



Resource Center
for Independent Living
318 3rd St NW
East Grand Forks, MN 56721

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Options: Interstate Resource Center for Independent Living Special Edition COVID Newsletter



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!!!!Help!!!! North Dakota's Governor Zeroes Out Centers' State Funding!

North Dakota's Governor Burgum has submitted his budget to the North Dakota State Legislature without any funding included for Centers for Independent Living. If this stands three of four Centers will have to cut staff, services, or whole programs. It is Options hope that through your help the Governor will agree to support the Independent Living Programs Line Item maintaining independent living services within the State when the Legislature adds it. Additionally through your help Options is hoping the Legislature will include our total line item in equal or greater amounts received last biennium.

If only the match money is added to the cut, General Funds Options budget of \$ 534,218.00 would be reduced to \$ 223,621.00. This is an almost 50% reduction of funding. If this cut stands it is questionable how Options would operate going forward. Because of this we are asking your help. Please ask that **"the Independent Living Programs Line item be restored to the same level funded last biennium"**. Included within this newsletter are some cards you can cut out and mail to the Governor's Office, your Senator and your Representatives. We have provided a listing where you can look up who represents you. If you have any problems please feel free to call Options we will assist you. All you have to do is stamp the card, write in the

name of the person the card goes to and also a couple lines on the back talking about why this is important to you.

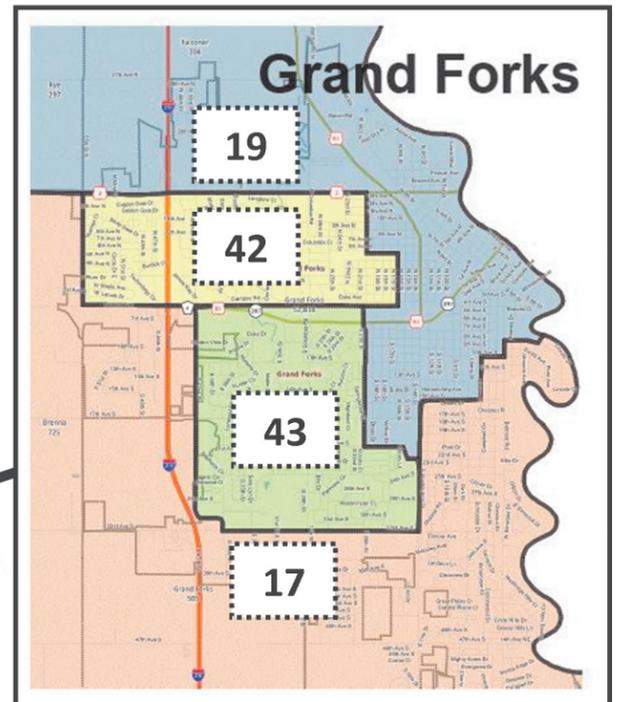
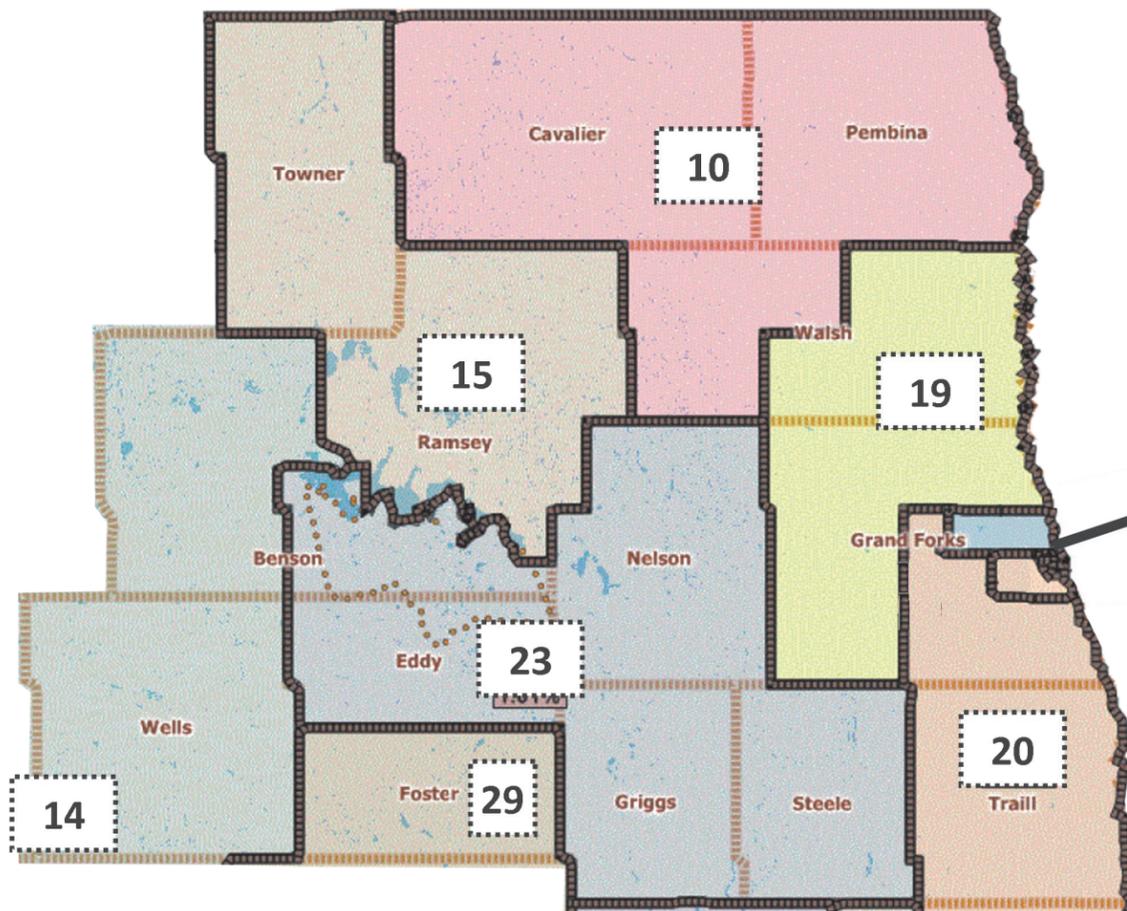
If you have any questions feel free to call or text Options for assistance. If you have any questions or need any disability related services call or text us.

