

DISABILITY INDEPENDENCE, EMPOWERMENT & FAIRNESS

INTERSTATE CONNECTIONS

**MOUTH
MAGAZINE**

Americans love to come together in community for entertainment, support, service, politics, and many other reasons. Friendships are being formed by coming together around common interests, sharing information, and advocating for each other. Historically these affinities have been the seedbed of transformative political and social change.

This photo shows a dozen different publications about disabilities on display in the Smithsonian EVERYBODY, History of Disability in America. You can view the entire exhibit [online](#). It's amazing what we can accomplish as a society by working together.

UPCOMING EVENTS JUST FOR YOU!

Emergency Preparedness Workshop for the Deaf, Deaf/Blind and Hard of Hearing Community

November 8th, 2025 10:00 – 3:00 pm

Lilac Blind Services, 1212 Howard St., Spokane, WA

Hosted by Simone Ramel-McKay. Lunch will be provided. Plus emergency kits, raffle, give aways, and resources. Be sure to fill out the reservation form. A virtual Zoom option is also available. American Sign Language and closed captions will be provided. If you need additional Accommodations call 509-477-3006.

Email to register: namicdaexecdirector@gmail.com

Find more accessible events at www.dacnw.org/events



DAC NW CONSUMER SUCCESS STORY

NEWS FROM DAC NW

In early 2025, Paul D. experienced a diabetic crisis that led to multiple hospitalizations and a stay at a Transitional Care facility. . During this time, his apartment lease was at serious risk of termination. Following his first hospital stay, he fell into a deep depression, and his apartment became uninhabitable. Management issued him a 3-day vacate notice. Since he had been a resident of the complex for over 10 years, this was deeply saddening to him.

Paul reached out to DAC NW for support, and together we outlined his goals: to be discharged and return home, resolve the conflict with management regarding his



hidden pet, and get his diabetes under control so he could remain independent.

After meeting with the apartment management, we worked together to developed solutions that addressed both his health and housing needs.

Successes

- We helped Paul complete a discharge plan from the transitional care facility.
- We successfully problem solved the vacate notice through a behavior contract established with the apartment management.
- We successfully re-certified his lease, and Paul has completed his behavior contract requirements and was able to bring his pet home with permission from management at his apartment.
- DAC provided independent living skills including creative problem solving, resource management, asking for help, accountability and time management.
- Paul benefited from peer support when he discovered that the building management shared the same disability as him and offered guidance and support throughout the process.
- Together we created a self-care routine to better manage blood sugar, learned step-by-step cleaning strategies, and began using a chore calendar to stay on top of household management.

DAC NW can help you too! Call for an appointment with an advocate.

New Guide for Parkinson's Disease

The Guide to Parkinson's Disease and Multiple Sclerosis (Mostly) Palouse-Area Resources is now available, online, as a PDF or a hard copy. The guide was created by DAC's Public Healthcare Advocate Barbara Merchant when she observed that, unlike bigger cities like Spokane or Seattle, the Palouse had minimal resources for people with MS or Parkinson's disease (PD). The Palouse does have some specialty resources, such as physical therapists who specialize in MS or PD, but not many people knew where to find them.

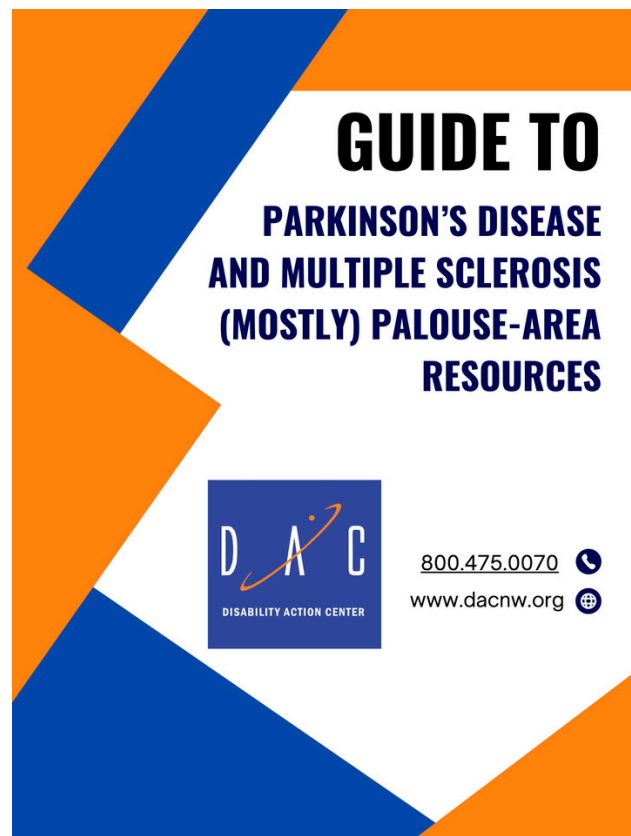
Merchant tracked them down, then verified them before putting them in the guide.

