Limits on drive-throughs are eyed
By Jane McClure

St. Paul could become the latest city to limit new drive-through sales and services if a proposal is adopted this summer. The St. Paul Planning Commission hosts a public hearing at 8:30 a.m. Friday, June 7 at City Hall on the proposal.

If the regulations are adopted, St. Paul would join other cities including Minneapolis in such restrictions. While some cities have adopted outright bans on drive-through services, the capital city is taking a more nuanced approach.

While drive-through traffic can pose hazards to people crossing them on foot or with mobility devices, using a drive-through service is a way many people with disabilities get their medicine, do their banking and get their food. Restrictions typically raise red flags and calls for compromise.

As of Access Press deadline, the St. Paul Mayor’s Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities and the Minnesota Council on Disability had not weighed in on the proposal.

City Planner Bill Dermody told the commission recently that drive-through sales and services can negatively impact walkability and active streetscapes.

That is seen as being in conflict with the city’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan goals and policies for pedestrian-friendly environments along city streets.

Drive-through services are typically found at fast-food restaurants, coffee shops, banks and pharmacies. A Planning Commission study found that St. Paul has more than 77 of businesses with drive-throughs, including 36 restaurants, two coffee shops, 31 banks, and eight pharmacies.

That’s out of a total of about 640 restaurants, 51 coffee shops, 40 banks and 17 pharmacies in the city.

But the city staff report notes that demand for drive-through services may be growing, as some suburban grocery stores and big-box retailers have experimented with drive-throughs. If that is successful, it could spread.

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted a surge in demand for drive-throughs nationwide.

Since March 2020, St. Paul city officials have approved site plans and/or conditional use permits for three new drive-throughs, for two banks and a coffee shop. Also approved are at least five drive-through reconstructions or redesigns, all for fast food restaurants.

One drive-through service was removed in 2022 after a Starbucks coffee shop at the corner of Snelling and Marshall avenues generated considerable controversy with long traffic backups, blocking of a sidewalk and bike lane, and a few accidents.

Motor vehicle off-site queuing that blocks sidewalks, bike lanes, or traffic lanes was cited as a reason to restrict drive-through services. Exhaust from idling vehicles, noise and challenges with pedestrian access in reaching a business were also cited.

Some cities have banned new drive-through services outright. St. Paul officials proposed a more nuanced approach, with new drive-through services banned in some parts of the city and still allowed in others.

Existing drive-through services would be grandfathered in. A

As adjournment draws near, lawmakers pick up the pace
Advisors for Minnesotans with disabilities are in the home stretch of the 2024 legislative session, as an adjournment date of May 20 is coming up quickly. And while the status of some bills is clearer, there are many questions about what is to come.

The Minnesota Legislative Committee for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD) and other groups continue to meet and provide updates on legislation. One date everyone was eying was April 9, which marked a critical deadline for bills. That date was when any proposals with fiscal notes attached needed to have been heard in committees in both the House and Senate. That hard deadline meant many measures with costs attached would be dropped off, and shelved until next year.

Sean Burke, who leads lobbying efforts for MNCCD, noted that after the Passover break of April 12-13, state lawmakers would delve into the process of preparing larger omnibus bills. That is after this issue of Access Press went to press.

Those who live with limb loss hope for improved coverage
By Margie O’Loughlin

More than 35,000 Minnesotans are living with limb loss, and thousands more are living with limb difference and mobility impairments. Many are unable to access prescribed orthotic and prosthetic care due to a lack of insurance coverage, forcing individuals and families to incur huge out-of-pocket costs.

Some of their stories were shared at the state capitol this spring at a day-long event, called “So Every BODY can Move Minnesota.” It drew more than 100 advocates for two bills affecting people with limb loss and limb difference.

The goal of the two bills is to change the climate of insurance denials for orthotics and prosthetics prescribed by physicians for the health of their patients.

Seven other states are introducing similar legislation for fair insurance compensation this year, and five others passed similar legislation in 2022 and 2023.

Not medically necessary
Elsa Keeler is a retired pediatrician. Five years ago, she was diagnosed with a rare form of bone cancer that required a full leg amputation. She received a prosthetic leg with a microprocessor liner, which was expected to last five years. Keeler is an active outdoors-person who loves to paddle in remote places like the Boundary Waters Canoe area. Her first prosthesis began to wear out after three and one-half years.

When her doctor wrote a prescription for a replacement with a waterproof microprocessor liner, the claim was denied as ‘not medically necessary.’

These are three words that every person living with limb loss or limb difference quickly learns to dread. Being denied an orthotic or prosthetic device prescribed by one’s physician brings a range of feelings including frustration, disappointment, shame, and anger.

Like many advocates throughout the day, Keeler told stories about non-disabled relatives who received hip and knee replacements routinely so they could maintain their previous lifestyles. Artificial hips and knees are internal prosthetic devices. Keeler said, “People needing external orthotic and prosthetic devices should have those same privileges, too.”

Bills receive bipartisan support
Limb loss can affect anyone at any time. It’s estimated that about 500 Americans lose a limb every day. Sen. Karin Housely (R–Stillwater) co-authored the Senate bill,
When it comes to transportation and disabilities, we can’t get there from here

July 1 is a date the disability community won’t forget. In the days when ridership companies including Uber and Lyft say they will end service to Minneapolis. A dispute over ridership pay has dragged on. It was the subject of vetoed state legislation in 2023. In March the Minneapolis City Council approved an ordinance to increase rider pay. While the intent is to ensure that ridership drivers are paid at least as much as is required by federal law and minimum wage policy, the loss of a transportation resource is prompting great worry.

Many people with disabilities rely on Uber and Lyft. It will be a huge disruption for us and for elders, businesses, and the hospitality industry.

The start date for higher pay was May 1 but the council killed the can the road down in mid-April. That is seen as giving more time for new rideshare companies to emerge. The major transportation network companies will still be gone.

Jack Frey, who opposes the original rideshare ordinance, said a delay is not a fix. We agree with him. We’re very skeptical that viable alternatives will be found by July 1.

We certainly appreciate the concerns about driver pay. We’re the group who community know all too well what happens when workers are not paid enough. (Let us tell you about a little issue called the direct support staffing crisis.)

