

TFL & DAS Training
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MODERATOR: We are five minutes out. We will start in five minutes at 1:00. We still got some folks joining, but we will get started here in just a moment. Good afternoon everyone. We have a few more people joining. We are hoping for just a second so they can join and then we will get started.

MODERATOR: Tory, if you're ready we should go ahead and get started and be mindful of the time.

TORI HUGHES: First off, I'm going to go ahead and set up our captioning. We will get started here in just a second.

Good afternoon everybody, we are so glad to have you on here with us. Just a couple of housekeeping rules so we know where everything is. No one as far as participants have access to microphone, you do not have microphone rights, but, if you have any questions please feel free to type them in chat. In order to find chat, there's very small purple tab on bottom right on your screen. By clicking on that, you will have option to see chat option and see all participants. If you have any comments or questions type them there.

>> We will have captioning. I have assigned Lorea as captioner, you should have link to view them, if you don't, we have another link to view them. I will put that in chat right now so you have them for today.

>> One last thing, if you need to zoom into your screen, on the left hand side at the top, there's small icon that looks like it has magnifying glass. It will say show zoom control, when you click on, you can zoom in or out. Anybody other thing Martha before I start recording.

>> MARTHA RUST: I think that was very helpful.

TORI HUGHES: I will go ahead and click record and we can get started.

>> MARTHA RUST: Thank you so much Tori for going through that. Are we recording? I did not see it pop up. Usually I get a pop up. I am getting all these and it must have been over looked.

>> Good afternoon everyone. I want to thanking you guys for spending an hour with us today. My name is Martha, I'm very excited you guys are here with us today. Before I pass to other speakers you might notice or slides are different. We have Shepherd logo on there. We have guest speaker Danny Housley, we will be speaking about that today. This one came out treasure chest, how to find treasures in funding for AT purchases.

>> CIARA MONTES: My name is Ciara Montes, I'm with Tools for Life.

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>> DANNY HOUSLEY: I'm assistive technology case manager at Shepherd Center. Previously I worked a Tools for Life as accessibility manager.

>> Tools for Life is your assistive technology program. We serve state of Georgia, all people to find assistive technology tools so they can be assisted at home, work wherever they want to be.

>> This is our Tools for Life for web site, it is more of a resource page. This is where you can find information about assistive technology upcoming webinars. We actually have Wiki link where we put all aging webinars in. So, if you miss one, like today is going to be filled with great information, if you want to go back and listen to it again we will share on our

Tools for Life web site.

>> We are partner with division of aging. We are working with 39 individuals across to state who have been in pandemic, socially isolated or having difficulty with dally living. We want you guys referrals. We have not gotten many. We are definitely wanting to work with your individuals. Please, if you have any wes about who you can refer and how this program work reach out to me or Rachel would be happy to set you up with a portal so you can get your referrals in. It is going great. Last month we talked about sol of equipment we sent out to people. This month we have gotten back some e-mails and phone calls from individuals receiving their AT and it is working with them and they are becoming for socially with their friends and becoming more [Inaudible] in their community. I want to make sure you all got this information and please refer your individuals to us. We will be happy to work with them. If you need access to portal let us now. We will be happy to set you up.

>> We provide for training. This is third one. This one is focusing on funding. . The past was care's act. June was on AT, thinking outside box on technology. Last one is aug 19. Mark your calendar down. That link is already up and working. If you have any questions about this project that we are working with you guys on let us know and we will be happy to answer.

>> Before I let go of microphone please make sure to put any questions if chat box. We want to hear from you. I want to make sure we leave this open so you can ask what questions you have about funding. Danny is here and what roadblocks are you finding when working with your individuals around the state. So, if you can have some of questions you have about roadblocks Tori and I will monitor those. I know it can be very frustrating when it comes to looking for AT and what grant does this and what waiver does that and other things that tend to be a roadblock. Take a minute right now if you know of any, put them in chat box so we can address. Or, if there's certain funding questions you may have put in chat box and we will try to answer throughout this presentation. With that I will pass over to you.

>> DANNY HOUSLEY: Shepherd Center is private hospital specializing in medical treatment, research and rehabilitation for people with spinal cord, brain injuries stroke multiple sclerosis. I work in assistive technology center. The main goals for that center, we do that for environmental control, aug communication and computer access. We also have a drive-in clinic, they work to make sure people have technology they need to be able to drive safely and independently. They also work with a lot of people experiencing cognitive decline to make sure they are still safer to drive. We work with a lot of folks with dementia and other cognitive disabilities. We also have our seating clinic. That is where people come to be fitted for their chairs whether power or manual. They do positioning, pressure mapping, all kinds of good stuff. We have rehab equipment, what are tools somebody will need to transition back to their home after coming here for occupational service.