The Pacific Northwest has high rates of MS and PD, so the guide meets a unique need. The high rates of Parkinson's and MS on the Palouse are likely linked to a combination of environmental factors and genetics, with agricultural pesticides and other environmental contamination suspected for Parkinson's, and factors like genetics, reduced sunlight/vitamin D, and viral infections being researched for MS. The Palouse region is particularly noted as an MS hot spot. Its agricultural history and rural characteristics make it a focus for studies on environmental links to these neurodegenerative diseases. Researchers are aware that it increases the further away from the equator you live. And it affects more women than men, especially those of northern European heritage.

There is a stigma about both MS and Parkinson's Disease, and people can be judged incorrectly sometimes.

There's been a positive response to the guide, both from people with MS and PD, and MS and PD specialists.

To get a PDF copy, go [here](#). To get a hard copy, drop by the Moscow DAC office at 505 N. Main St, Moscow. Or you can email info@dacnw.org and request an e-copy sent to you.



All In for National Epilepsy Awareness Month

News from DAC NEW – Spokane

According to the [Mayo Clinic](#), epilepsy is a brain condition that causes recurring seizures. There are many types of epilepsy. Sometimes, the cause can be found. Other times, the cause is not known. Epilepsy also is known as a seizure disorder and seizure symptoms can vary widely. Epilepsy is common and affects people of all genders, races, ethnic backgrounds and ages. Epilepsy is diagnosed if you've had at least two seizures without a clear cause at least 24 hours apart. This [video](#) shares new approaches in responding to seizures.



Quick Facts About Epilepsy

- 1 in 10 people will have a seizure and 1 in 26 will develop epilepsy during their lifetime.
- Approximately 3.4 million people living with epilepsy in the United States; about 456,000 of them are children.
- Epilepsy is a neurological disorder that can affect any one of us regardless of race, age, or gender.
- Seizures are a symptom of epilepsy. Not all seizures are the same. Many people with epilepsy have more than one type of seizure.
- Misunderstanding about seizures contribute to stigma and negative outcomes.
- People with epilepsy may experience "felt" stigma, which leads to shame about their condition and fear of discrimination if they talk about it.
- Felt stigma was linked to higher seizure frequency, younger age at epilepsy onset or longer duration, lack of knowledge about epilepsy, and younger age.
- Felt stigma can reduce the quality of life even when seizures are well controlled.

This year's call to action is **All In for National Epilepsy Awareness Month!** This year's theme is about showing up and doing what we can to support epilepsy awareness.

How to participate Epilepsy Awareness Month

- Learn more about epilepsy and share accurate information with your community.
- Spread awareness online: Use social media to share information and start conversations.
- Display educational materials: Post a seizure first aid poster at your workplace or school.
- Wear purple to show your support: Purple is the official color for epilepsy awareness.
- Take part in a free seizure first aid training to learn how to respond in an emergency.
- Volunteer your time to help support the epilepsy community.
- Share your story: Use your personal experience to help others understand the challenges of living with epilepsy.
- Advocate for more research and support efforts to improve the lives of those affected by epilepsy.

Are you interested in earning a [Seizure Recognition and First Aid Certification](#)? This online course formally educates the public on the Epilepsy Foundation's approved procedures for recognizing seizures and responding to someone having a seizure. This course aims to increase the knowledge, skill, and confidence in applying seizure first aid. Participants who successfully complete the course will receive a two-year certification.

NW ADA CENTER ~ Idaho

ADA Question of the Month

QUESTION:

What is the definition of disability under the ADA?

