



# LCDJFS E-Newsletter

February 2006

A newsletter from the Lorain County Department of Job & Family Services

## Ohio Works First (OWF)

Natalio Rodriguez  
Program Administrator

Families across Ohio receiving OWF, cash assistance, saw the first increase in monthly grant amounts since January 2000.



**OWF monthly payment standards increased up to 10% for different size households.**

The OWF grant increase was passed in the Ohio Budget bill that was effective 7/1/05. The grant increase was effective 10/1/05 for Ohio's families receiving

A recent article in Time Magazine states that Ohio is sitting on a \$900 million unspent TANF surplus, yet, Ohioans living in poverty rose 17% from 2000 to 2004. There are some 83,000 families on assistance in Ohio.

This past fall, there was an effort by State Representative Jimmy Stewart to further increase the family grants by \$100 in monthly aid, but the committee chairs have not scheduled hearings on his bill.

The current monthly grants are as follows:

AG Size	OWF 1/2000—9/2005	OWF Effective 10/01/05
1	223	245
2	305	336
3	373	410
4	461	507
5	539	593
6	600	660
7	670	737
8	743	817
9	817	899

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# News from Adult Protective Services

**Kathryn Griffin**  
Adult Protective Service Supervisor

## Adult Protective Services Automated Reporting System

Since July 1, 2005, our unit has been reporting statistics to ODJFS via the new web-based APS Automated Reporting System. Lorain County APS also participated in the pilot program in April and May 2005. The purpose of the program is to have a uniform method of collecting, compiling, and reporting elder abuse statistics statewide.

**The numbers reported are: new allegations of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual), neglect (by self or others), and exploitation; and the outcome of the APS investigation - whether each allegation was validated and if so, did the client agree to services, knowingly refuse, or were services court ordered. These numbers are then broken down by age, race, and marital status.**



Prior to the use of this database, statistics were compiled manually and submitted to ODJFS in a quarterly report. Only about half of the counties actually reported (Lorain County among them).

Since this automated system became operational, 78 out of 88 counties are reporting. It is hoped that this reporting method will provide accurate statistics that can be used to advocate for adequate funding and services to meet the needs of older adults who are abused, neglected, or exploited.

## Lorain County Elder Abuse Network

Adult Protective Services has been instrumental in the establishment of the Lorain County Elder Abuse Network, which began meeting in May 2005, and continues to meet bi-monthly. Peg Calvey, Disability Outreach Coordinator for Genesis House, and Kathy Griffin, APS Supervisor, are co-facilitators for the group.

About 35 people have attended meetings, representing social service and mental health agencies; health departments; law enforcement; Probate Court; MR/DD; assisted living facilities; senior centers; elder law and guardianship attorneys; Legal Aid; and others who serve older adults.

The purpose of the group is to create awareness of elder abuse issues and to improve the delivery of services for vulnerable older adults. The Network has created an I-Team (Interdisciplinary Team) that meets monthly to consult on difficult cases.

At the recommendation of the Ohio Elder Abuse Task Force, there is now proposed legislation (Senate Bill 175) that would mandate counties to establish I-Teams.

Lorain County is proud to be on the cutting edge, one of the few counties to already have such a collaboration in place.



# Job & Family Statistics For Lorain County

## Families receiving on-going cash assistance

Mar. 2005	Jun. 2005	Sep. 2005	Dec. 2005
2,120	2,189	2,232	2,358

## Individuals receiving health insurance through Healthy Start/ Healthy Families Medicaid

Mar. 2005	Jun. 2005	Sep. 2005	Dec. 2005
39,983	40,020	40,220	40,419

## Individuals receiving employment-related training assistance

Mar. 2005	Jun. 2005	Sep. 2005	Dec. 2005
808	717	776	938

## Individuals receiving food stamps

Mar. 2005	Jun. 2005	Sep. 2005	Dec. 2005
27,241	26,704	26,857	27,556

## Disabled individuals receiving on-going cash assistance

Mar. 2005	Jun. 2005	Sep. 2005	Dec. 2005
331	351	288	242

## Aged, Blind or Disabled individuals receiving health insurance through Medicaid

Mar. 2005	Jun. 2005	Sep. 2005	Dec. 2005
7,961	8,008	8,014	8,073

## Disabled individuals receiving Nursing Home or Home and Community-Based Service Waivers assistance

Mar. 2005	Jun. 2005	Sep. 2005	Dec. 2005
2,080	2,073	2,072	2,080

## PRC Classic Program

Natalio Rodriquez  
Program Administrator

LCDJFS PRC Classic Program are those services such as car repair, rent and security deposits, paying utility bills, training needs and some other services. The 2005-2006 is shaping up to be the most money ever spent on these services in Lorain County.