The companies, which now are marketing themselves as an option for disabled Twin Citians, aren’t a transportation option for many of us. Why Uber and Lyft contend that because they are technology-based and are not comparable to taxi services, they don’t have to provide accessible vehicles under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Taxi companies must provide vehicles accessible to passengers with a wheelchair or scooters can access. Minnesota lawmakers have yet to pass legislation that requires Uber, Lyft and their counterparts to do that.

Disability community members have been refused ridership service because drivers say it’s too hard to even pull up a walker or wheelchair. Disability community members have been refused rides because drivers refuse to accommodate service dogs.

Bringing in new companies by July 1 is not likely to make the situation any better. Those companies will likely claim that they also don’t have to meet ADA requirements.

Until a state law is passed mandating that all rideshare companies provide wheelchair-accessible vehicles, the July 1 delay is meaningless. Until something is done statewide about driver pay discrimination against people with disabilities, the Minneapolis City Council and its actions are a joke.

There is a bigger and more insidious, overarching issue that must be considered. Throughout Minnesota and the nation, the transportation system for people with disabilities and elders is collapsing. It is an unsustainable mix of staffing shortages, rising costs and demand for service. Supplying it

And that is frightening. Waiting for improvements is necessary yet complex. Whom a disability advocate speaks to depends on where they live, where they travel to and how a service is provided. It can be daunting to figure out where to make comments heard.

Those of us in the core cities famously remember when we had many more local taxi companies. Many closed in the face of rideshare companies. The few remaining companies sometimes don’t have enough drivers. Eventually they get paratransit? Riders have experienced less reliable service. That in turn has affected their employment, and their ability to be part of their home communities.

Why not take regular transit? Too many transit service providers are short-staffed. Not likely to have reliable service. Light rail trains can be an uneventful if not frightening experience at times, with open doors and inopportune behaviors.

A woman with disabilities we know told us how she had to turn down a great job. She wasn’t physically able to do a 1½ hour bus ride, with two transfers, to and from work every day. She did not have good experience with her area’s paratransit.

So as we are literally and figuratively left at the curb, here’s our message to political leaders. Do better. Pass a law requiring wheelchair-accessible vehicles and then back it up with some financial support for rideshare companies.

Consider the consequences of your actions.

To the rideshare companies and all other service providers? Do better. Accommodate us. Get some accessible vehicles. Educate drivers about our needs.

Do better. Do something.

Many disabled Minnesotans have similar stories. It’s especially dire in Greater Minnesota, where short-staffed companies cannot begin to meet the demand for rides for people with disabilities and elders.

How we people with disabilities get around is not a new issue.

Fifty years ago, the Minnesota Legislature opted that transit service would be provided for people with disabilities. State lawmakers in 1974 added four-hundredths of one mill to the metropolitan area property tax bills to fund the program. The tax was expected to generate $240,000, which would be matched with $240,000 in federal dollars.

State lawmakers had heard from many disabled constituents, who needed viable and dependable options. Buses were not accessible to everyone.

Mandating accessible transit or paratransit was something new. Providing it would be quite another. The task of setting up service in the Twin Cities was placed in the hands of the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC). The MTC in turn set up a steering committee, the Metropolitan Transit Commission for the Disabled, to study paratransit issues.

‘Taxi for handicapped may be available soon’ was a headline on the October 25, 1974 Star Tribune. The article noted that personal transit service could be provided to some disabled Minneapolis and Robbinsdale residents before Christmas.

The MTC planned to purchase special vans or small buses that were accessible to people with disabilities. ‘Drivers will receive physical, psychological and sensitivity training,’ the article stated.

The initial idea was that service was to be tailored to riders’ individual destinations, with some rides available through an on-demand, dial-a-ride service. Other rides would have to be reserved at least 24 hours in advance.

Fares were to be the same as those under the MTC zone system, with a base of 40 cents. The zone system meant varying fees were paid, set by length of ride.

Eventually the steering committee decided to serve part of Robbinsdale and North Minneapolis, as well as the Loring Park neighborhood of south Minneapolis. But the service didn’t meet its Christmas 1974 deadline. It took months longer than expected to get the vehicles in service.

The delays in starting the program frustrated people with disabilities. At its 1975 convention in Minneapolis South High School, the United Handicapped Federation objected to the delays and demanded action.

MTC Chairman Doug Kelm promised the group that things would get better.

Kelm also noted that MTC had recently lowered bus fares by half for disabled riders. But that too was short-term benefit. Some blind advocates said they didn’t want special treatment. Other disability advocates said a half was still not enough.

‘Project Mobility’ finally started in 1976 and provided several hundred rides to people who were never serviced after the cut rate in service in the city of Minneapolis. In 1979, Project Mobility became Metro Mobility and expanded to the surrounding suburbs of St. Paul and surrounding first ring suburbs.

The History Note is a monthly column produced in cooperation with the Minnesota Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities. Past History Notes and other disability history may be found at www.mnddc.org

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First statewide post-pandemic health assessment is released

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), in collaboration with the Healthy Minnesota Partnership, has published the Minnesota Statewide Health Assessment. The assessment report provides a snapshot of health equity in Minnesota.

It focuses on how different factors impact health, including the environment, education, housing, transportation, social circles and more. It compiles and uses data and information from more than 300 data sources and scientific literature.

The assessment shows that Minnesota’s health is positively impacted by things like access to nature, good health care facilities and strong civic participation. Not every community has the same opportunities to be healthy.

The assessment is also one of the first statewide health assessments in the nation that was completed after the COVID-19 pandemic. While COVID-19 is not the main focus, the assessment does include some data about COVID-19. It acknowledges that COVID-19 had a significant impact on health.

It notes that COVID-19 was the third leading cause of death in Minnesota in both and 2020 and 2021. In 2020, it accounted for 10 percent of all deaths, behind heart disease (56 percent) and cancer (9 percent).

Before vaccines and treatments were developed, during the fall surge in 2020, a smaller number of infections caused a much higher rate of hospitalization and death in Minnesota, according to the assessment. As vaccines and treatments became widely available, hospitalization and death rates declined sharply during the surge in cases between fall 2021 and early spring 2022, highlighting the value of vaccination and treatments in preventing serious illness. One of the outcomes of the pandemic was that people ages 65 and older who were vaccinated were less likely to be hospitalized or die compared to people who were not vaccinated. The risk of hospitalization and death was reduced even more for people ages 65 and older who stayed up to date on their vaccines by receiving the regularly recommended doses.