ANSWER:

The ADA defines a person with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity.

It is important to remember that in the context of the ADA, “disability” is a legal term rather than a medical one.

Because it has a legal definition, the ADA’s definition of disability is different from how disability is defined under some other laws, such as for Social Security Disability related benefits. It is not a medical or social justice-related definition.

The ADA definition includes people who have a record of such an impairment, even if they do not currently have a disability. This could be someone who had cancer, but is currently in remission.

It also includes individuals who do not have a disability but are regarded as having a disability. This could include someone with extensive scarring, but otherwise does not have a disability.

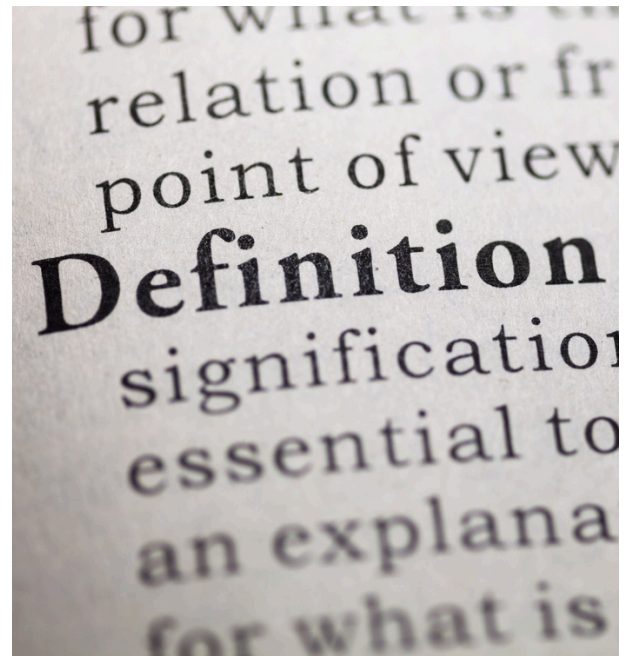
The ADA also makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person based on that person’s association with a person with a disability. Such as a person who cares for a family member who has a disability.

For additional information contact Dana Gover, MPA, ADAC, Training & Technical Assistance Consultation

Northwest ADA Center-Idaho Email: dananwadacenteridaho@gmail.com ADA TA

Hotline: voice and text

208-841-9422



What is a Medicare Flex Card?

SELF-DIRECTED PA SERVICES

It is a prepaid debit card that is issued by some (not all) private Medicare Advantage plans, not the U.S. government. It can help pay for specific expenses, such as over-the-counter (OTC) medications, a grocery allowance for healthy food purchases, and copayments for dental, hearing and vision care.

The stand-alone card is different than your Medicare card or health insurance card from Medicare Advantage, Medigap or another health plan.

Flex cards typically contain quarterly or annual allowances for OTC medications, drugstore items, healthy food, meal delivery, transportation and other extra benefits.

Like prepaid debit cards, flex cards are loaded with a predetermined amount to cover expenses within a specified time. But they also come with rules on what the money can be used for.

You may be able to use your flex card for OTC medications at certain pharmacies, for eyeglasses and contact lenses at select optical centers, or for copays with in-network dentists. Find out from your plan about requirements for using the card.

If you receive a quarterly allowance for OTC medicine and other drugstore items — say, \$50 a quarter — scan the flex card at checkout; the money will automatically be applied to eligible items. Some flex cards work with online purchases too.

Some Medicare Advantage plans offer flex cards only to certain members, such as those with chronic conditions.

The flex card is one of many benefits to consider when deciding between original Medicare and Medicare Advantage. When choosing a Medicare Advantage plan, compare how the plan covers your regular medical expenses and medications, as well as its coverage for major medical issues. *And find out whether the plan's provider network covers the doctors and hospitals you want to use.*

Beware of flex card scams if someone claims to be from Medicare offering one of these cards. It could be an ID thief trying to steal your personal information.

For more information check out AARP's website.



Services YOU control!

VETERANS WITH DISABILITIES

Veteran Treatment Court

“Veteran” isn’t a word; it’s a person. Every veteran has a unique military experience. And for those veterans who become involved in the justice system due to mental health, substance use, or trauma-related issues, Veteran Treatment Court gives you an ally. They provide judicially supervised, problem-solving programs that include treatment, peer mentoring, and court monitoring. Eligibility and referral are handled through a partnership with local criminal justice agencies, the VA, and community partners.