Thank you so much,

Randy Sorensen, Executive Director

Maintain Vigilance!

We are starting to realize maybe life can get closer to normal. We are seeing friends of Options being vaccinated with North Dakota leading the efforts. I would like to say as there is light at the end of the tunnel do not lose your vigilance. It would be a shame with a solution so close at hand you would get sick. Options has lost some very dear friends due to this pandemic. So please mask up, wash up and isolate as much as you can. We do have some groups you can be a part of by just calling or through your computing device, if you feel isolated and want to talk to other folks feeling as you do please join us.



To identify your legislators, match the District Number on the map with the legislator below.

House of Representatives

- 10** Chuck Damschen
Email: cdamschen@nd.gov
*Serves Cavalier, Pembina and Walsh counties
- 10** Dave Monson
Email: dmonson@nd.gov
*Serves Cavalier, Pembina and Walsh counties
- 14** Jon O. Nelson
Email: jonelson@nd.gov
*Serves Wells, Benson counties
- 14** Robin Weisz
Email: rweisz@nd.gov
*Serves Wells, Benson counties
- 15** Dennis Johnson
Email: djohnson@nd.gov
*Serves Ramsey, Towner counties
- 15** Greg Westlind
Email: gwestlind@nd.gov
*Serves Ramsey, Towner counties
- 17** Mark S. Owens
Email: mowens@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks county
- 17** Mark Sanford
Email: masanford@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks county