The pandemic shed light on underlying issues that we’ve known about for a long time including the need to effectively communicate the importance of actions like vaccination, finding ways to collect better and more timely data, and continuing to address health and racial inequities,” said MDH Commissioner of Health Dr. Brooke Cunningham.

“Minnesota is a place that values health, opportunity, belonging and nature, and this statewide health assessment shows that,” said Cunningham. “But we know it’s not just the presence or absence of disease or injury that defines health. The places we live and the environment around us play a role as well, and we can see in the data that it’s easier for some groups and communities to be healthier than others.”

The Healthy Minnesota Partnership, a collaboration of MDH and community partners, will use the assessment, done every five years, to create a statewide health improvement framework, set priorities and make recommendations.

“This assessment helps update the roadmap we’re using to understand our work and address disparities in data and community-driven ways,” said Cunningham. “Working together, change is possible. We have a lot of great momentum coming out of a historic legislative session in 2023 and a shared goal with the rest of the Wril-Flanagan administration to make Minnesota the best state for children and families.”

As of the assessment, the Healthy Minnesota Partnership also surveyed Minnesotans to learn about state strengths that support health. Other assessment activities included a community engagement inventory, group conversations and public comment.

“Everyone in Minnesota can use the assessment to support their communities’ health improvement efforts through planning, organizing, working on statewide action and more,” said Sarah Grossnitch, co-chair of the Healthy Minnesota Partnership and public health director at Wright County.

She also added that the assessment is meant to inspire action across different sectors, agencies and communities. The assessment calls for a health-in-all-policies approach and includes policy profiles about paid family and medical leave, tree canopy cover and broadband Internet access.

The Healthy Minnesota Partnership is expected to release its framework for action and recommendations based on the assessment in late 2024.

To read the full assessment, go to https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/practice/healthypartnership/sha.html

LIMITS

From page 1

staff report also notes that: “Banks and financial institutions provide valuable services to St. Paul residents in addition to employment and tax base benefits. Also, notably, pharmacies play an important role in public health.”

The proposed regulations focus more on specific areas and specific types of businesses that can provide more protection to adults ages 65 years and older. The additional vaccine dose can provide added protection that may have decreased over time for those at highest risk.

When should you get another?

Additional doses of COVID-19 vaccines are available to those most at risk for severe outcomes of the pandemic. While COVID-19 is not the main focus, the assessment shows that, “just the presence or absence of disease or injury that defines health.”

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Change is needed to cities from forcing community-based housing out

by Josh Berg

For almost 10 years, disability advocates, myself included, have voiced concerns regarding cities arbitrarily applying municipal rental ordinances to community-based settings. In 2024, we are finally seeing some progress as cities are applying more stringent local rental ordinances to residential settings licensed by the Minnesota Department of Health and Human Services. In 2021, we saw news stories about cities revoking local rental licenses, and of factoring group homes from within their borders. These NIMBY-driven policies and practices prevent our fellow Minnesotans, including those with disabilities, from living in the communities they choose.

As a city council member in Elyo New Market, an active member of the League of Minnesota Cities, and a member of the Board of Directors of Metro Cities, I support cities in their ability to use tools like rental ordinances to regulate activity. But as someone who has worked in disability services for years, I am a leader within a St-Paul-based nonprofit providing affordable and accessible housing, and volunteers my time serving on ARRM’s Board of Directors. I know cities are on the wrong side of this issue, and I support HF3938/SF3839’s efforts to correct that.

Cities contend that “local control” is critical to ensuring the safety and quality standards for communities, and rental licensing ordinances are designed to allow cities to quickly respond to and address issues. That may be true, but it is also true that there are countless safeguards and redundancies already in place to address these issues, through individual counties, state agencies, and the state fire code. In most circumstances, the standards and requirements imposed by state agencies are more comprehensive in addressing a wide array of issues than what local rental ordinances do. Local control, in this case, provides nothing other than an opportunity for local governments to regulate the licensing procedures of state agencies and to discriminate on behalf of residents, often as a concession to NIMBYism, who don’t want people with disabilities living in their neighborhoods.

Thankfully, most cities already defer to the state and exempt residential settings from their rental housing ordinances, but not all. These bills are necessary because some cities insist on using rental ordinances to drive group homes out of their communities. In recent months, I’ve spoken with several council members, mayors, and staff from cities across the metro that exempt these settings from rental regulations, and when asked why their respective cities choose this approach, the resounding theme is “why would we waste valuable city resources to duplicate something the state and counties are already doing?” HF3938/SF3839 is about bringing stability and consistency to a vital support network that has been stretched thin in recent years. When residential settings run the risk of arbitrary “eviction” from local government, the mental and physical impact on those living and working there is too great for the Legislature to ignore. Consistency and fairness are important as well. Cities cannot explain why some cities allow a state-licensed home that serves primarily older adults to be exempt from obtaining a rental license/permit but a state-licensed home that provides supports to individuals with disabilities are required to. But we know why. Situations like this reek of ableism and ageism, and the Legislature should step in and put these controversial and unfair practices to rest.

We also must look at issues elsewhere in the care profession and how they might be connected to this issue. We’ve all heard of the overcrowding issue in hospitals and emergency rooms. This specific issue has been brought up at the Acute Care Transitions Advisory Council as one of the several significant barriers to finding housing and supports for individuals stuck in hospitals. Discriminatory local ordinances contribute to this issue. Providers operating in cities that require a rental license/permit are often afraid to accept individuals with complex care needs, including mental health issues or severe behavioral challenges because they fear that the city could arbitrarily and capriciously revoke that license/permit if neighbors complain. This keeps people in hospitals instead of in communities that can care for them and support them.

The debate over HF3938/SF3839 boils down to “local government control” or “putting people first” and I hope we all agree that the latter is far more important.

We welcome your letters and commentary; follow guidelines

Access Press welcomes letters to the editor and commentary pieces from readers, on topics of interest to Minnesota’s disability community. Letters should be no more than 500 words, with 750 words per commentary. If accommodations are needed to submit a letter or commentary, a staff member will help you. Letters and commentaries are on file and you may request for the newspaper to discuss ideas or to ask questions about From Our Community submissions, at 651-644-2133 or access@accesspress.org. If accommodations are needed to submit a letter or commentary, a staff member will help you.

Pictures of the author can be published with a guest commentary but aren’t required.

Access Press asks that letters and guest commentaries be specifically written for the newspaper. Letters must have a focus on disability issues and ideally, focus on those issues as they affect Minnesotans. Form letters will not be published.

