

PARIS
Public Assistance Reporting
Information System

PARIS Newsletter

PARIS is operated under the auspices of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Official PARIS website:
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The annual PARIS Training Conference, March 13-15, 2012, in Arlington, VA, was a huge success. For the first time, all 52 PARIS jurisdictions were represented at the annual conference. Attendees received information on all aspects of the PARIS matching process. Speakers from Federal agencies emphasized the importance of PARIS and how it plays a role in program integrity. The most popular training sessions were “State Perspectives,” where participating states shared their best practices for working PARIS matches. Attendees heard representatives from California, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Ohio, New York, and Washington, as they discussed the particulars of PARIS within their respective states. One thing is clear, while PARIS proves itself to be a useful tool in waste and cost prevention, there is much to be addressed for improving the effectiveness of PARIS. The PARIS Board of Directors is already working to address training necessities for next year’s conference. Your input is always welcome.

This issue of the PARIS Newsletter is a reflection of the growing importance of PARIS as an integral part of program integrity throughout the country. PARIS news from five states is contained within. If you have a PARIS related story you would like to share in a future PARIS Newsletter, please let me know. Thanks for all your support in PARIS.

***Tom Miller, PARIS Project Officer Administration for Children and Families U.S.
 Department of Health and Human Services***

I hope this finds the PARIS community enjoying the summer season with thoughts of attending the next PARIS Training Conference, sometime in early 2013. As Tom Miller stated, the 2012 conference was a huge success. All of the PARIS jurisdictions were well represented and the conference evaluations indicated the attendees received valuable information to take back to their states. The Board is currently working to craft the agenda for the next conference. We intend to make the 2013 conference an even better opportunity to share information and hear from Federal agencies on the rising importance PARIS intends to play in future health care legislation.

As utilization of the PARIS VA file was the highest evaluated session, we hope to continue with updates from states that have initiated a military related benefit enhancement effort, as well as representation from a state veteran affairs office working with their state Medicaid agency. There is little doubt that PARIS contributes to the reduction of improper payments and to increased program integrity. To support this, for those of you attending the upcoming 2012 NAMPI Conference in Oklahoma City, PARIS is on the agenda. The result of growing interest in the PARIS match process, necessitates all of us to join together to insure the continued effectiveness of PARIS data. The Board intends to include training and useful tools to speak to that effort in the next 2013 conference.

As you’ll notice, five states contributed information contained in this newsletter. We again encourage you to provide input and make any suggestions you feel makes PARIS even more useful. All of us must work together to insure PARIS is successful and an effective tool to improve cost and waste prevention efforts nationwide. Feel free to contribute your own ideas and state initiatives in future PARIS newsletters. As a member of the PARIS Board, please keep in mind all of us are just an e-mail or phone call away. If there is any way we can assist you and your state, don’t hesitate to let us know. I hope to continue my efforts to keep in touch with all of you. Our website continues as a useful source of updated information as it occurs. I look forward to hearing from you and rest assured, the 2013 Training Conference is shaping up as the best one to date! Thanks are in order for all of your past and future support.

Bill Allman, President, PARIS Board of Directors

GEORGIA

The Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) continues its work to decrease abuse, fraud and waste. This effort ensures that quality services are available to the eligible citizens of Georgia. DCH's commitment is further symbolized in its continued efforts to develop a robust and effective Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS) program.

As of August 2008, Georgia began collecting all three available PARIS file matches to check the eligibility status of Medicaid and PeachCare for Kids® members. The Georgia PARIS Project team participated in the 2012 Annual Training Conference in Washington, D.C. The conference offered a plethora of benefits as Georgia revamps their PARIS program. It also highlighted opportunities for states to reduce Medicaid member fraud, abuse and waste. The Georgia PARIS project team described the conference as "a unique national brainstorming session, with direct access to lessons learned by other states and that Georgia did not need to re-invent the wheel".

*Got a story to share,
please let us know!*

In Georgia, the DCH leadership launched a multi-disciplinary team between the Member Services Division of Medicaid and the Office of Inspector General. The collaboration ensured the development and implementation of the revised program captured the expertise of investigations, Information Technology, member services and project management.