- 18** Corey Mock
Email: crmock@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks county
- 18** Steve Vetter
Email: smvetter@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks county
- 19** Gary Paur
Email: dwvigesaa@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks and Walsh counties
- 19** Wayne A. Trottier
Email: wtrottier@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks and Walsh counties
- 20** Mike Beltz
Email: mbeltz@nd.gov
*Serves Traill county
- 20** Jared C. Hagert
Email: jhagert@nd.gov
*Serves Traill county
- 23** Bill Devlin
Email: bdevlin@nd.gov
*Serves Eddy, Nelson, Griggs and Steele counties
- 23** Don Vigesaa
Email: dwvigesaa@nd.gov
*Serves Eddy, Nelson, Griggs and Steele counties
- 29** Craig Headland
Email: cheadland@nd.gov
*Serves Foster county

- 29** Chet Pollert
Email: cpollert@nd.gov
*Serves Foster county
- 42** Claire Cory
Email: clairecory@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks county
- 42** Emily O'Brien
Email: eobrien@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks county
- 43** Mary Adams
Email: mkadams@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks county
- 43** Zachary Ista
Email: zmista@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks county
- ## Senate
- 10** Janne Myrdal
Email: jmyrdal@nd.gov
*Serves Cavalier, Pembina and Walsh Counties
- 14** Jerry Klein
Email: klein@nd.gov
*Serves Wells, Benson counties
- 15** Dave Oehlke
Email: doehlke@nd.gov
*Serves Ramsey, Towner counties

- 17** Ray Holmberg
Email: rholmberg@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks county
- 18** Scott Meyer
Email: scottmeyer@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks county
- 19** Robert O Fors
Email: rfors@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks and Walsh counties
- 20** Randy D. Lemm
Email: rlemm@nd.gov
*Serves Traill county
- 23** Joan Heckaman
Email: jheckaman@nd.gov
*Serves Eddy, Nelson, Griggs and Steele counties
- 29** Terry M. Wanzek
Email: tmwanzek@nd.gov
*Serves Foster county
- 42** Curt Kreun
Email: ckreun@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks county
- 43** JoNell A. Bakke
Email: jbakke@nd.gov
*Serves Grand Forks county

What To Do If You Are A Close Contact

From the North Dakota Department of Health

<https://www.health.nd.gov/what-do-if-you-are-close-contact>

Close contact definition: A close contact is someone who was within six feet for a total of at least 15 minutes in a 24 hour period of someone who has COVID-19 (48 hours prior to their onset of symptoms; for asymptomatic cases, 48 hours prior to the date they were tested).

Please note: If both parties were wearing masks, the positive individual is still required to isolate but the close-contact does not have to quarantine.

How long must you quarantine?

At least 14 days from the last exposure to someone who tested positive for COVID-19

You may be released from quarantine AFTER DAY 10 if the following criteria are met:

- Remain symptom-free.

You may be released from quarantine AFTER DAY 7 if the following criteria are met:

- Remain symptom-free.
- Test negative for COVID-19 - please note that the PCR or antigen test can not be administered more than 48 hours prior to release. Free public testing throughout North Dakota is available to anyone who would like to be tested for COVID-19. Click here for updated information on free testing events.

If you have been identified as a Close Contact, follow these instructions:

- If you have been identified as a close contact, the first and most important thing you need to do is remain at home. You should avoid congregate settings and public activities, as well as practice social distancing and good cleaning/disinfecting habits.
- Close Contacts should monitor symptoms for the full 14 days after the last exposure to the positive case, as it can take that long to develop symptoms. Being identified as a close contact does not mean you will get COVID-19. However, you should behave as if you are contagious.
- Do not go to a hospital or clinic without calling your health care provider first.
- If you have been excluded from work due to an exposure to a COVID-19 case, check with your employer to find out when you may return to work.

Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:



Symptoms can range from mild to severe illness, and appear 2–14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.



NORTH DAKOTA SETTLES WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE!



