



# What's Happening At Main Line July 2015

## Breaking Barriers with Assistive Technology

We are so proud to know and work with Paul K. Over the years of providing services to Paul in his home, school, and in the community, we have learned so much from his tireless self-advocacy and unique connection to the world. On his blog, Paul refers to himself as a student, blogger, advocate and educator with autism and apraxia.

Recently, Paul participated in AT&T's and New York University's ABILITY Lab's Connect Ability Challenge, a \$100,000 global software development competition leveraging mobile and wireless technologies to improve the lives of people living with disabilities. It featured designers, engineers, and entrepreneurs tasked with developing software, wearable and technology solutions that are affordable and applicable for everyday life. The winners will be announced on July 26<sup>th</sup>, the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act in New York City.

Paul uses assistive technology to communicate every day. He was chosen based on his work over the last five years as a speaker at numerous NYU classes centered on Autism and Occupational Therapy, in addition to his presentation at the 2014 American Occupational Therapy Association National Conference.

For this competition, Paul participated in the filming of the promotional video, wrote an op-ed, developed a social media presence, was interviewed, and participated in weekly conference calls with the logistics team. Paul met with about ten teams to provide feedback on their ideas in the hopes of creating something that will make a real difference for people with disabilities, including Autism, and not just wow the judges on technical merit. We wish Paul all the luck in the world with his latest endeavor! If you would like to follow Paul and his progress, you can check out his blog at:

<http://www.wired.com/2015/05/even-tiny-updates-tech-can-obstacles-disabled/>

### Inside This Issue:

<b>Tips to Stay Cool &amp; Benefits of Sunlight Exposure</b>	2
<b>Main Line Events</b>	3
<b>Emergency Preparedness</b>	4
<b>Swimming For Exercise &amp; Eligibility for Medicaid Waivers</b>	5
<b>Eligibility for Continued Treatment</b>	6

Visit Main Line's Facebook page and "like" our page to find the latest announcements for resources and activities. Go to:

[www.facebook.com/MainLineRehab](http://www.facebook.com/MainLineRehab)



## **Beat the Heat: How to Stay Cool When Temperatures Soar**

It's summer again! Heat is the number one weather related killer in the United States. Intense heat can cause dehydration, sunburn, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. The effects of heat can be gradual on our bodies, so often we are unaware of how the heat is affecting us.

Here are some tips for staying cool and comfortable during the hot weather of summer:

- Stay inside during the hottest times of day (mid-morning– mid-afternoon) and in air conditioning if possible. If you need to be outside take frequent breaks to stay in the shade
- If your house does not have air conditioning consider going to a place that does (grocery store, mall, movie theater, etc.).
- Drink plenty of water. Keep a water bottle by your side so you have easy access to water throughout the day.
- Dress in lightweight and breathable clothing.
- Never leave a person or animal in a car during hot conditions.
- Frequently check on children, elderly adults and pets to ensure they are not suffering in the heat.

Source: [http://safety.lovetoknow.com/Summer\\_Heat\\_Safety\\_Tips](http://safety.lovetoknow.com/Summer_Heat_Safety_Tips)

## **The Health Benefits of Sunlight Exposure**

Most people are familiar with the risks of unprotected sun exposure, such as sunburn, wrinkles, freckles, eye damage and skin cancer.

However, although overexposure to the sun is bad for you health, getting enough exposure to the sunlight is necessary and beneficial. Adequate time in the sun gives you several benefits:

- A boost in serotonin, a neurotransmitter that regulates your appetite, sleep, memory and mood
- Support of your circadian rhythm, which leads to better sleep-sunlight “turns off” melatonin production each morning, which is the hormone that makes you feel drowsy as it gets darker at night.
- Production of Vitamin D, which is needed for important body functions such as strengthening your bones and contribution to your immune system
- Relief of stress and pain, and help for individuals suffering from season affective disorder (SAD), a type of depression

The key to reaping the health benefits of sunlight while avoiding the risks is balance and moderation. The U.S. National Institutes of Health recommend about 10 to 15 minutes in the sun without sunscreen. The time of day and your skin pigmentation will affect how much unprotected time in the sun is healthiest for you.

## **Main Line Events:**

**Date: July 29th: Pittsburg Support Group: Attention, Focus and Concentration.**

**Time:** 1:00 pm– 3:00 pm.

**Location:** Carnegie Borough Building, 1 Veterans Way, Carnegie, PA 15106

**For questions,** contact Sarah Fischer at **610-280-0180 ext. 140** or by email at [sreis@mainline-rehab.com](mailto:sreis@mainline-rehab.com)

**Date: July 30th: Keys to Success: Finding Employment**

Join us to learn about different strategies and tips for finding employment. Learn how to complete an application and how to find and contact potential employers! We will have pizza and soda!