Focus:

- To provide a program for justice-involved veterans with substance abuse and/or mental health disorders

Services:

- Includes mental health and substance use treatment, case management, education, employment support, and peer support

Eligibility:

- Veterans are screened for drug/alcohol dependency, mental health issues, and trauma (including TBIs).

Referral:

- Referrals can be made by a defense attorney, prosecutor, judge, probation officer, the jail, or the VA. The first step is filling out a referral form.

Where to get information:

The main Veterans Treatment Court in Northern Idaho is operated by Kootenai County, located in Coeur d'Alene. Veterans Community Response is a non-profit organization that serves the Inland Northwest, including Northern Idaho, with a chapter planned for Sandpoint in the future. In the Lewiston area you can reach out to Greg Forsmann at 208-503-9376.

The Veteran Crisis Line is available around- the-clock by dialing 988 and pressing 1. Crisis. Support can also be accessed via text at 838255 or online at VeteransCrisisLine.net

**VETERAN-
DIRECTED
CARE**

**Questions about Veteran Directed
Care?**

Call Spokane 509-434-7000

Or Walla Walla 509-525-5200

Get Your Documentation in Order!

Young Adults – Next Chapter

If you want to be ready for what's next in your life; school or work, you need some documentation to be at your fingertips. Part of being independent is knowing where your documents are and how to keep them safe.

- State ID card, needed for work or school
- Birth Certificate
- Drivers License
- Social Security card
- A local bill for proof of residency



Getting these documents in order is a big step toward your independence and the opportunity to work. These documents prove who you are, and employers need them to legally hire you.

When you apply for a job, you'll be asked to show identification and proof you are eligible to work in the U.S. Without these papers, even if you have the skills and motivation, you can't be added to the payroll and receive a pay check.

You will also need these documents to apply for housing, open a bank account, get a drivers license, or even travel.

DAC NW can help you get these documents and store them in a safe place where they are easy to retrieve.



Rewriting the narrative of what's possible!

QUOTES TO MAKE YOU THINK

“Well, I've been diagnosed with Asperger's, but I'm high end. A lot of people with Asperger's are highly functional, but inconsistent. They have nervous ticks, nervous habits, inconsistently obsessive thinking.”

~ Anthony Hopkins, award winning actor, diagnosed in his early 70's.

Accessible CPR & Stop the Bleed Training

News from LINC

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

LINC is excited to announce an upcoming Accessible CPR and Stop the Bleed Training designed with and for people with disabilities. This unique session goes beyond standard emergency response classes — it focuses on making lifesaving skills truly accessible for everyone.

Participants will receive hands-on CPR and Stop the Bleed instruction, while also helping trainers identify ways to make future trainings more inclusive and effective for people with diverse abilities. Your feedback and participation will help shape how emergency preparedness is taught in our community.

Stay tuned for details on how to register by visiting www.lincidaho.org or following us on Facebook at facebook.com/LINCIdaho.

Together, we can build a safer, more inclusive Idaho—one skill at a time.

Accessible CPR & Stop the Bleed Training

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

What Training Offer?

- ✓ CPR Training & Stop the Bleed Training
- ✓ Training tailored to people with Disabilities
- ✓ Help trainers develop accessible training options



Empowering Independence!

Joke of the Month

Seeing her friend Sally wearing a new locket, Meg asks if there is a memento of some sort inside.

“Yes,” says Sally. “A lock of my husband’s hair.”

“But Larry is still alive?!”

“I know, but his hair is gone.”

BLUEPATH – Two-Way Communication Can Help



If you are a business, you may think you are fully accessible. The ADA is complicated! But that's where BluePath can help. A business can go in and see their Quick Look Survey and easily know what improvements should be made.

For Greycliff Mill, some of the fixes are super easy and cheap. This stop is between Bozeman and Billings, Montana.

You can tour their green house and demonstration gardens. Book a horseback ride and chuckwagon dinner. You can stay in their unique lodgings which may or may not be accessible. Drop us a note! We would love to know.

They have a real water operated mill, a cheese cave, Wool Works for fiber enthusiasts, leather works, kids area, along with their restaurant, petting zoo, and other entertainments.