Because Access Press is a non-profit publication and must follow regulations on political partisanship, political endorsement letters are not published. That is true for candidates’ endorsements as well as for ballot questions. Before mailing a submission, writers are always encouraged to contact the newspaper to discuss ideas or to ask questions about From Our Community submissions, at 651-644-2133 or access@accesspress.org.

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Participants at the rally enjoyed a series of exercises.

I have complex health issues, but I’m getting help to clear the obstacles.
My diagnosis doesn’t get in the way of living my best life.”

Your best life, your way.

Whether facing an immediate concern or planning for the future, the experts at the Hub have years of experience helping people with disabilities, and the people who support them. A free resource for all Minnesotans. We serve all languages.
**As 2024 session winds down, disability measures are facing mixed fates**

**Setting the stage**

What’s been a challenge this session is the caveat that advocates and their organizations face regarding potential funding shortfalls, especially since many either didn’t get fully funded in 2023. One group calling attention to the funding crisis is the Mental Health Legislative Network, which held a press conference and call-in day focusing on children’s mental health and the desperate need to add more resources to areas that had made it possible for providers to meet the needs of their clients. Advocates noted that funding decisions pertaining to mental health make the problem even more difficult.

The biggest appropriations in the bill are for health and human services. Sue Abderholden, executive director of NAMI Minnesota said, “The stage for change began to be set April 18 and sent it on to Ways and Means Committee.” Sponsored by Rep. Mohamad Noor (DFL-Minneapolis), the bill would appropriate $23.5 billion in fiscal year 2025 and $24.6 billion in the 2026-27 biennium to the Human Services and Corrections Omnibus. As April ended the change was in the Human Rights Department policy. Another amendment to the state act would allow for less than minimum wage to be paid to workers with disabilities for competitive jobs with their employers. Minnesota organizations transition away from paying people with disabilities below the applicable federal minimum wage to pay these workers less than the applicable minimum wage. Minnesota’s above the minimum wage wage will eliminate jobs for some people with disabilities, especially those with limited skills. Qualified employers have been authorized to pay these workers less than the applicable minimum wage. Employers must hold what is known as a 14c waiver. About 50 employees in Minnesota have such waivers. According to the Minnesota Coalition for Disability Wage Justice, the average Minnesota under a 14c waiver makes $4.55 an hour. Some are paid much less. One report was that there is person paid 7 cents per hour, although that could not be verified by Access Press.

On April 15, the House passed legislation to fund the state’s minimum wages and hours, which is a key provision for federal standards. Episodic disabilities are those that come and go, such as recurring cancer, epilepsy, diabetes or psychiatric disorders. People with these types of disabilities have often struggled to gain equal rights, as well as needed supports and services.

As April ended the change was in the Human Rights Department policy omnibus bill. Another amendment to the state act would make changes to definitions of a service animal. It would be more inclusive of the types of disabilities where a service animal could be used. The bill would expand the types of animals that can legally be considered service animals.

So what’s next?

Many committees held their final meetings the third week of April, marking up, debating and voting on comprehensive supplemental budget bills in advance of the April 16 final deadline for those bills to have had favorable action taken on them in order to proceed. That deadline does not apply to the taxes, bonding, housing and mental health. The work of those committees and several efforts to add Minnesota with disabilities with the deadline in the weeks to come are made and a capital investment bill is likely assembled and debated.

For more information about the Minnesota Coalition on Disability, visit the Minnesota Coalition on Disability, 601 Minnesota Session Daily.

**Commission of the Defaf, Defafblind, & Hand of Hearing by increasing the number of at-risk youth from seven to 10. Voting members could not serve more than three consecutive terms. The bill would limit advisory committee members to three consecutive terms and no more than nine years in total.**

**Setting the stage**

**Session**

From page 1

Fiscal and policy measures previously passed in committees get thrown into the House and Senate and combined with new measures. That work began in late April, followed by the intensive work of conference committees and the work to prepare committee reports. That work comes out of the conference committees then heads to the floors of the House and Senate for consideration.

End of minimum wage?

One of the most controversial issues that is moving ahead is that of eliminating minimum wage. A 2023 legislative task force on eliminating minimum wage recommended state lawmakers end the practice by August 1, 2023, with a phased implementation plan.

The wage program allows employers to pay people with disabilities a low wage. It was set up in 1938 and was long seen as a way to provide a small amount of income to workers who otherwise would not be hired in the greater marketplace. It is often used by service providers in workshop-type settings, to provide or prepare goods for sale. But with so much training and more supports available today, foes of minimum wage say it devalues people and should be abolished. They say that advances in training and support services have made it possible for those with disabilities to pursue careers of their own choosing based on their skills and interests. They say there is no evidence of the effectiveness of minimum wage and contends practice is unfair and must be banned. But others worry that raising minimum wage will eliminate jobs for some people with disabilities, especially those with limited skills. Qualified employers have been authorized to pay these workers less than the applicable minimum wage. Employers must hold what is known as a 14c waiver. About 50 employers in Minnesota have such waivers. According to the Minnesota Coalition for Disability Wage Justice, the average Minnesota under a 14c waiver makes $4.55 an hour. Some are paid much less. One report was that there is person paid 7 cents per hour, although that could not be verified by Access Press.

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Day and employment service providers win 2024 MOHR Choice awards

Six organizations that go above and beyond in providing services to Minnesotans with disabilities are being honored by the Minnesota Organization for Habilitation and Rehabilitation (MOHR).

The six are recipients of the annual MOHR Choice Awards. The nominees are chosen from large and small day and employment service organizations from all corners of the state. The commonality is that they have all created exceptional programs which ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are uplifted, celebrated and given the opportunity to use their skills to add value to their communities.

This year, the Choice Awards highlight exceptional programs offered by MOHR members, said Robin Harkonen, president and CEO. “The programs are life-enriching for the individuals who participate in them.”

This year’s winners include businesses operated by people with disabilities, programs designed to break down barriers to disability employment, opportunities for people with disabilities to learn non-traditional skills, and initiatives that foster community engagement through the arts.