**Time:** 2:00 pm-4:00 pm.

**Location:** STEPS 669 Exton Commons, Exton, PA 19341

**Please RSVP by July 27th to 610-280-0180 EXT 168**

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## **Congratulations Lauren**

Here is a picture of Lauren L. with her very dedicated cognitive therapist of nearly nine years, Carol M. This was taken just before Lauren led the graduating class of 2015 in processing on June 9th. She is moving to New York this summer and we know she will be a success at whatever she puts her mind to!

She will continue to be involved in "Lauren's First and Goal" a non-profit football camp that has raised more than \$1.7 million toward its mission to provide financial support for brain tumor research and cancer services, to offer financial and emotional support to families living with pediatric cancer, and to increase awareness of the disease. To find out more about "Lauren's First and Goal" and to visit her website go to <http://www.laurensfirstandgoal.org/>.



## Emergency Preparedness

When emergency situations arise in PA that may affect you and your family, ReadyNotifyPA lets local officials notify you quickly. Be among the first to find out and stay informed during an emergency.

ReadyNotifyPA can send you an e-mail, or a text message to your cell phone or other device. You can choose how you want to be notified by ReadyNotifyPA. Alerts are free; however, your cell phone provider may charge for text messaging.

All subscribers will get emergency alerts. You may also choose to get other alerts, such as severe weather, transportation delays and crime alerts if offered by your county.

You can choose the county or counties that will send you alerts. Pick the county or counties where you spend most of your time. Sign up at [www.ReadyNotifyPA.org](http://www.ReadyNotifyPA.org) for more information.



## Make an Emergency Preparedness Kit:

An emergency kit goes a long way in making sure you are prepared. Think about those special items you and your family need, but also think about including:

- Flashlights
- Radio (batter powered)
- First Aid Kit
- Non-perishable food
- Hand-operated can opener
- Bottled water (one gallon per person per day)
- Blankets and or sleeping bags
- Emergency contact phone list
- Cell phone with chargers



## Swimming for Exercise

Swimming is often a summertime favorite for children, but it's also a great form of exercise for individuals of all ages. What sets swimming apart from other workouts?

- It's low impact, which is ideal for anyone with overworked or injured joints.
- It's a form of resistance training that strengthens muscles all over your body, especially your core.
- It's an aerobic exercise strengthening your heart and improving lung efficiency.
- If you're a novice swimmer, start slowly to build up how long and far you're able to swim.



## **Eligibility for Medicaid Waivers**

When receiving services through one of the Waivers (CommCare, Independence or OBRA), one of the rules is that you continue to meet financial eligibility to be able to stay in the waiver. Remember, when you entered the waiver, you had to meet both the clinical requirements *and* the financial requirements. For most people, continuing to meet financial eligibility is not a problem, but things like getting a job, receiving a settlement, or inheriting money could impact the ability to qualify for the waivers.

Once a year, your local county assistance office is supposed to mail out paperwork to each person getting waiver services so that they can check to see if you still meet the financial requirements to stay in the waiver. It is really important that you fill out the paperwork and return it in time, or you could lose your services. **Be sure to check your mail and return the forms** when they come in. Your staff can help with this process, so feel free to ask for assistance if you need it.

## Eligibility For Continued Treatment

The individual must:

- have a primary neurological diagnosis that results in cognitive impairment(s), including
- acquired brain injury, autism or other developmental disabilities
- be medically and psychologically stable
- be willing to participate in the therapy program
- not require 24 hour supervision by MLRA staff or therapists
- be free of active substance abuse
  - individuals with a history of substance abuse will be required to participate in random drug testing
- have no incidents of aggression (verbal and/or physical) within the past 6 months
- have a rehabilitation program focus that fits into either Home/Community, Academic or Vocational track
- be able to handle (or have someone to handle) all personal care needs

\*Please note that Main Line staff does not provide personal care services such as feeding, bathing, toileting, physical assistance with mobility, and administration of medications or other medical treatments.\*

\*Our definition of Substance Abuse problem = illegal use of controlled substances or alcohol abuse.\*

\*Medical stability is defined as not missing more than 20% of all scheduled sessions in a calendar month because of medical issues.\*

\*The environment where services are to be held must be determined to be safe for staff (including firearms locked, safe access to the therapy site and site must be free of environmental hazards such as bug infestations, strong odors, other individuals who may be considered a risk to our staff, etc)\*