Currently, a family who applies for PRC services must be at or under 175% of the Federal Poverty Level. This level has been set for the past two years to help serve the working poor of Lorain County. For the 7/2004 – 6/2005 budget year, LCDJFS spent \$494,083.96 on the PRC Classic Program. We had only budgeted \$376,000 and we overspent the program by \$118,083.96.

For the new budget period of 7/2005 – 6/2006, we are projected to spend \$547,745.00 on the PRC program that was budgeted for \$450,000. We are currently spending \$45,000 monthly on PRC services.

LCDJFS has been lucky to have been awarded incentive dollars from the state along with earning a Federal Welfare-To-Work-Bonus, that we have been able to supplement the PRC Program and allow it to service those seeking assistance.

# Dually Eligible Medicaid & Medicare Plan D

## Marion Slovak Program Administrator

Staff have been busy the last four months fielding questions and helping our Medicaid/Medicare dually eligible population transition to the Medicare Plan D Prescription Drug Program.

As of 1/1/06, those dually eligible must receive their prescription coverage under the Medicare Plan D. Medicaid will no longer pay for prescriptions for this population with the exception of barbiturates, benzodiazepines, and prescription vitamins. Appendix A of OAC rule 5101:3-9-12 was updated 1/1/06 to show which drugs will be dispensed by Medicaid for dually eligible individuals.

As reported by the news media, the transition from Medicaid prescription coverage to Medicare Plan D has not gone smoothly and many elderly and disabled individuals have had problems in obtaining their needed medications, including here in Lorain County.

In preparing for this transition, our Spenddown Medicaid population was of special concern. In Lorain County, over 890 individuals have been meeting Spenddown through incurred bills, or paying-in their spenddown amount on a monthly basis. An average of 650 individuals were typically paying-in their spenddown amount each month usually to obtain their prescriptions the first of the month. In reviewing the spenddown cases, 834 of the 890 cases were identified as being on Medicare and would need to transition to Plan D coverage.

In December 2005, a flyer was hand-issued, or mailed, to all individuals who Paid-In their spenddown amount to alert them that they may not wish to pay-in their Spenddown amount in January 2006 as the Medicaid card would not cover most prescriptions.

In January, casework staff were redeployed to help spenddown clients determine the appropriateness of meeting spenddown in light of their Plan D prescription coverage. Those with Medicare and Qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program (QMB) coverage typically would

receive minimal benefit through receipt of the regular Medicaid card and were advised to not pay-in. Staff also used the Medicare website at [www.medicare.com](http://www.medicare.com) to help individuals determine if the federally-assigned plan best met their needs once their specific medications were evaluated to determine costs. Those clients who wished to, were able to switch plans for February 2006 at that time.

Additionally, explanations were given regarding what types of medical costs were covered by the various programs; i.e. Medicare, QMB, Medicaid, and Plan D. Over half of the individuals were advised to not pay-in their spenddown. As of the 17<sup>th</sup> of this month, 160 individuals were given hands-on assistance with their Medicare Plan D and/or spenddown pay-in programs by our staff, in addition to those who were assisted by phone. 411 individuals met spenddown and were issued Medicaid cards.

The county has another 6,400 full Medicaid individuals covered by the Aged, Blind, or Disabled Medicaid program, of which an unknown number are dually eligible with Medicare and are navigating through the system with help of family, friends, pharmacists and their staff. Computer crossover problems prevented some from being assigned to a Medicare Prescription Plan. Some were assigned to a plan, but the system did not register they qualified for "Extra Help" and were being overcharged at the pharmacy.

Our staff have been referring individuals to their pharmacists, Plan D plans, or the 1-800 Medicare hotline for assistance with these and other issues. Guidance received from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services assures us that individuals who are overcharged will be reimbursed by their plans once problems are resolved.

Those still experiencing problems should contact:

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS)  
at 1-800-Medicare

Ohio Department of Insurance - OSHIIP  
at 1-800-686-1578

## Contact LCJFS

42485 North Ridge Road  
Elyria, OH 44035—1057  
Phone: 440-323-5726  
Fax: 440-323-3422  
TTY/TDD: 440-284-4125  
Child Support Office: 440-284-4401

Hours of Operation:  
7:00—4:30 Mon, Wed, Thur, Fri  
7:30—6:30 Tues