>> Today we will talk about funding and one of the barriers people encounter is financial access. Traditional is often out of reach for a lot of people with disabilities in the state. It is very hard to go to the bank and get a loan for \$200 to \$300 for equipment that you need. A lot of people think that's not too bad, but when you look at some of our folks here, especially in the more rural community, they are on very fixed income, \$200 to \$300 could mean going without grocery for a week or month, or doing without paying the bill. A lot of lenders will not do anything that small. They will take out a loan for \$1,000 and they look at your credit history.

>> Employment, often times people cannot get a job because of transportation issues, barriers, may be person is paid sub minimum wage what happens throughout state. Employment can hinder someone's ability to have the things they need to be able to pay bills and be independent.

>> Third party funder anything that will help cover cost. Sometimes people go to National Federation of Blind or Association for Blind Citizens to apply for grant or funding. Those are becoming more and more scarce, especially now that we are in throws of pandemic.

A lot of places, direct funding they are actually dried up, or frozen, or they had to get rid of that program. At the end of day where do you turn? A lot of people are kind of looking at payers of last resort. I will let Ciara talk more about what that is and what that entails.

>> CIARA MONTES:

>> CIARA MONTES: It is organization that covers cost after third party has exhausted funds. A lot of people are relying on funds like these. It can be medicare or medicaid. Even folks like vocational rehab will cover costs for people with disability to get back into employment.

>> I will ask audience what barriers have you encountered with funding or working with clients or maybe yourself if you have a disability? Please add in chat.

>> For those looking for chat, you should see a little purple thing in the bottom right with like two arrows, if you click on that, it opens up, the first speech bubble is chat. Please let us know what barriers you have encountered?

>> I see a comment from Bill. Most of our clients just have lack of knowledge of AT.

>> That makes sense because you don't know what you don't know. Just knowing there's certain devices out there that can help.

>> So Bill, how do you help the individuals that you work with increase their knowledge about AT?

>> GUEST SPEAKER: It is just kind of knowing the resources that's out there. Often have link, with AT, I know at Tools for Life we rely on service providers to send people our way to help them kind of navigate those options and to increase their knowledge base. It is, you know a tricky [Inaudible] plan.

>> You're totally right Danny.

>> When funding options change so rapidly we have had to take some of our resources off because they have dried up. They are no longer taking applications for funding because there is no funding right now. I definitely hear you on that Danielle. We have physical catalog, assistive technology that we have available for them to visit. That's awesome Bill. I love that you have it up and accessible on your web site.

>> Shell, says clients we work with have needs for things that medicaid will pay for but for whatever reason they cannot get a prescription for item, we would reach out to difference resources and it always said client can reach out to their medical doctor. Any comments on that?

>> It is tricky, a lot of AT is not covered by insurance because it is not considered medically necessary. Whereas you can get a prescription for Hoyer lift or chair, cane or walker, you're not going to get one for environmental access for that accessible thermostat or different kind of AT to make your environment accessible. That is where things get tricky. Even with things like wheelchair, certain frames and materials if it is manual or more light weight that is more cost, may be they do need titanium frame. We will talk about some co-pay stuff in a little bit.

>> This comes from office of disability. These are statistics for ages 16 and up. People with disability is at 21.3% compared to people without disability. These are actually people working in employment positions. Then we have unemployment rate of people with disability at 10.9% and people without disability at 5.9%. You can see people with disability have a harder time finding employment and keeping those jobs.

>> What kind of funding is there out there for people with disability? There's grants, loans, supports, services and also demonstrations what we do at Tools for Life where people are able to get their hands on technology and able to try before they buy, which ultimately saves them from spending money on items that may not work for them.

>> When we talk about support and services part, when you look at some of your nonprofit, independent living, Tools for Life, their services are important because often

times they can give demonstration or some feedback or some hands on experience with technology that other wise would cost money. Often time those kind of supports and services from independent living centers and AT F, don't come at cost for individual and they don't need to worry about prescription or something like that. I want to reinforce the free services you get from people, there's monetary value that can be placed on that.