The team approach gives full consideration to the people, processes and technology necessary to build a program that is efficient, effective and has automation support. The collaborative effort will optimize external partnerships with the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) and the Veterans Administration, and includes methods to improve the following:

- Providing inter-agency services to the public
- Streamlining data sharing processes
- Reducing member fraud and abuse
- Ensuring veterans and their dependents within our communities, have access to the health services and financial support they earned

Under the PARIS program manager, LaDonna Roberts, the team recently conducted a trial run of the new PARIS program, and reported the redesign of the program was a success. Some of the results from this study included:

- 54 percent of identified cases led to case updates and corrections by Department of Human Services
- 16 percent of identified cases were not substantiated
- 30 percent of identified cases resulted in recipient terminations

The team already experienced a significant improvement in the number of cases identified from the Interstate and Federal files. A new training program for the PARIS team is being implemented and new staff hired to ensure each quarter Georgia is able to enhance its participation in all scheduled data matches, and fully utilize all

PARIS AT HEART OF IOWA INTEGRATED CLAIMS RECOVERY UNIT

In May 2012, Iowa Governor Terry Branstad signed a bill that specifically appropriated funds to set up a centralized Integrated Claims Recovery Unit (ICRU). The focus of the Unit is program integrity with PARIS matching at the heart. Linda Mount, Executive Officer, Iowa Department of Human Services, is a part of the team coordinating the creation of the Unit.

Linda is a regular attendee of the annual PARIS Training Conference. Design meetings and work requests are underway in Iowa. While there is a lot of work ahead, Linda is hopeful the Unit will be working with the PARIS data on a regular basis by the beginning of October 2012.



Meet Your PARIS Board Members

In each newsletter, we are interviewing a PARIS Board member to give you a better understanding of who we are and where we come from. This is the 1st installment and is featuring Kristi Scheve, Kansas, Veterans Match Liaison.

Background:

I am a lifelong Kansan lucky enough to have most of my extended family living within 100 miles. I was raised in Baldwin City, a town famous for maple trees, and was even named the Maple Leaf Queen in my youth. Imagine my surprise to later find out as an adult that I am allergic to maple trees! I came to Topeka, the capital city, to attend college at Washburn University and just never left. I met my husband through a former co-worker's recommendation we'd be perfect together and that was the last blind date I ever had to go on. My husband and I were blessed with our daughter, Sophie, in 2009 and we can't remember what our lives were like before she came along. I mostly enjoy my job with the State and really enjoy the PARIS portion of my job duties. I appreciate being a member of the PARIS Board of Directors and the acquaintances made in other states through our work. I enjoy learning more each day what we can do with the PARIS information and am always happy to help other states improve their PARIS understanding and processes.



Here are a few more questions to help you know Kristi more:

What sound do you love? My daughter's laughter.

If you could witness any event past, present or future, what would it be? Selfishly, I guess I would say to see my daughter's 50th birthday, because that means I would have been around to see her graduate, marry, have kids, and all other significant milestones in her life.

If you could learn to do anything, what would it be? There are a lot of things I wish I knew how to do...play piano or guitar, knit, speak fluent Spanish, or grow a vegetable garden (I am not exactly a green thumb) are just a few.

Which celebrity do you get mistaken for? I don't recall being mistaken for one, but I carry a photo of Diane Keaton from a magazine make-up ad in my purse and ask my hairstylist/friend to make my hair look like that practically every time I get my hair done. I guess it isn't working because no one has said "Hey, you have Diane Keaton's hair"! ha ha

What would you name the autobiography of your life? An Unfinished Project

If you had one word to describe yourself, what would it be? Caring

What is the one thing I would 'not' know about you when I first meet you? I shamelessly spoil my black Labrador; in fact, my daughter tells everyone she has a sister, because we treat the dog so much like a member of the family. I am an animal lover...Friend of the Zoo, Helping Hands Humane Society supporter, National Wildlife Federation, Vital Ground, etc.

If you could live anywhere in the world for a year, where would it be? Disney World

What are your hobbies? I love to cook and wish I had more time for home improvement projects, embroidery, scrapbooking, and quilting.