On December 14th, 2020, the State of North Dakota reached a settlement with the Department of Justice for the purpose of keeping individuals with disabilities living in the homes and communities of their choice as opposed to being segregated in institutional settings. Under the Settlement terms, the State of North Dakota will expand services to more than 2,500 individuals with physical disabilities in, or at risk of entering a institutional setting in order to allow them to live in their homes. This victory would not have been possible without your feedback and advocacy!

The State of North Dakota is now seeking YOUR input in order to plan going forward on how to implement expanded services for individuals with physical disabilities. There are four Conference Calls scheduled to discuss!

Tuesday, February 2nd | 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Call **701-328-0950**, then dial
conference ID number: **625-556-944#**

Friday, February 5th | 2:00 PM-3:30 PM

Call **701-328-0950** then dial
conference ID number: **626 030 299#**

Thursday, February 4th | 6:30 PM-8:00 PM

Call **1 701-328-0950**, then dial
conference ID number: **600 959 875#**

Tuesday, February 9th | 3:30 PM-5:00 PM

Call **701-328-0950**, then dial
conference ID number: **486 894 859#**

JOIN OUR EMAIL LISTING

Do you use email to communicate? If so, send us your email address to mike@myoptions.info so we can keep you up-to-date on various advocacy issues and opportunities to participate in various activities.

Mental Health Resources During the COVID Pandemic

Are you feeling anxious, sad or lonely because of the COVID-19 pandemic and would like additional support?

Project Renew is a new behavioral health program providing community support services and outreach to individuals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, in partnership with Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota.

Call **701-223-1510** (M-F between 8-5pm CT) OR email renew@lssnd.org.



Every Thursday, Options hosts a 45 to 60 -minute call in or virtual chat session called Coffee and Chat with Options. People we serve can call in or connect by computer on “Go to Meeting” to share. This time of COVID-19, many people are feeling isolated and want someone to talk to. Visit tinyurl.com/CoffeeOptions to join online or dial **1-866-899-4679** and enter the code **772-233-413** to talk with us!

Every Thursday, 11AM

Hosted on **GoToMeeting**

DO choose masks that



Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric



Completely cover your nose and mouth



Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps

What's An Underlying Condition

Adults of any age with certain underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19. Severe illness from COVID-19 is defined as hospitalization, admission to the ICU, intubation or mechanical ventilation, or death.

Adults of any age with the following conditions are at increased risk of severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19 such as: Cancer, Chronic kidney disease, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), Down Syndrome, Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant, Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m² or higher), Pregnancy, Sickle cell disease, Smoking, Type 2 diabetes mellitus

Taken from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>

COVID-19 spreads very easily from person to person

How easily a virus spreads from person to person can vary. The virus that causes COVID-19 appears to spread more efficiently than influenza but not as efficiently as measles, which is among the most contagious viruses known to affect people.

Taken from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>

Hiring Services/Repair Work In Your Home

What you need to know:

- Ask the service provider to wear a mask.
- You and other household members should wear masks.
- Stay at least 6 feet from the service provider, and limit interactions between the service provider and other household members and pets.
- After the service is completed, clean and disinfect any surfaces in your home that may have been touched by the service provider.

Taken from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/at-home/in-home-services.html>

DO NOT choose masks that



Are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl



Have exhalation valves or vents, which allow virus particles to escape



Are intended for healthcare workers, including N95 respirators or surgical masks

If You Need PPE Contact Us

Do you have a disability and are looking for gloves, masks and hand sanitizer? If so, contact Options and we may be able to get you some. You can reach us at :

V/TTY 218-773-6100
Toll-Free 800-726-3692
Text-Line 701-864-0296
Fax 218-773-7119
Email options@myoptions.info

Stop the spread of germs that can make you and others sick!