>> Definitely. I feel like a lot of people don't know what they don't know. I can't tell you how many times when you talked to clients that we exist are just so shocked and thankful.

>> Grants, holy grails is money you don't have to pay out. They are hard to find for individuals. Some have limited funds where they can only spend a certain amount in a given year so funds go very quickly.

>> The brain and spinal cord injury trust fund is for people with spinal cord injury. The maximum amount is \$10,000 and this can be used over time. We have included the link at the bottom of this slide. Danny, did you want to add anything about this grant?

>> DANNY HOUSLEY: Yes, it is very versatile, we talked about it can be used for home mod's and smaller equipment as well. So any of that, you know a home mod can be a ramp, also smart home technologies to make a home more usable. It is very flexible, the \$10,000 you don't have to use all at once, you can use 5000 this year and the rest years later. I have heard that people are applying for brain and spinal injury trust. People just aren't getting out and engaging like they used to. Just make sure, if you do have somebody with brain and spinal cord injury they are exploring that, because that's free money they get due to having one of those conditions.

>> Danny, can you tell people for those who don't know where the money actually comes from?

>> DANNY HOUSLEY: It is funding through DUI tickets throughout state. It has one of those things where a lot of people who were causing these kind of accidents they had to pay a fine, but where does that money go? They wanted to make sure it would be able to be allocated the people who were going to be impacted most directly by those types of incidents. We are working on trying to expand some of the funding for that. By we, I mean a lot of advocates throughout the state, not just me. It is a good program and we want to make sure people are using it, because it is there to benefit the community.

>> I want to talk about options for co-pay assistance. This is co-pay relief program, it is diagnosis specific. You can go to their page to look at it. It is pretty broad, covers a lot of things. It can help with co-pay for doctor's visits, for services, can help, if you are looking to getting the chair, seat elevate and some of those power functions that insurance may not cover. We have web site up here. It is patient advocate.org is their web site. There's form to fill out and income requirement.

>> There's also assistant fund. This can be used for healthcare assistance, for premiums, incidentals. You see with a lot of co-pay assistant programs, you do have to have a particular diagnosis of a disability or condition in order to qualify for it. The web side is tafcare s.org. I have known a couple of people who have gone through it and has success. They had medical bills covered because they were low income.

>> For patient services incorporated they can help with covering cost of medications, co-pays. . They actually have people who can help with insurance claim navigation, because that is one of the trickiest things to deal with. No matter what your status is, having disability or not. It can be so tricky. Picking the right plan that is going to cover the things you need. They can also cover legal advice at no price. Web site is www.patient servicesinc.org. Just getting the legal advise and navigating the services is invaluable.

>> Here for a ran is like shower chairs, canes and walkers. Really looks at covering the out of pocket cost, things you cannot get a prescription for. Getting help for medical supplies is a big deal. That can be a big deal as people are figuring out what kind of

[Inaudible] to use.

>> Home modification --

>> Sorry to interrupt, looks like we can go back a couple of slides, phone number missing for patient incorporated.

>> DANNY HOUSLEY: It is. If somebody can look that up while I'm talking. I apologize, I don't know what happened there. Definitely get the phone number there.

>> I do want to talk about home modification and alterations. These are things that can really hinder a person from transitions into community of their choice or staying in. There's consideration you have to consider in this kind of area, does person own or rent home? If they own they have lot more flexibility, a person who is renting can still request reasonable accommodation for home. Sometimes there maybe cost sharing involved with getting modification. The other thing to consider, if you are renting and have rent install a raft bars, generally those stay with the home if you move. That's why sometimes people who rent don't want to do a lot of modifying, because that's money they will sink if for equipment they will not be able to bring with them.

>> We do have a program here in Georgia called metro fair housing, our fair housing act. . They do handle tenant landlord dispute, disability discrimination when it comes to renting a home.

>> FODAC does have program for specific modification. They have numb of programs they have worked with over the years that's trusted to provide those services. FODAC is also good option when it comes to getting durable medical equipment. Sometimes with D&E, if you get a huh power chair, you have to pay for battery, which is 200 to \$300, but you get the rest of the device for free. With supplies they do have things like incontinent supplies and wound care things. It just depends on what they have been able to maintain from different vendors and donations.