The setting is stunning makes it worth the stop! A cliff side hike is available but is not accessible.

A quick look at their survey shows that if they bevel their thresholds, it would be way easier to get inside the restaurant and coffee shop. And they can see they need to add a van-accessible parking sign to make sure there is room for people to deploy a lift. Proper maintenance can make sure the accessible ramp doesn't have a lip from gravel pulling away at the bottom.

Those are all quick and easy fixes. Tougher is the access to the cheese cave which currently is down a flight of steps.

A BluePath Quick Look Survey can show a business things they can do to be even more accessible!

BLUE  **PATH** Find **YOUR** path!

Community Survey

Idaho State Independent Living Council

The SILC, in collaboration with the Centers for Independent Living (CILs), the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ICBVI) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), develop the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) every three-years. The SPIL is a three-year plan that sets goals and guides activities for independent living services and systemic advocacy in Idaho.

The SILC is responsible for submitting and monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the SPIL. The SILC also conducts systems advocacy through public education and provides technical assistance related to community living.



CIL Core Services

Independent Living Services are designed to help people with disabilities reach their personal goals for independence and participation with their families and communities. The five core services of the Independent Living program are:

- Information and Referral
- Independent Living Skills Training
- Peer Counseling
- Individual and Systems Advocacy
- Life Transition Assistance; youth leaving high school, people moving out of nursing homes, people leaving correctional facilities, helping people stay in their own homes with needed supports, including home modifications

Access

2025 marks the 35th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA helps protect the rights of people with disabilities in employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications. There are many other laws that protect the rights of people with disabilities so we can access our communities.

Access means: you can go to the places you need and want to go. You can do the things you need and want to do in your community. You can get the services you need and want; and you are able to buy the things you need or want within reason.

Please take this survey to help us better understand the needs of Idahoans with disabilities; that we may better advocate for improved access, supports and services. The survey is voluntary and anonymous.



[Take the survey here.](#)

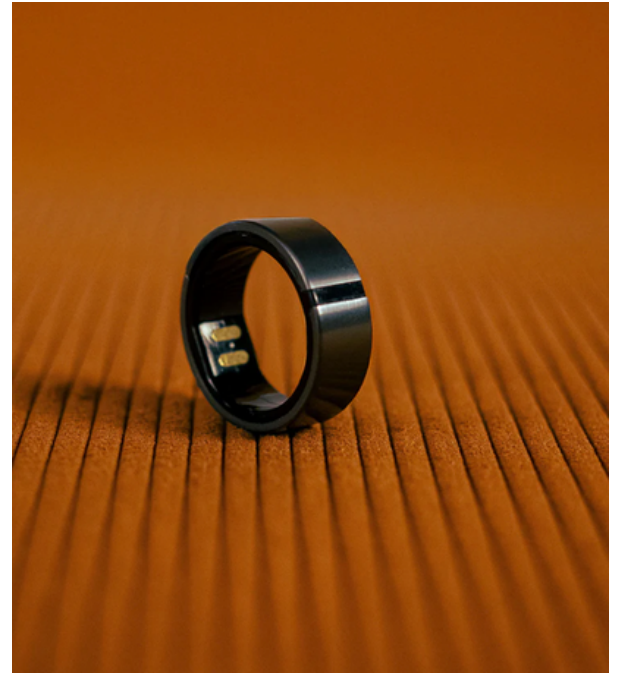
LIFE HACKS For Disability

The Lotus

A wearable ring that controls switches by pointing. No app, wifi, or set up is needed. New switch attaches with magnets to control lights, fans, etc. You can even take them with you when you travel. For a TV, simply double click. Charge it only a few times a year.

<https://getlotus.com>

\$399.00 for a kit with 3 switch plates and ring.



Discover GlassOuse Puff Switch!

If you find traditional buttons or touchscreens tough to use, the Puff Switch is your bridge to easy communication, gaming, learning, and more. It's lightweight, ultra-responsive, and a breeze to set up. Just puff and have hands free control. You can adjust sensitivity for higher accuracy. Hygienic and easy to clean. Adaptable for a wide range of needs.

**\$129.00 from
Glasshouse.com**

Stuff to make life easier!

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING



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800-631-2747

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