

# Board News



*IA news & updates - March 2023*

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The Board of Directors at Independence Association would like to invite you to the premiere of "invisible" on March 23rd at 6 pm at the Curtis Memorial Library in Brunswick. We know you will be touched by these short videos of personal stories. Please see the flyer below.



Join us for the premiere of

## **invisible:**

**Personal stories from the front lines of disability**

A screening of short videos by and about people living with disability in Maine, followed by a conversation with the filmmakers.

**Thursday, March 23, 6 p.m.**

Curtis Memorial Library, Morrell Room  
23 Pleasant Street, Brunswick, Maine  
*(fully accessible facility)*

**Free and open to the public**  
Please register at: [deborah@communityconnectme.org](mailto:deborah@communityconnectme.org)

- Snacks will be served
- Parking available
- For more information, call (207) 754-3435.

*(One video deals with sexual abuse and may not be appropriate for all viewers.)*

**These videos are presented by Community Connect Maine.**



## **Benefits From the Perspective of a Mom**

As the mother of a son with developmental disabilities, I well remember the confusion and uncertainty I felt when trying to navigate what benefits he was entitled to and how to go about applying for them. I knew nothing about Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Medicare or MaineCare.

Eventually my career led me to become a SHIP counselor, Maine State Health Insurance Assistance Program. I am retired now but still feel confident explaining how Medicare and MaineCare work, but to learn more about SSI and SSDI I encourage you to visit [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov).

The Social Security website is extremely helpful in answering most of your questions and applying for benefits. Here are a few websites.

Benefits For Children With Disabilities: <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10026.pdf>

[www.ssa.gov/redbook](http://www.ssa.gov/redbook). Or call 1-800-772-1213

My son has been on Medicare since he was 25 years old. He is also on MaineCare which is a secondary payer. DHHS should automatically enroll everyone on Medicare and MaineCare in a program called Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB). QMB pays for the Medicare part B premium and a prescription drug plan premium plus help pay most of the co-pay on medications. You should call the State Pharmacy Help Desk with your child's SSN and ask them to check. Their number is [866-796-2463](tel:866-796-2463). They can see all the benefits someone has.

I recently enrolled my son in a Special Needs Advantage Plan which is available to anyone who has Medicare and MaineCare. Advantage plans replace Medicare but offer excellent additional benefits. He now has a yearly \$2,000 dental benefit; a free pair of glasses each year; a \$30 voucher for healthy food every month; and \$90 a quarter of free goods from CVS.

To learn about these programs, you can call your area Agency on Aging. The number for the office for Cumberland and York counties is [207-396-6500](tel:207-396-6500).

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

***Vicki Durrell is a member of the Independence Association Board of Directors and is a mother of a person with Intellectual Disabilities.***

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### Family Advisory Council

The Family Advisory Council (FAC) was established as a way for family members and individuals served by IA to provide suggestions and feedback on IA services. While the IA Family Advisory Council often discusses statewide issues regarding services for people with intellectual and other disabilities, its focus is primarily on how those issues impact services provided by IA. If you are interested in becoming part of our Family Advisory Council, please reach out to David Cowing at [cowingdavid@gmail.com](mailto:cowingdavid@gmail.com)

### Community Connect Maine

Community Connect Maine focuses on expanding opportunities for consumers and family members to collaborate and engage in advocacy work both regionally and statewide. If you would like to know more about Community Connect Maine, please reach out to Lisa Wesel at [lwesel@signallightbooks.com](mailto:lwesel@signallightbooks.com) or Kim Humphrey at [khumphrey.phadv@gmail.com](mailto:khumphrey.phadv@gmail.com)



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