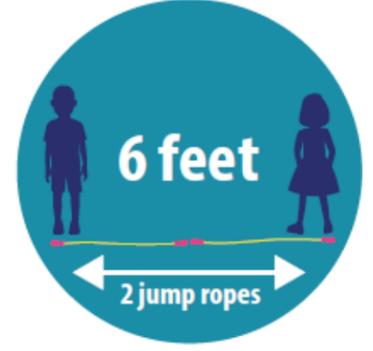
Wash your hands often



Wear a mask



Cover your coughs and sneezes



Keep **6 feet** of space between you and your friends

HEALTH CARE AND THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

You have the right to request a reasonable accommodation from your medical provider.

As adapted from a technical assistance paper from the ADA National Network, 2020

The ADA requires that health care entities provide full and equal access for people with disabilities.

This can be done through:

- **Reasonable Modifications of Policies, Practices, and Procedures.** Adjusting policies, practices, and procedures, if needed, to provide goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations.
- **Effective Communication.** Making communication, in all forms, easily understood.
- **Accessible Facilities.** Ensuring physical accessibility.

Covered health care facilities include, but are not limited to: hospitals, doctors' offices, pharmacies, dentists' offices, acupuncturists' offices, etc.

A person with a disability can be a person with a mobility or physical disability, sensory (vision or hearing), intellectual, psychiatric, or other mental disability. People with medical conditions such as HIV/AIDS, epilepsy, rheumatoid arthritis, and cancer may also be covered under the ADA.

Reasonable Modifications of Policies, Practices, and Procedure

Health care providers are required to make reasonable modifications (or changes) to policies, practices, and procedures to provide equal access to facilities and services to people with disabilities. The term "reasonable modification" is a broad concept that covers every type of disability.

Effective Communication

Health care providers must ensure that communication with patients with hearing, vision, and speech disabilities are as effective as communication with other patients. The aid or service provided depends on the method of communication used by the patient, how long and how complex it will be, and the setting where the communication will take place.

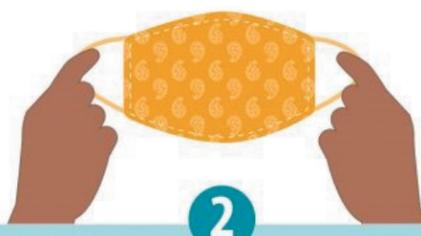
Accessible Facilities

Health care facilities must ensure that their facilities are accessible to people with disabilities. When possible, medical equipment should also be accessible. Examples: accessible examination tables, accessible imaging machines, accessible scales, and patient lifts. Health care providers must have an accessible facility that meets the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design and have accessible exam/ treatment/procedure rooms available.

How to take off a mask



1
Carefully, untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops



2
Handle only by the ear loops or ties



3
Fold outside corners together



4
Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Recommendations for People with Disabilities using Personal Attendant Services

Used with permission from the Center for Disability Rights, Inc., a Center for Independent Living based in New York State, some parts were edited due to our space constraints and differences in attendant care programming.

1. Ensure you have sufficient back up attendants in case your regular attendants cannot work due to the illness affecting someone in their family or themselves. If you use a provider call and ask what their backup plans are in the event of a widespread outbreak. If it seems inadequate think about people you may call to help you and how you can start preparing now.
2. Ensure that you have the ability to get assistance if an attendant does not show up for work. They may not be able to get to you and you may need to make sure your needs are met. Start a checklist of possible resources from other providers which may be able to serve you, as well as family and friends who may be able to help for free in an emergency. Brainstorm with your provider to see if emergency fill in staff you identify could be paid by your provider.
3. Have at least a week of non-perishable food in your home at any given time. If you need help, check with local grocers to see if you can

order by phone or online and have it delivered to your home or have picked up. If financially unable seek out assistance from local organizations or food banks to build up stock.