The winners are:
- **Udac, Duluth—Exploring Community and Careers**
- **PAI, White Bear Lake—Community Engagement and Inclusivity through Performing Arts**
- **Options, Inc., Big Lake—Blackbird Coffee Company**
- **Blackbird Coffee Company, owned, operated, and powered by Options, Inc., operates a coffee kiosk in the main lobby of Sherburne County Government Center in Elk River. The company was created to help people with disabilities develop and enrich valuable work skills including customer service, operating a point of sale system and creating custom drinks.**

People served by Options, Inc. operate the kiosk every step of the way, from taking in-person and online orders to making the drink. Behind the scenes, they process orders, manage inventory and sales, and ship bulk coffee, t-shirts and mugs. The kiosk opened for business on May 1, 2023 and has seen a steady following from customers ever since.

**PAI, White Bear Lake—Community Engagement and Inclusivity through Performing Arts**

In 2023, Lakeshore Players Theatre collaborated with PAI to provide attendees and employment tours of their home venue, the Haniff Performing Arts Centre in White Bear Lake. This provided a unique opportunity for PAI program participants. The Lakeshore Players also produced a short play in March, featuring participants from PAI.

The tours were a regular occurrence throughout the fall, and play practices are being held twice a week until the end of the show. Lakeshore Players partnered with PAI’s employment placement team to facilitate a job tryout. The tours, play and sightseeing opportunities all boost confidence, increase skills, foster community inclusion and provide an opportunity for meaningful employment for community members with disabilities.

Get MOHR Choice Award winners’ info.

Kevin Kaminski, PAI business development manager, said, “The Lakeshore Players and PAI are working together to break down barriers to employment. This is an amazing opportunity and we will continue to collaborate.”

**Reach our valued readers!**

**Contact**

Katarina Mulheran  
Ad Sales  
651-644-2133 ext 2  
katarinam@accesspress.org

Reach us at info@accesspress.org

**Housing with Care**

* 24-hour Assisted Living Services  * Adult Foster Care  * Independent Living Services  * Eligibility for or selection of ASI services is not required to qualify for housing. ASI services are not available in all locations.

CORPORATE ADULT LICENSE FOSTER WITH ASLEEP OVERNIGHT STAFFING AVAILABLE IMMEDIATELY IN METRO AREA

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**Affordable Senior Apartments**

For qualifying senior households age 62 or better. Metro & Greater MN locations available. Accessible apartments available for seniors in these locations. Income limits apply. Immediate openings in Hibbing, MN!

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**Accessible Space, Inc.**

Call 800-466-7722  
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The Depot program focuses on teaching individuals with disabilities skills that they have previously been told were too dangerous. The program starts with basic tools like hammers and screwdrivers and works up to woodworking with table saws, grinding equipment, sanding equipment and more. It includes basic car repair like checking fluids, and tire rotations; a welding program that starts with basic skills and works up to welding for repair and artistic creation, and basic animal care with chickens. In the future, the Depot will also work on a community project with Hubbard County Soil and Water to create a food forest that will become a park for the community, and a pollinator garden.

**Itasca Life Options, Grand Rapids—Dragonfly Coffee**

Dragonfly Coffee is a social enterprise created by Itasca Life Options to provide empowering inclusion and community engagement through the employment of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The program provides pre-vocational job training as well as a sense of community and pride for the individuals served by Itasca Life Options. While some individuals may never have the opportunity to hold a job in the greater community, Dragonfly Coffee strives to find a spot for each person. To date, 30 individuals have been employed by Dragonfly Coffee, discovering and strengthening their skills in customer service, baking and barista work.

**Itasca Life Options, Grand Rapids—Itasca Life Options, Grand Rapids—Dragonfly Coffee**

The program initially began with lobby mixers, allowing both groups to meet each other. People began talking about life enrichment activities along with opportunities to connect. Since then, Red has held more activities with members, including YMCA sponsored fitness classes, social events, arts and cultural programs, volunteering opportunities and job outings, and special events including a holiday party lunch. Rise regularly serves 30 people through its YMCA Life Enrichment Program. The events and activities also drew more than 40 YMCA members.

Additionally, after learning more about the program, 42 YMCA members signed up to connect with the Life Enrichment Program through special group activities like Zumba, coloring club, music therapy and community outings to places like the Pavek Museum of Electronic Communication and a bottling tour of Blue Sun Soda.

**Options, Inc., Big Lake—Blackbird Coffee Company**

Blackbird Coffee Company, owned, operated, and powered by Options, Inc., operates a coffee kiosk in the main lobby of Sherburne County Government Center in Elk River. The company was created to help people with disabilities develop and enrich valuable work skills including customer service, operating a point of sale system and creating custom drinks.

People served by Options, Inc. operate the kiosk every step of the way, from taking in-person and online orders to making the drink. Behind the scenes, they process orders, manage inventory and sales, and ship bulk coffee, t-shirts and mugs. The kiosk opened for business on May 1, 2023 and has seen a steady following from customers ever since.

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**Gillot clinic project benefits from generous gift**

Minneapolis resident Dean Steven Ross Phillips, who died in April 2021, gave a generous gift of almost $1 million to the Gillette Children’s Foundation with a gift of nearly $1 million. The gift, which was confirmed recently, will be used to help cover the costs of renovating the Gillette Children’s Hospital clinic in St. Paul. Phillips will be honored with a plaque in the renovated facility.

The nonprofit organization provides medical care and services to children with developmental disabilities. Several people and groups received 2024 awards. The Austin American Legion Post 91 Community Partner of the Year. Vanessia Mower County gives awards

The Mower County Honor community partner at its recent annual meeting. The family inquiry in 2016 about the procedure for naming Gillette as a beneficiary. A coworker’s child had been treated at

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**In Memoriam**

**Bartz an adapted sports champion**

John Bartz was a lifelong Minnesota sports figure whose accomplishments included work with prep adapted sports tournaments. Bartz died April 9. He was 89 and lived in Vadnais Heights.

Bartz grew up in St. Paul and was a graduate of Washington High School, where he was active in sports. He graduated from Hamline University and the University of St. Thomas. He was also a U.S. Army veteran.

He began his career at North St. Paul High School as a business education teacher and hockey and baseball coach. He was athletic director for 16 years, and was an assistant principal at Tartan High School from 1982-89.

Bartz became an associate director of the Minnesota State High School League in 1987, staying there until he retired in 2001. He directed several state tournaments and helped start the girls’ state hockey tournament in 1994.

He was active in establishing the state tournaments for adapted sports, helping to make Minnesota the first state to recognize such programs. It was one of his proudest accomplishments.

