
the NADE ADVOCATE



A Publication of the National Association of Disability Examiners

Volume 18, Number 3

Mar./Apr., 2002

Mid-Year Board Addresses Professional Concerns Proposes a New Disability Claims Process

Packed Agenda and Speakers Fill Mid-Year Board Meeting

THE MID-YEAR BOARD MEETING was held Feb 21-23, 2002 at the L'Enfant Hotel in Washington D. C.

The Board dealt with many pressing issues of SSA but discussion centered around Prototype and its future. Executive officers Jeff Price, Sue Heflin, and Ken Forbes, the Legislative Director Marty Marshall, and the SSA Liaison Debi Gardiner met with SSA Commissioner JoAnne Barnhart. Commissioner Barnhart told the NADE group that Prototype will be replaced and she welcomed NADE to submit comments on a new process. She may extend prototype past the June deadline for an exit strategy to be in place but it will be a short extension. Commissioner Barnhart asked NADE to identify processes that work well considering improved service to claimant and affordability. She is committed to the electronic folder and discussed revisions of the listings. The current volume of revisions will slow down to better assimilate information and to do training.

Prior to the Mid-Year Board Meeting, the NADE delegation also met with National Academy of Social Insurance, National Council of Disability, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and

the staff members of the House subcommittee on Social Security. Visitors to the Board during the Mid-Year meeting included Associate Commissioner of Disability Ken Nibali and Phil Landis. Nibali noted that SSA is working to find a middle ground between the old and new process. Other visitors included Sue Roeker (SSA Director of Strategic Planning), Jenna Lewis of the House subcommittee on Social Security staff, and SSA Advisory Board Staff director Margaret Malone and SSAAB staffer Mike Brennan.

Major motions and activities of the Mid-Year board:

- The New Board in Austin had awarded the membership processing contract to Envision. The Board discussed putting membership applications on the website. Many suggestions to improve service were brought before the board by the new contractor.
- Approved giving a membership card to new members. The membership cards issued this year will have no expiration dates and no new cards will be issued to members in subsequent years of membership. (*see article p. 22*)
- Discussed the possibility of establishing a member-at-large category. Decision deferred to old Board to allow Elections and Credentials Committee to come up with some parameters.



Board Officers review reports.

- Discussion of purchase by NADE of a video camera. Decision deferred to Continuing Education (CE) and Certification committees to examine best and most cost effective plan for videotaping conferences. Moved and passed that regions be encouraged to tape conferences and make tapes available through Continuing Education. CE committee was directed to find ways that would allow those tapes of conferences to be provided at a nominal cost.

Mid-Year, continued on page 6



IN THIS ISSUE:

2002 Award Criteria	pp. 10-11
Correspondence	pp. 11,16-19
NADE Proposal	pp. 12-14
Job Opportunity	p. 20
GAO Report	p. 25

ADVOCATE STAFF

Editor

Donna Hilton
1117 Sunshine Drive
Aurora, MO 65605
417.888.4152
Fax 417.888.4069

Regional Representatives:

Great Lakes

Judy Nesbitt
209 Eagle Ridge
Chatham, IL 62629
217.782.8356
Fax 217.524.3185

Great Plains

Shari Bratt
PO Box 82530
Lincoln, NE 68501
402.471.2961
Fax 402.471.3626

Mid-Atlantic

Betty James
211 Arms Chapel Road
Reisterstown, MD 21136
410.966.8097

Northeast

Debi Chowdhury
906 Myrtle Avenue
Albany, NY 12208
518.473.9038
Fax 518.486.7469

Southeast

Leslie Medlock
2269 4th Place Circle, NE
Birmingham, AL 35215
205.989.2620
Fax 205.989.2602

Southwest

Lisa Martin
PO Box 149198
Austin, TX 78714
512.437.8083

Pacific

Mary Gabriel
PO Box 9303
Olympia, WA 98507-0851
360.664.7362
Fax 360.586.0851

Letters to the Editor are welcomed and may be selected for inclusion in future issues. Please forward ideas for future *Advocate* topics to the editor or your Regional Publications Representative.