4. Stock up on other important supplies. Bowel and bladder care items in addition to cleaning, toiletries, and other supplies. These are similar supplies which are recommended to possess in a natural disaster scenario.
5. Identify a way to make sure you can get your medications in a timely manner. This may mean having friends or family assist you or using a pharmacy delivery service.
6. Plan for your pets. There may be difficulties in getting pet food or your pets may need someone to take care of them if you are hospitalized.
7. Have your attendants wash their hands and use hand sanitizer when they arrive at your home and each time prior to touching or feeding you.
8. Regularly clean, sanitize and disinfect surfaces that are touched in your home to prevent the spread of infection. Have your attendant do this each time they arrive.
9. Use disinfecting wipes on items that are frequently touched. These include your telephone, doorknobs, your refrigerator handle, your wheelchair controls, lifting device controls and remote controls. Place wipes near the items that should be regularly cleaned as a cue for you and your attendants.
10. Have your attendant take extra steps to avoid possibly infecting you by wearing a surgical mask if someone close to your attendant like

a member of their household becomes sick. You both should be extra vigilant about cleanliness.

11. If your attendant becomes sick, urge them to seek medical care and utilize your backup attendants.
12. Take immediate steps to avoid infecting your attendants if you, one of your attendants, or a member of your household begins to feel sick. Protecting their health supports your own independence. Ensure everyone washes their hands and uses hand sanitizer regularly. As a person with a disability, it may be difficult for you to cover a cough or sneeze, so we encourage you to wear a surgical mask if you are sneezing or coughing. It is important to use a surgical mask correctly. The following link explains how to properly use one. <https://www.sfcidcp.org/communicable-disease/healthy-habits/how-to-put-on-and-remove-a-face-mask/>
13. If someone in your household becomes sick, take steps to avoid infecting other people. If possible, have them stay in a separate room of your home to get well. Regularly clean, sanitize and disinfect shared spaces, particularly the bathroom to avoid spreading the infection.
14. If you become sick, seek medical care immediately. As people with disabilities we are at greater risk from illnesses like these.
15. If you cannot be supported at home, contact your doctor and notify Options so we can make sure you are able to get back home when your situation is resolved. Many of us know people with disabilities who have been institutionalized when they sought medical care, so some people are reluctant to seek medical support.

FACT:
NORTH DAKOTANS
HELP EACH OTHER.

LET'S STOP THE SPREAD 



NORTH
Dakota | Health
Be Legendary.

Vaccine Roll-Out

As the vaccinations roll-out is currently under way in North Dakota, it is important for you to pay attention on where you fit in based on your disability or underlying condition. If you do fit into a vaccination group or question whether you do, follow the procedures outlined. Your county public health agency is your best resource so please call them, call your medical provider to insure they are aware of your need especially if you believe they may forget about you.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, some vaccines which were subsidized during their development may be given without a charge. You should always be an informed user of your medical services so ask the provider if you will be charged for the vaccine or any related costs while getting the vaccine. If you will receive a charge see if your provider will reimburse. If you have question or need help call us.



Mission Statement

Options is a non-profit organization committed to assisting individuals with disabilities to live independently in the communities of their choice and to eliminate barriers of attitude, architecture and communication from the environment.

Contact Info

V/TTY 218-773-6100
Toll-Free 800-726-3692
Text-Line 701-864-0296
Fax 218-773-7119
Email options@myoptions.info

On the Web

www.MyOptions.info
www.OptionsOutdoors.org
[Facebook.com/optionsRCIL](https://www.facebook.com/optionsRCIL)

Vision Statement

Options sees a world where people with disabilities: enjoy the same human and civil rights as citizens without disabilities; live, attend school, work and play in an integrated accessible community; are respected citizens and community leaders; and face no attitudinal, architectural or communication barriers.

Text us Your Questions on our Text-Line at 701-864-0296

If you would like this newsletter in alternative formats, such as audio, braille or digital, please contact Mike or email options@myoptions.info.

If you would like to receive this newsletter and other publications by email submit your request to options@myoptions.info or call us.

While the Information contained in this issue has been presented with all due care, Options IRCIL and its funding partners do not warrant or represent the Information as being free from errors or omissions.

This newsletter is for informational purposes only; it does not constitute legal advice or medical advice, and should not be construed as such.

Always seek advice from qualified medical or legal professionals with questions which you may have to insure it is applicable to your situation.