Bartz was also an active hockey official throughout Minnesota for decades who officiated in a record 10 state tournaments and was assigned to officiate the championship game seven times. He was honored for his service at the 2022 state tournament.

Fisher a DAV leader

Vietnam veteran Craig W. Fisher was a leader in state and national Disabled American Veterans (DAV) affairs. Fisher died in March. He was 73 and lived in Rosemount. Fisher enlisted in the U.S. Navy after finishing high school, and was selected for the Construction Battalions, known as the Seabees. Serving two tours, he had 29 days remaining when he was severely wounded. He spent eight months at Great Lakes Naval Hospital.

After his disability retirement Fisher in 1971 began his long career as a National Service Officer for the DAV. He represented thousands of veterans in obtaining disability benefits. He served for 26 years, including as the supervisor of the national service office at Fort Snelling. Fisher was twice elected as the commander of the DAV Department of Minnesota, in 1977 and 1989.

He is survived by his wife Gina, a daughter and son and their families. Services have been held, with internment at Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

Memorials preferred to Presbyterian Church at Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

**PEOPLE & PLACES**

**DON’T LOSE IT!**

- Keep your Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare active
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Disabled voters file suit in Wisconsin

Wisconsin voters with disabilities should be able to cast their ballots electronically and failure to provide that option for the upcoming presidential election is discriminatory and unconstitutional, a lawsuit filed April 16 in the federal courthouse argues.

The lawsuit seeks to require that electronic absentee voting be an option for people with disabilities, 14 of whom filed the complaint. The case is set to push back against the closures, saying the state is trapping one problem for another. They are particularly concerned with the looming shutdown of the only state-run substance use disorder residential facility specifically for women.

"Some of these women have been traumatized by men," they said. They have been trafficked, neglected, abused, said Taraje Goorhouse, a nurse at the Carlton facility.

She said the women-only environment allows people "to feel safer, and able to be a little more vulnerable and focus on their recovery." Goorhouse and other employees included outside the Community Addiction Recovery Enterprise (CARE) facility in April and have been meeting with lawmakers in hopes of preventing its closure. The Carlton location is one of five 16-bed CARE centers around the state. The Department of Human Services (DHS) has been planning to close the Carlton, St. Peter and Willmar programs and continue operating the Anoka and Fergus Falls locations.

The potential CARE closures are part of a complicated game of chess DHS is using to try to quickly tackle the overwhelming mental health crisis with limited state budget dollars available this year.

DHS wants to close psychiatric treatment facilities and hospitals with lengthy waitlists and too few beds to meet the skyrocketing demand for treatment. While the system has expanded in recent years, it has nowhere else to turn as often are stuck in emergency rooms and jails as they await care. Doctors, social service workers, sheriffs and family members of those in need have been pleading with the state to address the crisis.

So DHS has proposed shuttering the st-bed CARE program in St. Peter and repurposing the space and staff. The location would instead serve people who have been civilly committed.

The Olmstead decision guarantees people with disabilities the right to receive supports and services in the community rather than in institutional facilities that prevent that, according to ADAPT.

Among their demands are living wages and benefits for personal care attendants and other caregivers, the end of institutional bias, the expansion of access to home and community-based services, the creation of accessible housing so people with disabilities can move out of institutions, and the delivery of high-quality medical equipment equitably and without fraud.

"I would describe a day in the life of a students with an intellectual disability who enroll in college are more than likely to be as those who are also likely to have higher education, live independently and rely less on social services. In May, Minnesota colleges will be able to apply for money to make higher education more accessible. They can receive up to $100,000 per year for four years. The Minnesota Inclusive Higher Education Consortium is holding sessions to prepare colleges and universities to apply for the state grants, as well as the federal designation for financial aid.

"I'm excited to help students who require assistance with mailing or voting for most in Wisconsin is by paper ballot, many people with disabilities are unable to cast their votes without assistance. They could vote in private if electronic voting were an option." (Source: Associated Press)
The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has plans to invest $35 million in Get Out MORE funds on wide-ranging access and accessibility improvements across the state.

The projects will focus on road, trail and facility modernizations in state parks, state forest areas and wildlife management areas. The DNR has identified more than 100 access and accessibility projects throughout the state, making it a part of the once-in-a-generation Get Out MORE (Modernize Outdoor Recreation Experiences) investments approved by the Minnesota Legislature and signed by Gov. Tim Walz in 2023. The projects will serve new and existing users but also easier to get to recreational opportunities, and easier for people to enjoy outdoor recreation.

The historic, one-time Get Out MORE investment of $459.9 million centers on five key areas:
- Enhancing fishing and fishing infrastructure ($60 million)
- Restoring streams and providing new access to public land and outdoor recreation facilities (35 million)
- Modernizing boating access ($35 million)
- Modernizing and ridding accessibility ($9.5 million)
- Improving money and coverage protections. About one

Minnesotans eligible for public coverage have Among those living at 200 percent or

Among the uninsured the rate was 53 percent.

percentage points from 2021 but similar to the percentage points.

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Money and coverage protections. About one

 giảm 0.9 percentage points.

Another 0.9 million is for road improvements. Road modernization will enhance more than 35 roads across Minnesota that provide access to recreational opportunities in state forests, wildlife management areas, state recreation areas, and state parks.

Projects in this category include bridge replacements, road reconstruction, erosion control and resurfacing. Improvements will make it easier for more people to reach and enjoy outdoor recreation opportunities.

Also, $8 million is earmarked for improvements to hiking and paved trails at state parks and hunter walking trails at wildlife management areas.

Projects include improvements at more than a dozen state parks to improve accessibility and long-term sustainability. Improvements will focus on increased access to hunter walking trails at wildlife management areas across the state.

There is $2 million for improved wayfinding and signage, to create or improve trailhead signage at priority wildlife management areas and hunter walking trail networks.

Additionally, the DNR will update maps for four state forests, including creating maps that users can download using various map apps and access even without cell service. These maps will include a high level of detail and highlight nearby recreation opportunities like trails and public water accesses as well as state forest amenities.

Wildlife management areas will receive improved signage and wayfinding at access points and hunter walking trails to increase function and accessibility for all users. There will be $1 million for adaptive equipment, including track chairs and accessible hunting blinds, and supporting infrastructure. The funds will be used to purchase nine more track chairs and other items needed to support the track chair program, such as safety sheds and trailers.