The next issue will be published in **May, 2002.**

All correspondence should be directed through your Regional Representative or directly to the *Advocate* editor **no later than April 15, 2002.**

You may e-mail articles in text format to drhilton@sofnet.com
Please also forward a hard copy.

President's Message

"MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU!" The new Star Wars movie is due out soon and this phrase will be



on the lips of many people. It should be the new motto of NADE because if the force is not with us, it will certainly be against us! We certainly don't want that to happen! We have enough forces against us already. NADE has within its membership ranks the expertise and skill level to offer guidance on many issues that pertain to the disability program. In the past few weeks, NADE has been at the forefront on many issues related to the disability program, offering guidance on many issues ranging from the new listings to the future design of the disability claims process. It is important that NADE choose to be proactive on these issues and offer our expertise to assist SSA in determining the direction it will go on these issues. After all, who better to offer such guidance besides the ones who perform the work?

Our membership is a showcase for the "One SSA" concept.

NADE has always prided itself on its diversity and that diversity makes our perspective very special. When we present testimony before Congress or offer advice to SSA on the new disability claims process, we do so from a perspective that no other organization can provide. It is our perspective that makes us unique and makes our voice so much more effective. We are all part of SSA, an agency that touches the lives of every single American. Think about it. Sooner or later, every American comes to SSA asking for assistance. What kind of service do we provide them? What kind of service will we provide in the future?

By now, I am sure that most of you have seen the proposal NADE submitted for a new disability claims process. I am sure that many of you will, at first, disagree with portions of that proposal. But let me ask you, what plan would you have submitted? Customer service should be the basis for any plan and I don't think many of us would argue the point that customer service has been missing from the focus of much of what has transpired in recent years. When it takes two years to get a hearing before an ALJ, is that good customer service? NADE submitted a position paper in 1999 arguing that 5 months was too long to wait to become eligible to receive disability benefits. It is! But if 5 months is too long to wait to get benefits, is two years not too long to wait for a decision?

continued on page 3

NADE 2002 CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

Southwest Regional	DoubleTree	Little Rock AR	April 3-5
Great Plains Regional	RamadaInn	Sioux Falls, SD	May 1-3
Great Lakes Regional	Battle Creek Inn	Battle Creek, MI	May 9-10
SE/NE/Mid-Atlantic	Hyatt Regency	Louisville, KY	May 7-10
Pacific Regional	tba	Sacramento, CA	May 15-17
	(see nade.org for updated information)		
National Conference	DoubleTree Hotel	Portland, OR	Sept. 21-27

The NADE Advocate is the official publication of the National Association of Disability Examiners. It provides a forum for responsible comments concerning the disability process. Official NADE positions are found in the comments by the NADE President and NADE Position Papers.

Advocate advertising rates are as follows:

Size	Single Run	Multiple runs
1/3 page	\$75.00	\$50.00 per issue
1/2 page	\$125.00	\$100.00 per issue
Full page	\$200.00	\$175.00 per issue

Professional Opportunities: Brief 1-2 lines on related occupational information (\$25.00)

Chapter Networking/Fund Raising: "Chapter Bulletin Board" (\$10.00)

Membership Networking: Exchange or request for information, such as computer information (\$5.00)

Advertising: Contact Donna Hilton 417.888.4152 or Glenda Croom 512.437.8592

The NADE proposal asserts that there will be more contact with the claimant from the very beginning of the process and that the claimant will be educated as to what that process will involve and what their responsibilities are. The proposal asserts that the DDS will fulfill the requirements for due process at the first appeal step and that the ALJ hearing will be only to determine if the DDS correctly applied the law. The record would be closed after the DDS appeal decision and ALJs would be prohibited from holding de novo hearings. There should be fewer reversals of the DDS decision, thereby restoring public confidence in the DDS decision by eliminating the disparity in allowance rates between DDSs and OHA. It is a good plan. It is a plan that has providing good customer service as its focus and that is really what we are all about! Put yourself in the claimant's shoes and ask what process you would prefer? And don't forget that the NADE proposal is affordable and achieves many of the goals that lay behind the failed prototype experiment.