Alaska Prioritizes PARIS

Within the State of Alaska 2013 Governor's Operating Budget, Department of Health and Social Services Quality Control Budget Summary, released 12/15/11, we saw this excerpt:

"Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2013

Expanded use of the national Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS) data match and validating the effectiveness of the data as a means to detect fraud and avoid duplicate program participation will facilitate QC's research and fraud detection efforts."

Congratulations to Alaska for their expanded use of PARIS.

What Changes/Updates Do I Need to Know?

After transmitting your data file to the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) it is now required that an email be sent to DMDC contact Portia A. M. Sullivan at Portia.sullivan@osd.pentagon.mil stating the total record count submitted. DMDC will respond with a confirmation email.

State to make more use of federal data to fight fraud

Monday, June 11, 2012, Main Sun Journal, Mal Leary, Capital News Service

AUGUSTA – Maine, like many other states, is not taking full advantage of the Public Assistance Reporting Information System, shortened to PARIS, operated by the federal government to help states find cases of fraud in a wide array of programs.

That's a concern of the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee, because of the loss of federal funds to fraud.

"I support efforts to ensure that people who need assistance get it and those who would cheat the system do not," U.S. Sen. Susan Collins, the ranking GOP member of the panel, said. "The federal government should beef up its system for collecting and making more accessible information about who is, and who is not, eligible for payments." The panel has had one hearing on the issue and more are expected, with one estimate that the federal government made \$125 billion in erroneous payments last year.

The voluntary program generates reams of possible cases of fraud, and Maine does not have enough staff to sift through the data and determine the validity of the information, although the state is adding more investigators under a measure approved by lawmakers last month.

"We get reports quarterly, and there is an awful lot of information that has to be reviewed," said Scott Fitts, director of the Fraud, Investigation and Recovery Unit at the Department of Health and Human Services. He said there are several federal lists of individuals who may be receiving food stamps, Medicaid or other safety net programs in more than one state.

Fitts said the system works on the basis of Social Security numbers and other federal data submitted by all of the states to the federal government. It covers Medicaid, food stamps, welfare benefits, child care benefits and workers compensation. A state can access all of that information quarterly.

"We have to scrub all that data," he said, "and we just can't get through all of it and there are a lot of mistakes, like wrong Social Security numbers or names. And often what looks like something is not when we check it out."

Fitts said there are only nine investigators for the entire state, and they are responsible for all fraud investigations, such as tips to the fraud hotline, not just following up information on the leads provided by the PARIS matches. He said in the most recent quarterly match there were thousands of possible cases from PARIS in the various files. He said many leads simply are not fraud, such as when a person moves from one state to another and shows up in both because they have applied for benefits in another state while still being listed on Maine's rolls. He said the numbers in the files are also somewhat inflated because a family of five would show up as five separate entries in the computer data rather than as a family.

"We are more reactive than proactive to the PARIS matches," he said, "though we do use the data regularly."

Fitts said the Legislature added eight investigators and two support staff positions starting Jan. 1. The total cost of the initiative is \$675,000 a year.

Sen. Earle McCormick, R-West Gardiner, the co-chairman of the Legislature's Health and Human Services Committee, sponsored the measure for Gov. Paul LePage. He said there were some concerns raised during committee deliberations about adding staff when some on the panel do not believe there is a serious fraud problem.

"We have not had a lot of resources to do investigations, and a lot of people concluded we don't have a problem," he said. "This should answer that question by providing resources to do more investigations than we have done in the past."

McCormick said the intent is to find any abuses in the system, not reduce benefits for individuals. He said it may be that more resources may be needed.

"It seems that everyone has a story to tell about what may be abuse of the system," he said. "This will provide for more investigations, and we can get to what is the size of the problem and how we should best address it."

State Sen. Margaret Craven, D-Lewiston, also serves on the committee. She supported the legislation but unsuccessfully argued some of the investigators should have been dedicated to provider fraud.

"That's where you could find some big savings," she said.

Another area where some states are using PARIS and Maine is not is in workers compensation claims. Workers Compensation Board Executive Director Paul Sighinolfi said he is having his staff review the possibility of using the PARIS system.