Another need is for 65 pairs of specialized glasses. The glasses will assist visitors with red-green color deficiencies, to see colors outdoors.

Many people enjoy fishing at state parks.

As further details are available about these projects, information will be added to the Get Out MORE webpage of the DNR website (mndnr.gov/aboutdnr/get-out-more).

**REGIONAL NEWS**

From page 8

Insurance coverage is eyed

The share of Minnesotans without health insurance fell to an all-time low in 2023, as shown in a report issued by the Minnesota Department of Health.

Last year 4.8 percent of Minnesotans said they did not have any form of health insurance, down from 4.0 percent in 2021 and a high of 9.1 percent in 2009. The data comes from the Minnesota Health Access Survey, which interviewed 15,220 respondents from the Minnesota Health Access Survey, a high of 9.1 percent in 2009. The data comes from the Minnesota Health Access Survey, which interviewed 15,220 respondents.

The report also said that the share of Minnesotans forgoing health care due to cost concerns rose from 2021 to 2023, likely reflecting the rollback of COVID-19 stimulus money and coverage protections. About one quarter of respondents said they slipped needed care due to costs in 2023, up nearly 5 percentage points from 2021 but similar to the level seen in 2019.

Among those living at 200 percent or less of the federal poverty level, the rate was 33 percent, while 40 percent of indigenous Minnesotans said they slipped needed care due to cost. A Minnesota uninsured rate was 32 percent.

Gov. Tim Walz ran in 2018 on improving health care access and coverage for all Minnesotans. But Walz did not have the votes to make it happen despite gaining narrow control of both legislative chambers in 2023. Last month the governor’s office told the Minnesota Reformer it wouldn’t happen in 2024, saying it was too expensive to pass in a non-budget year. Minnesota has one of the nation’s lowest uninsured rates, according to separate data from the U.S. Census.

The American Legion is hoping to provide veterans with the community they need to tackle those issues.

(See West Central Tribune)

“Every veteran who comes to an American Legion post will feel that passion,” said Daniel Seehafer as he spoke about the Chronic Disease and Suicide Prevention Annual Report by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the suicide rate for veterans in 2020 was 23.5 per 100,000. In 2021, it was 23.1 per 100,000. The 2022 rate was almost double the rate for non-veteran adults.

Be the One was started prior to Seehafer’s election as national commander; he has continued the work since his election.

During his address, Seehafer commented on the many stories he has heard from veterans across the country who have contemplated suicide. The American Legion is hoping to provide veterans with the community they need to tackle those issues.

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(See West Central Tribune)
Chauquaqua* Monday – Friday 6 a.m.
The Deepest Map, nonfiction by Laura Treharre. 2023. The dramatic story of the last mysterious place on earth—the world’s seafloor—and the marine biologists, entrepreneurs, and adventurers involved in the historic push to chart it. Read by Julia Brown. 11 broadcasts; begins Mon, May 13.
Where We Meet the World, nonfiction by Ashley Ward. 2023. The thrilling story of how our senses evolved and how they shape our encounters with the world. Read by Karen Ray. 14 broadcasts; begins Tue, May 28.
Past is Prologue* Monday – Friday 11 a.m.
Whiteman’s Way, nonfiction by Theresa Wilhelms Waldorf. 2022. The untold story of the humble man whose scientific innovation helped end World War II. Read by Andrea Bell. 12 broadcasts; begins Mon, May 27.

The Writer’s Voice/Monday – Friday 12 p.m.

The Book of the Week, nonfiction by William McGraw. 2022. Memoir essays about the hidden worlds that exist within our own. Concealed lives we encounter every day, and how to live a long and happy life from the centenarian next door in this original and highly readable account of a splendid American life. Read by Ronnie Sweeney. Seven broadcasts; begins Thu, May 4.

The World’s Most Violent Cities, nonfiction by Vasilis Dimopolous, 2023. An unflinching look at the heist of their lives and must avoid the cops and criminals hot on their tails. Read by John Gunter. Nine broadcasts; begins Mon, May 15 – L.


The Crisis of Democratic Capitalism, nonfiction by Martin Wolf. 2023. A magnificent reckoning with how and why the marriage between democracy and capitalism is coming undone, and what can be done to reverse this terrifying dynamic. Read by Anna Pliner. 14 broadcasts; begins Tue, May 16.

Night Journey* Monday – Friday 7 p.m.
Lowdown Road, fiction by Scott Von Doviak. 2023. A heart-racing road trip across 1970s America as two cousins make the heist of their lives and must avoid the cops and criminals hot on their tails. Read by John Gunter. Nine broadcasts; begins Mon, May 15 – L.

Off the Shelf* Monday – Friday 8 p.m.
In Memoriam, fiction by Alice Wins. 2023. A heartfelt novel about two offbeat young men who fall in love during World War II. Read by Holli Richner. 15 broadcasts; begins Fri, May 19 – L, S, V, G.

Potpouri* Monday – Friday 9 p.m.

A Council of Dolls* Wednesday, May 10 – 9 broadcasts; begins Tue, May 28.

Afternoon Report* Monday – Friday 4 p.m.
The Crisis of Democratic Capitalism, nonfiction by Martin Wolf. 2023. A magnificent reckoning with how and why the marriage between democracy and capitalism is coming undone, and what can be done to reverse this terrifying dynamic. Read by Anna Pliner. 14 broadcasts; begins Tue, May 16.

Choice Reading* Monday – Friday 2 p.m.

A Council of Dolls, fiction by Mona Susan Power. 2023. A profoundly moving novel spanning three generations of Yokkanita Dakota women from the 19th century to the present day, Read by Pat Muir. 12 broadcasts; begins Tue, May 28.

Afternoon Report* Monday – Friday 4 p.m.
The Crisis of Democratic Capitalism, nonfiction by Martin Wolf. 2023. A magnificent reckoning with how and why the marriage between democracy and capitalism is coming undone, and what can be done to reverse this terrifying dynamic. Read by Anna Pliner. 14 broadcasts; begins Tue, May 16.
Volunteer
Speak for nursing home residents
Long-term-care volunteers bring passion and value to their work in nursing care facilities across Minnesota. With training and direction from the Office of the State Ombudsman for Long-Term Care, volunteers choose the office and clients they wish to support, educate and advocate for the rights of Minnesota residents receiving long-term care services.

