
- Free age 3 and under

Online race registration now open!

Go to mds-nh.org. Processing fees covered by Raynor Dental.

MDS Run~Walk~Smile will follow local and national COVID-19 safety protocols in effect at the time.

Our Sponsors Make Us Smile!



Bowman Dental ♦ Northeast Delta Dental
Matthew Cielinski, DMD ♦ Hastings Dental
Keene Orthodontics ♦ Monadnock Food Co-op
Connor Business Resources

Resources

New Hampshire Resources

ABLE NH

2 1/2 Beacon Street
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-2336
www.ablenh.org

Advocates for the civil and human rights of all children and adults with disabilities. Promotes full participation by improving systems of supports, connecting families, inspiring communities, and influencing public policy.

Disabilities Rights Center

64 N. Main Street, Suite 2
Concord, NH 03302
(800)834-1721 (603)228-0432
www.drcnh.org

Provides advocacy assistance, information and referral services to families and individuals with disabilities.

Governor's Commission on Disability

121 South Fruit Street, Suite 101
Concord, NH 03301
(800)852-3405 (603) 271-2773
www.nh.gov/disability

Information and referral service, Client Assistance Program for vocational rehab clients, Barrier Free Committee, and newsletter.

NH Council on Developmental Disabilities

2 1/2 Beacon Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-3236
www.nhddc.org

Recommends policy and advocates for legislative change on issues affecting people with developmental disabilities. Not a direct service agency, but likes to hear your thoughts.

NH Family Voices

129 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-4525
www.nhfv.org

Family organization that provides services to families and professionals caring for children with special health care needs and/or disabilities. network of families speaking on behalf of children with special health care needs.



People Can't Wait

Make your voice heard during this Legislative Season!

Check the MDS Advocacy page online or sign up for email updates.



Looking for rewarding part-time work?

Are you dedicated, creative, committed, team-oriented, with a good sense of humor?

MDS is hiring part-time Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) for children and adults in Keene and Peterborough.

You could make a huge difference in someone's life!

Call 603-352-1304 or send an email to us at employment@mds-nh.org for more information.



Inclusion • Participation • Mutual Relationships

MDS is hiring! Email employment@mds-nh.org

Medicaid False Claims Act

False claims are not claims with innocent billing mistakes. False claims include services that are:

- Not rendered
- Upcoded
- Not supported by patient's medical record
- Part of a previously submitted claim

Watch a brief video on the False Claims Act to help you understand and comply with this law:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbZ78QTLzIQ&feature=youtu.be>

Want to file a complaint?

Call 1-855-450-3593

To file a complaint with the Bureau of Developmental Services, call 1-855-450-3593.

After you file a complaint, an investigator will contact you directly.

Medicaid Care Management

MCM Enrollment Information

(888) 901-4999 dhs.nh.gov

MCM General Telephone

(603) 271-4344 nheasy.nh.gov

Providers:

AmeriHealth Caritas (833) 704-1177

NH Healthy Families (866) 769-3085

Well Sense Health Plan (877) 957-1300

Respite Providers Needed

Part time hours with flexibility.

Contact hr@mds-nh.org

CLIPBOARD Summer 2021



MONADNOCK DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
121 RAILROAD STREET
KEENE, NH 03431

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

What's in this issue? Summer 2021

- Project SEARCH Graduation
- MDS Strategic Plan 2021-2025
- Register for Run~Walk~Smile – October 30, 2021
- Family Council COVID-19 Relief Funds
- Community Support, People at MDS

MDS Offices will be closed:

**Monday, Sept 6
Labor Day**

What's coming up? For upcoming events, visit the MDS Events Calendar at www.mds-nh.org.

Join the MDS email list!

Receive MDS updates and news electronically. To sign up, contact your Service Coordinator or email Lurleen@mds-nh.org.

