

MINUTES
March 3, 2025

Present: Heidi Showstead, Myles Brawn-Husband, Jason Harritos, Lisa Albert, Jill Merlin, Nathan Jackson, Zachary G, Joan Perates, Mindy Highland, Jamie Harris Pfantz, Iraida Williams, Janice Musco, Barbara Henry, Andrew Lamson, Jeff Mello, Esther Picon, Kathy Kuiper

1. Welcome



Tanja welcomed everyone to today's meeting.



2. Mission Statement/Minutes



Deanne read the Mission Statement of the Coalition.

“The Coalition is for individuals with all disabilities to connect and talk about what is important in our lives and what we can do together to improve quality for all people! It is also an opportunity to become familiar with different services available from agencies in Rhode Island and learn what these agencies can do to support and meet the needs of individuals.”



Rachel read the December 2024 Minutes



3. Presentation: *Your Life, Your Rights Presented by: Tanja, Deanne, and Rachel: Based on Your Life, Yor Rights by BHDDH*

Tanja, Deanne and Rachel went over the Your Life, Your Rights Healthcare by Behavior Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Healthcare (BHDDH) presentation with the Rhode Island Cross Disability Coalition members.

Everyone has the right to healthcare!

Healthcare includes your physical health and mental health.

Your Healthcare Rights Include:

- Be treated with dignity and respect.

Which means that the doctors and nurses listen to you about your wants and needs.

- You have FREE access to an interpreter.



An interpreter helps two or more people to understand each other. If you are deaf or speak another language, you can have access to a sign language interpreter or someone that speaks your language.

- A FREE interpreter must be available to you if you are in the hospital.

This right is protected by the Civil Right Act and American with Disabilities Act (ADA)



When you are at a doctor's appointment and your only language is Spanish or another language you don't have access to an interpreter. Unfortunately, someone who is with the patient at the doctor's appointment will end up interpreting, such as a child.



Make sure that you have it written down in your Individual Support Plan (ISP) that if you are ever in the hospital that you need your direct support professional (DSP) with you to help you with the things that hospital staff WON'T do.

- Have the same treatment options as everyone else.
- Treatment options are things that doctors can do to make you feel better

This right is protected by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is a law that makes sure things are not denied to people with disabilities.

Under this Law must give people the same treatment options no matter their disability.

- Have the same access to healthcare as everyone else

Access to healthcare means you can go to doctor's appointments and get care when you need it.

- Access includes close parking spots to the building if you need it.



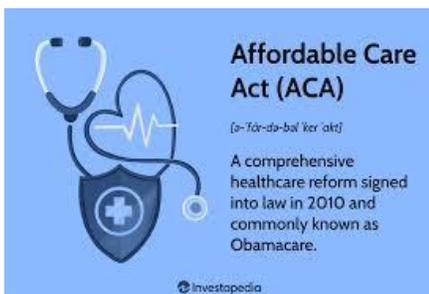
It means the building has stairs or ramps and different ways to open to door.



➤ Access also includes exam room with accessible medical tools. Many exam rooms do not have lower exam tables, or scales for wheelchair users.

Accessible medical tools that doctors use to care for people with disabilities.

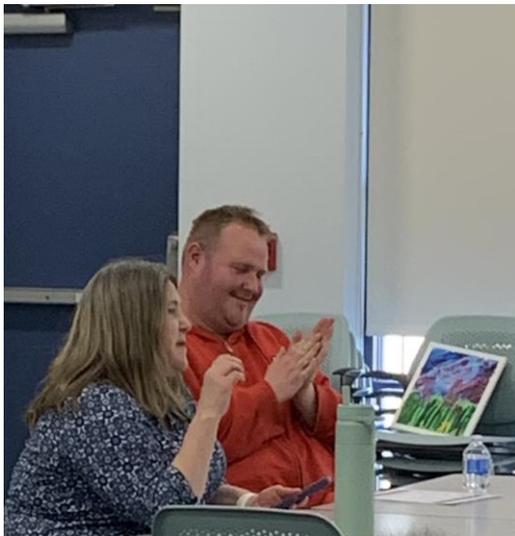
➤ Healthcare Insurance is a plan you have with a company to help pay for healthcare.



The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is a law that helps make sure everyone can get healthcare insurance they can afford.

Health insurance helps people get healthcare by paying for health services.

The meeting needed to end so Deanne, Tanja, and Rachel will continue The Healthcare Rights conversation another time.



See you in May 2025!



5. Motion to Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at about 3 pm.

NEXT MEETING

Date: MONDAY, May 12, 2025

Location: Warwick Public Library

Time: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm



Minutes submitted by Tanja Blicher-Ucran

an initiative of the RI Developmental Disabilities Council

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