



Meeting Life's Challenges

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July 26, 2021

Dear Families & Friends:

In our recent communications, we have highlighted the significant staffing crisis that Living Resources is facing. There is little solace in knowing that we are not alone in this crisis, however, we are facing major challenges that others may not be.

On July 1, 2021, NYS raised the mandatory minimum wage for fast food workers to \$15 per hour, while the minimum wage for other positions, including Direct Support Professionals remains at \$12.50. More importantly, the funding for services does not support wages much beyond that \$12.50 minimum wage. Imagine that someone who provides critical supports for you and/or your loved ones makes less than a fast food worker. So, why can't we simply just raise wages? Unlike many private sector employers who are raising wages in hopes of attracting staff members, we are not able to compete by doing the same. As a non-profit that receives a majority of its funding from State Medicaid to provide mandated supports and services, we do not have profits to draw from and we have little to no control over our "prices". In essence, NYS determines how much Living Resources gets paid. Therefore, we can't easily raise wages because NYS will not increase our funding just to cover the added costs of increasing staff wages. We are in a crisis on the cusp of a catastrophe and we need your help to bring awareness to this tremendous need for critical funding.

We often hear, how can we help? Well, on **Thursday, July 29 at 4pm in Proctor's Arcade in downtown Schenectady**, Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara is sponsoring a **rally to raise awareness about the critical need for more funding for DSP wages** and the current crisis. We urge you join us and others by attending the rally and lending your voice of support. **Our voices are stronger when we stand together!**

Additionally, I would be remiss if I didn't also make a plea for all to be vaccinated. With the cases of COVID and its variant strains on the rise, it is so very important to protect you, your family, friends, and your community. Please join with me in protecting others and get your vaccination today!

Don't know where to go to be vaccinated? That information is only a click away, <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/> to find the nearest location to you.

Best regards for your health and safety,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Martin".

Elizabeth Martin
Chief Executive Officer