>> FODAC also has program for computers called reboot. They have helped a lot of people get laptops and computers, with limited software. Sometimes just getting affordable computer is first step. They web site is fodac.org. They are also a good place to donate to as well. It can be for clothing, large furniture item. Depending on where you are in Georgia they have pick up and drop off sites all throughout state. Keep them in mind, not only for D&E, but for home modifications. They do get vehicles with lifts and chairs already this them. It is good to check with them. For a lot of their vans they try to get those out for \$10,000. I know that sounds like a lot, but when you look at the cost of a new van, \$50,000 to \$60,000.

>> Department of community affairs is another good organization to keep in your tool box of resources. They have partnership with SILC. Right now, I think that program is on hold, they were doing home modifications. The way it was working they partnered with DCA, they doled out money to each of independent centers throughout state to provide modifications for people. They also have weatherization programs. They do provide community support and have resources for rental assistance as well. They also work closely with unit way and other nonprofits in state. You can find more office at www.dca.ga.gov. People are always advocating that people have access to that program.

>> The HOME program, local government. This program can be used for people who own their home. Or it can be used by a landlord who wants to make a home more accessible and then anybody who had has [Inaudible] is also eligible. That's community block grant they have access to. That's something you usually don't have to come out of pocket for.

>> The community development block grants. As I mentioned earlier HUD program, it is specific area of community block grant. They do have different ones for different communities. Sometimes you can get BG, you can get those for people who may have native ancestry, different part of states have access to some of these different community block grans. It is always good to check with the HUD program. Tanikia Jackson is head of HUD

program. They will give you [Inaudible] what they look like, what communities they serve. I know there's eligibility requirements. It is always good when you look at people in more rural environment.

>> We will talk about -- Ciara, are you covering this, I fill like I've been filibustering.

>>

>> CIARA MONTES: Vocational rehab they have people there to work with you directly. Employment, they know process for requesting and reporting to counselor. Web site is www.gvra.georgia.gov. They can figure out what tools will be needed to get person into gainful employment.

>> MDA, muscular dystrophy association. They have national equipment assistance, they have peer support. I'm aware of one that exists in Atlanta.

>> DANNY HOUSLEY: They tend to have multiple chapters throughout to state.

>> CIARA MONTES: That's MDA.

>> DANNY HOUSLEY: The Georgia center of deaf and hard of hearing is statewide program. They have things for people with hearing and other disabilities. TEDP is tell communication distribution program. This can be used with person with hearing disability to get access to caption phone, audio communication, anything that is going to help them with telephone access. One of things that make's Georgia's program unique is people with communicated disability can also go through this program to get speech generated device. It takes work. These programs are no cost to individual. So a person who has communicated related disability you is get those devices at no cost, because it comes from tax on your phone bill.

>> I can connect person is for people with dual sensory disabilities. Degree of visual loss with hearing loss. I can connect with that. It can cover anything that is going to be for information access. People have gotten smart phones, video magnifiers, computers and other equipment through that program. Again, that's federal grant they get to provide that equipment to the individual. Their web site www.gcdhh.org. It is for people with dual, hearing and communication [Inaudible]. They can get equipment and don't have to come out of pocket, which can be lifesaver when it comes to computer equipment and fancy smart phone that can open up world of opportunities for someone.

>> Georgia Lion's Lighthouse, vision and hearing program, you can get 1 pair of glasses every 3 years. They also cover up to 2 digital hearing aids. They have income requirements as well. You have to be low income in order to qualify for those services. For hearing aids, you have to have audiologist report a well. Hearing aids are very pricey and glasses to. They try to make sure people have access to those items.

>> CIARA MONTES: Walton options is resource for Tools for Life. They have star program. It is center for independent, they provide resources to help people with disabilities live in community. They have 3 offices, you have one in Augusta, north Augusta and Waltherboro. They can take old pieces of AT and durable medical equipment, sanitize and get it ready for someone else to use at little to no cost.

>> I don't know, Martha, do you want to chime in about Walton options.

>> MARTHA RUST: No, they have been doing a lot of resources in [Inaudible]. If you are in need contact Walton options.

>> CIARA MONTES: I will pass to Danny to talk about medicaid waivers

>> DANNY HOUSLEY: When we talk about waiving, that usually means somebody is giving something up, with medicare, you are giving up institution and living in community. This is for people with IDD, they cover medical equipment supplies, vehicle adaptation, behavioral supports. Often times there's age requirements as well. When you look at something like independent care waiver program ICWP, you have to be between ages of 21 and 64 and have hospital level of care. You have to have a physical disability or traumatic

brain injury to qualify for that. They can cover personal support informations, home health, specialized medical equipment, supplies, counseling, emergency response system and some home modification. At Georgia medical care foundation is organization that manages ICWP. I have seen waiting list on that move quickly. You can learn more by going to [www.Gmcf\[Inaudible\].](http://www.Gmcf[Inaudible].)

