

Michigan Alliance of Information and Referral Services
Annual Report
October 10, 2007

During 2007 MI-AIRS has focused on training and staff development opportunities, reviewing applications from providers proposing to expanding their service area and enhancing services to AIRS/MI-AIRS members.

Training

Since January, MI-AIRS presented five trainings including the Basics of I&R, Resource Database Management, Utilizing Quality Assurance Tools in I&R, Introduction to Best Practices in Serving People with Hearing Impairments and an Introduction to Developing and Uploading Courses on Essential Learning.

Web Site Refreshed

The MI-AIRS web site is being maintained by one of the board members and includes information about upcoming events, AIRS certification exam opportunities, and the AIRS online training subscription opportunity. In the next quarter expect an e-newsletter.

MI-AIRS Newsletter

Plans are underway to resume publication of the MI-AIRS Newsletter. Rather than being produced and distributed in paper format, the new Newsletter will be an electronic publication which will be sent to members via e-mail.

Certification Exams

As an AIRS affiliate, MI-AIRS oversees Certification exams held in Michigan. The objective of obtaining the Certification often results in professionals polishing their I&R knowledge and skills. The goal and the result are improved I&R services. Through today, MI-AIRS sponsored four exam opportunities in Grand Rapids, Detroit, Kalamazoo, and again here in Detroit this afternoon.

AIRS online training

Michigan 2-1-1 and MI-AIRS set up a subscription that provides unlimited use of the AIRS Online training courses for MI 2-1-1 and MI-AIRS members. Instead of paying for each course, MI-AIRS members who subscribe are able to use all of the available courses for less than \$50 per employee/annually.

As an added incentive to try the AIRS Online Training, AIRS members from Michigan at the "Basic" level receive one training slot and AIRS members at the "Standard" or "Enhanced" levels receive two training slots as an added benefit of their AIRS membership. Information is available on the MI-AIRS website (www.mi-air.com)

Coordination agreement between MI-AIRS and MI 2-1-1

Michigan 2-1-1 and MI-AIRS developed a memorandum of understanding to outline the process for assuring that programs seeking to provide or expand 2-1-1 services fit the Michigan 2-1-1 business plan.

Reviews of 2-1-1 Applications

MI-AIRS completed two reviews: CALL 2-1-1 was approved to add Ottawa County to their service area and, in a separate proposal, to add Oceana and Mason Counties. The review teams and the Board continue to demonstrate a commitment to assure the standards are met and quality 2-1-1 services will be available.

AIRS Accreditation

The Detroit Public Library's TIP program became the first library based I&R to receive Accreditation by the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems. Accreditation assures the highest national standards for I&R are being met. Organizations that complete this process will nearly always express that they needed to take a hard look at some of their systems...and that, as a result, their services are stronger. (While this is not an accomplishment of MI-AIRS, we are proud to recognize our members who demonstrate a commitment to quality I&R by attaining this quality benchmark.)

Recognizing MI-AIRS Leaders

The accomplishments of MI-AIRS are directly related to the time and effort contributed by our members. All of the Board deserves recognition for the time they put into 2-1-1 reviews, training others, coordinating regional roundtables, managing our finances, keeping the web site up to date, or providing oversight. All of this work is in addition to their job responsibilities but universally they invest in MI-AIRS because working collectively we make our individual I&R programs stronger.

It is important to recognize and say thank you to two Board Members whose terms expire today:

- Nancy Lindman of the Michigan Association of United Ways. We appreciate and thank Nancy for her vision and commitment for quality Information and Referral, particularly her passion for 2-1-1.
- Alisa Anderson of Huron Valley Ambulance, the host of the 2-1-1 program for Washtenaw, Livingston and Monroe counties. Alisa also brought vision and passion for 2-1-1 as well as the ability to design and implement the service that has uniquely fit those communities.

MI-AIRS is an active AIRS Affiliate serving 60 members stretching geographically from St. Joseph to Escanaba and alphabetically from *Adult Well-Being Services* in Detroit to the *Volunteer Center of Battle Creek*. Year after year, I&R services are better in Michigan because of the knowledge shared and developed between the members of MI-AIRS.

Robert H. McKown, CIRS
President