Certified volunteers assist regional ombudsmen to investigate and advocate for residents in nursing facilities and other living settings. Residents are often unable, uncomfortable or, in some cases, fearful to advocate for themselves. The volunteer’s resident’s consent, volunteers assist regional ombudsmen responding to residents’ concerns through on-site and telephone investigations. The state is looking for volunteers who are passionate about serving people in long-term care.

There are more than 2500 nursing homes and assisted living facilities across Minnesota. Fewer than 50 of those facilities currently have a certified ombudsman assigned to them, but the state is looking to increase the number of volunteers in the lives of long-term care residents is infeasible.


If you are interested in becoming a volunteer can visit https://mn.gov/colct/volunteerwithus for more information.

To the working function of the Ombudsman for Long-Term Care with any residents’ rights concerns visit https://mn.gov/ ombusdman. The office provides extensive professional, confidential advocacy services.

Open House
Visit Can Do Canines
Can Do Canines hosts an open house event on May 18 at its campus at 9440 Science Center Drive, New Hope.

The event is free, and the families of any dog who might be interested in supporting the organization is invited to attend to learn how an assistance dog changes the life of a person with a disability. Through a self-guided tour, attendees will be able to watch a trainer working with an assistance dog, talk with a dog host volunteer and staff members from the volunteer department, pose questions to client services coordinators, and meet graduate teams from five types that Can Do Canines trains dogs: hearing, mobility, seizure, diabetes and childhood autism. To request a sign language interpreter for the open house, please contact Laurie at lcarlson@candocanines.org or 763-331-3001 at least two weeks in advance. FFI: www.candocanines.org

Children and families
PACER workshops sampling
PACER Center offers many useful or low-cost workshops and other supports for families of children with any disabilities. Family workshops offer a sample of workshops at PACER Center, at Greater Minnesota locations and also offered online. Other workshops are on-line and livestreamed at this time. Advance registration is required for all workshops. At least 48 hours notice is needed for interpretation. Check out PACER’s website and link to the newsletter of statewide workshops that allows participants to pick and choose sessions designed for their needs. Access Press only lists a sampling of the workshops offered.

LightSwitch is 10-11 a.m. Sat, May 4 at PACER Center. May the 4th be with you! Learn how to interact with switch and design and print a lightswitch. Then, create a circuit to make the light switch light up. Making the Move: Your Child’s Transition from Early Childhood Special Education to Kindergarten is 6:30-8 p.m. Thu, May 5. Kindergarten is a big step in any child’s life. Parents of young children with disabilities will receive information to plan for this transition and learn strategies to help their child be successful.

Tools to Support Meal Planning and Cooking is 1-2 p.m. Wed, May 6. Online. Learn about apps and devices for meal planning, cooking instructions and cooking tools to help adults with disabilities to live more independently.

Think it, Dream it, Do it: Post-High School Options for Students with IBD: Community-based Employment is 6:30-8 p.m. Thu, May 9 for first session. Online. In session one of a series, learn from a panel of adult professionals and their families about their journeys to community-based employment. Presented with Larissa Beck, Director of Community Living Supports with Reach for Resources, and Program Coordinator at the University of Minnesota’s Institute on Community Integration.

The second session is 6:30-8 p.m., Tue, May 21. Online. Learn about national higher education resources and opportunities that are continuing to expand in Minnesota. Presented with Dan Habib from Think College, Mary Hauff from the Minnesota Inclusive Higher Education Network, and Dawn Allen, Director of Bethel Build, and a panel of young adults and their families.

Making the Move: Your Child’s Transition from Early Childhood Special Education to Kindergarten is 6:30-8 p.m. Thu, May 19 at PACER Center. Join PACER for a mini-conference on transition to adulthood. Information of young adults with disabilities are invited to hear from community experts and PACER transition specialists. Participants will learn new strategies for postsecondary, and how schools and vocational rehabilitation services support a youth’s employment goals.

Creating a Crisis Plan for Youth With Mental Health Needs is 1 p.m., Wed, May 22. Online. The workshop will provide an opportunity to work through an example of crisis plan and provide suggestions on how a crisis plan can be used for positive support at home or in school, and with 504 Plans and IEPs. 952-838-9000, 800-537-2237, www.pacer.org.

Info & Assistance
Many classes available
NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness Minnesota) offers a wide variety of free and in-person online mental health classes. Choices include Hope for Recovery, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Thursday, Understanding Early Episode Psychosis for Families, In Our Own Voice; Family, Positive Psychology, Creating Communities, smoking cessation, a suicide prevention class called QPR – Question, Persuade and Refer, and a series about postpartum depression.

NAMI Minnesota’s Online Support Groups has a wide variety of classes. Members of NAMI provides a safe, easy to access environment exclusively designed for online support groups.

The classes and online support groups are designed for family members and caregivers, parents living with a mental illness, service providers, and also the general public. Find a complete list of these classes and how to join in by going to namimn.org and clicking on “Classes” FFI: naminn.org

FINISHING UP
COVID-19 CHECKLIST

DO YOU HAVE POST-COVID-19 CONDITIONS?
Have a discussion with your healthcare provider

If you think you or a loved one may have a post-COVID condition (new or persistent conditions occurring 4 or more weeks after initial infection with COVID-19), taking a few steps to prepare for meeting with a healthcare provider can make all the difference in getting the proper medical evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment.

prepare a list

Prepare a list of current and past healthcare providers and current and past medical conditions, especially if you are seeing a new healthcare provider for the first time.

write it down

Summarize your experience with COVID-19 and post-COVID conditions. Include dates of onset and testing. For example, write down a list of the symptoms you think started after your COVID-19 infection. Include information on prior treatments and diagnostic tests related to your post-COVID symptoms (blood work, etc.).

symptoms 101

Explain what makes your symptoms worse, how the symptoms affect your daily activities, and how often symptoms occur.

how do you feel

Describe how you have been feeling and give examples of your best and worst days.

know your meds

Prepare a list of medications and supplements you are taking.

get support

Discuss your appointment with a trusted family member or friend immediately before and after you see your healthcare provider. This person can help you take notes and remember what was discussed at the appointment while it’s still fresh in your mind. If your healthcare provider’s office policy allows it, consider bringing them to your appointment with you.

Healthcare providers are still learning about post-COVID conditions. The CDC continues to work to determine how common these long-term effects are, who is most likely to get them, how long the symptoms typically last, and whether symptoms eventually resolve.

LEARN MORE AT