



RUBY SAYS

by
Ruby Duncan

As you know, George Miller and the Welfare Board have instituted massive cutbacks in the Nevada Medicaid (SAMI) program. Because these malicious cutbacks are hurting so many of us, I thought I would give you my views on them.

The cuts limit prescriptions to three per month, doctors visits to two per month and pretty much wipe out dental care and the therapy disabled people need. They say that care will be provided for emergencies, but you have to have one foot in the grave before emergency aid will be given.

George Miller keeps saying that no one is being hurt by the cuts, but we know that many are now suffering greatly and receiving sub-standard medical care because of them.

For instance, people with cancer and other agonizingly painful diseases can't get the pain killing medications all doctors normally prescribe. I guess they think poor people don't really feel pain.

Even worse is that social workers are now "playing doctor" for welfare recipients.

I know of a boy in Henderson with a recently broken collar bone, who was told by his social worker that he couldn't go to the doctor when the strap holding his arm up fell off. His mother had to sell her car for \$100 to take the crying child to the doctor, who immediately took him to the emergency room and put a cast on. And now SAMI is refusing to cover the x-ray costs!

We have recently heard of a woman who can't work because of severe bleeding that, her doctor says, can only be stopped permanently by a hysterectomy. However, her doctor was refused permission by SAMI to do the necessary operation.

Further, people who have had strokes or serious accidents can't get the therapy they need to walk or speak again.

They complain about all the people on welfare, but the Welfare Department won't even give sick and disabled recipients the medical care they need so they can get a job.

Legal Services sued the Welfare Department over this disgrace, but had the misfortune of having the case before Carl Christensen, a judge who is both incompetent and insensitive to poor people. Christensen is the judge who once tried to stop a Federal Court desegregation order and had to be quickly reversed by the Nevada Supreme Court.

Representing the Welfare Department was Marilyn Romanelli who made snide remarks about recipients going to the doctor to get their toenails clipped and who stridently claimed that all "essential" services would be provided despite the cuts.

Judge Christensen totally adopted Romanelli's position and argued angrily with both our medical expert, Dr. Stephen Zang of Family Doctors, and our attorneys.

Welfare's medical witness was Dr. James Laird who got rich off welfare recipients and now earns a healthy salary telling other doctors how often and for what reasons they can treat recipients. Christensen listened quietly while Laird said that a 59 year old black woman whom he had never seen until the trial, wasn't learning to walk fast enough with her new artificial legs and should be taken off therapy.

Given these people, the result was predictable. Christensen ignored the law and ruled for the Welfare Department. The case is now before the Nevada Supreme Court.

So the Medicaid disaster continues and it appears only the defeat of our enemies, like Judge Christensen, at the polls will assure recipients a fair hearing and a fair shake.

What are YOU doing to help YOUR community?

**V*A FACTS

EDITOR'S NOTE: Following are representative questions answered daily by VA counselors. Full information is available at any VA office.

Q - I have been receiving medical care under the CHAMPVA program from the VA on the basis my husband has a 100% permanent and total disability incurred in service. We were recently divorced. Am I still eligible for CHAMPVA benefits?

A - No. Your eligibility for benefits ceases as of midnight on the date the divorce becomes final.

Q - I have a guaranteed GI loan with a remaining balance of \$8,000. I want to pay off the loan in full at this time. Will there be any penalty in paying off the loan early?

A - No. A guaranteed loan may be partially or fully paid at any time without penalty.

Q - Is it true that I may personally review my claims folder? If so, what is the authority and how do I make the arrangements for a review?

A - Public Law 93-579 (Privacy Act of 1974) requires that government agencies make available any records they may have pertaining to an individual to that person upon request. Contact the nearest VA office for complete information.

Q - How can I find out what properties the VA has to sell?

A - Ask any broker of your choice, or request a list from any VA office.

Veterans

Entitled To Training

Veterans with service-connected disabilities of 10 percent or more may be entitled to training under the VA's vocational rehabilitation program, the agency reminded today.

Nearly 25,000 disabled veterans received training under the program in fiscal year 1975 and the VA said a total of 800,000 veterans have participated since World War II.

The 93rd Congress liberalized the availability of vocational rehabilitation for veterans rated 10 percent or 20 percent disabled by eliminating the requirement that such veterans must be found to have a "pronounced employment handicap" as a result of service-connected disability.

Currently, veterans with as little as 10 percent disability who are determined to require rehabilitation can receive up to four years of training provided their eligibility date - usually nine years after discharge - has not passed.

Vocational rehabilitation training may be taken at colleges or universities, vocational or technical schools or by means of on-the-job or on-farm training programs.



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"C"

Happiness

Through

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by

Otto McClarrin

Poison Ivy

"Leaflets three, let it be," is the only sure way of preventing poison ivy (*Rhus Radicans*), the cause of the most common skin disease in the United States. Therefore, during these summer months when much time is spent out-of-doors, make a special effort to avoid contact with all green plants with three leaves.

The family of plants to which poison ivy belong includes oakleaf, found in the southeastern part of the country; poison oak, found in California, Oregon, and Washington; poison sumac, which is distributed from the eastern seaboard into Louisiana and Minnesota; and poison ivy, which can be found in every state except California and Nevada.

The plants usually grow in the form of vines or ground shrubs (poison sumac does not appear as a vine) and may occasionally reach the height of a small tree. The chemical compounds (catechols) produced by these plants have erroneously been called poisons when in actual fact they are allergens (substances capable of producing allergic reactions).

No Reaction To First Exposure

The very first exposure to poison ivy will not produce a reaction. However, if a person has become allergic, the second exposure will result in a dermatitis within seven to ten days. Subsequent exposures may reduce the time of the onset of symptoms from a few hours up to two days.

No one should assume complete immunity to poison ivy, since repeated exposure may produce the disease. Only the area of the body which has been in contact with the plant is affected; the severity of the eruption is dependent on the amount of allergen deposited on the skin and the allergic sensitivity of the individual.

Soap will destroy the allergen - washing the skin immediately after contact will reduce the chances of developing symptoms. Therefore, it is important to rinse the affected skin area thoroughly to be sure that all traces of the allergen has been removed. The disease cannot be spread by releasing the blister fluid through scratching.

The effect of spreading is achieved by the response of areas of the allergen because of the varying amounts deposited and the period of exposure. Thus, a person may notice blisters appearing on his fingers and later his arms simply because he had far more of the allergen on his fingers.

Calamine Lotion Helpful

After washing off the allergen to reduce the effect of the disease, the use of cold water compresses to reduce itching and inflammation is advised. Calamine lotion, when used early, will help to dry up the small blisters. Oral antihistamines may also help to reduce itching. In severe cases your physician may use a local or systemic cortisone treatment.

Scratching of the blisters can occasionally result in the development of secondary infections. The use of various patent medicines is generally not advised since some may contain ingredients which produce equally uncomfortable allergic reactions.

To prevent poison ivy learn to recognize the various plants in this family and then keep as far away from it as possible. If such plants are growing in or near your property you may wish to explore the use of herbicides with your agricultural extension agent (or some similar knowledgeable person - depending on where you live) to rid your area of this major nuisance.

**BE GOOD TO ———
YOURSELF**