>> Elderly and disability waiver, also service option uses resources in community environment also known as source. This is for people elderly and disabled. Again, hospital level of care. They can help with serve coordination, adult day care and alternate living. They also do home delivers meals and respite care. I do suggest going to ADL, web site, there's really good support services that people can take advantage of at no cost.

>> The Georgia pediatric program, you can have multiple diagnosis to qualify. They can help with nursing services, personal care support, IV therapies, wound care. It is there to help parents and make sure they are getting affordable care for their children. Number is 770 -458-8500

>> I do want to talk about FCC broad band benefit program. After COVID-19 everybody turned to [Inaudible]. A discount of up to \$100 for laptop or tablet. If you go to fcc.gov that has application for that program there. It is very important for people in rural community to have that access.

>> Away want to wrap things up by talking about planning for the future. There's program in Georgia called stable, achieving better live experience was passed several years ago. Part of that was establishing stable accounts, it is tax free savings plans for disability related expenses. One of the problems with our system is people cannot save money for planning for future, large expenses without it potential his impacting their benefits. With this program, you can add up to \$15,000 a year. If you're employed you can add up to \$12,760. The money can be put into this accounted and it will not affect their medicaid etc.. You do get a stable visa card for paying for expenses. It is directly funding [Inaudible], there's five investment options as well that you can explore in the bank that covers those accounts with Georgia. You have to have acquired a disability before the age of 26. You know, people with any kind of intellectual disability that qualifies, but onset has to have occurred before 26. If you have a brain injury, or spinal cord it has to have happened before you turned 26. You also have to meet one of following criteria, be entitled to SSI or SSDI or have condition under compassionate allowances. Account can be set up by beneficiary, parent or guardian or by themselves. So parent can take account out for their child or person they are taking care of.

>> Qualified expenses what you with cause that card on, basic living expenses, housing, transportation, lift, any kind of AT can be covered under this program, employment training, personal support services, legal fees and health and wellness. It is really good program. The person in charge of how money is being spent.

>> If you go to Georgia.stable.com it gives information about each of those. It is very easy application process. . You can also call 800 number, 800-439-1653 to get that account set up. For Georgia it is called Georgia stable. Very good program. I recommend a lot of people look into this, because it is a way to plan for future needs without reasoning the risk of losing some of those valuable benefits..

>> Funding resources. You can find all your contact sources for CIL, ADRC, AAA. It has resources as well as options as well.

>> We are happy to answer any questions that may have come up, because I have not been able to look at chat box.

TORI HUGHES: A-okay, I have been looking at that. We do have a question, is list of waivers and [Inaudible] going to be available after presentation. Yes, we will post on our web site as well as transcript. You will be able to access it later. There was a lot of great information in here. I learn something knew all the time. Thank you Ciara, she put information up, it is 1-800-366-1781. Was this helpful to you guys? Did you learn about new funding

sources available? Please let us know. We want to make sure we covered any questions that you have during this presentation. Even after this presentation, you can reach out to all of us and we will help as well.

>> Our Tools for Life or team is here on this slide. I'm not seeing any questions. Thank you so much Danny and Ciara for information you gave us today. I hope everyone out there learned something new, there's some funding out there. Thank you for explaining waiver, source Danny. Is there anything else you would like to add?

>> DANNY HOUSLEY: No, I don't think so. I'm happy to answer any questions and I hope that this was useful for everyone. Thank you all for coming out.

>> CIARA MONTES: Nothing on my end thank you.

TORI HUGHES: Thank you so much for spending an hour of your afternoon with us. We hope this was helpful to you guys. Mark your calendar, we will be having our last one in the series aug 19, 1-2. Link is up and live if you want to sign up. We will expand on broadband, what kind of things are happening in Georgia. That's something you all wanted to know more about and looking at internet access. I see some of your comments, thank you this was helpful information. Thank you all for attending this afternoon.

>> And, thank you Tori, she just put training up. If you want to go ahead and sign up, the training link is in chat box. Thank you guys again. You