NADE also issued comments on the new musculoskeletal listings. Does anyone really believe that these new listings will not result in additional development and additional costs? I didn't think so! SSA's Deputy Commissioner for Disability and Income Security Programs, Martin Gerry, has promised NADE would have a much more active role in the future when new listings are being developed or revised. "Who better to offer advice on what listings need to be revised than the people who work with them every day?" Indeed!

While I am referring to the new leadership at SSA, let me take a moment to express appreciation to SSA Commissioner JoAnne Barnhart, Deputy Commissioner Martin Gerry and to Deputy Commissioner for Operations Linda McMahon for meeting with NADE's executive officers on February 19 to discuss issues important to our membership. This was a productive meeting that focused on the future of the disability program. Commissioner Barnhart made it very clear that she would act to resolve the complex issues, and even the not so complex issues that still seem to get pushed aside, that confront the disability program. The Commissioner made it very clear that Disability and Operations would work close together in the future. Hey, she got no argument from NADE. We agreed that it was time to take action, time to stop operating two very distinct disability programs, time to slow down the schedule for the release of new listings, time to really look ahead and ask, "What do we want this program to look like twenty years from now?"

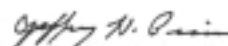
The same group of officers that met with the Commissioner - President-elect Ken Forbes, Immediate Past President Sue Heflin, Legislative Director Martha Marshall, SSA Liaison Debi Gardiner, and myself, also presented these questions to the Office of Management and Budget, to the National Academy of Social Insurance, to the National Council on Disability and to the congressional committees that exercise oversight of the disability program. Later, with the assistance of the rest of the Board of Directors, we made our points to the Social Security Advisory Board, the General Accounting Office, to SSA's Associate Commissioner for Disability and to SSA's Director of Strategic Management.

I hope that everyone read the article on NADE certification in the last issue of the *Advocate*. The NADE Board approved re-certification for medical consultants and support staff in addition to disability examiners. NADE has chosen to emphasize the importance of ongoing training, learning new skills and acquiring new knowledge, as a key element in building a foundation for success. Beginning April 1, NADE certification will be good for three years. Certified NADE members will have to apply for re-certification after three years and be able to attest at that time that they have achieved the additional continuing education credits necessary to be re-certified.

In the 1970's, futurist Alvin Toffler wrote, "The illiterate of the year 2000 will not be the individual who cannot read and write, but the one who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn." (I know what you're thinking but I have it on good authority that Toffler did not work for DDS.) Our security no longer comes from being employed. Employment security comes from being employable. Superior performance depends on superior learning and that superior learning is available at NADE's training conferences. These regional and national conferences offer opportunities to learn what your Association is doing for you and for members to take advantage of the quality training available at these conferences. Check out the schedule in the *Advocate* and at www.nade.org for these conferences and attend one in your area.

I want to take this opportunity to express NADE's appreciation to Mr. Stanford G. Ross and to Ms. Margaret Malone. Mr. Ross is stepping down as Chairman of the Social Security Advisory Board March 21 and Ms. Malone is stepping down as the Advisory Board's Staff Director March 31. Their departure from these positions will leave a huge vacuum. Mr. Ross and Ms. Malone were in attendance during our national training conference last year in Austin. NADE has been very grateful for the willingness of these individuals to meet with us on a regular basis and listen to our concerns. Both have provided outstanding leadership for the Advisory Board and are to be commended for their service. Mr. Ross will continue to serve on the Advisory Board through the completion of his term in September. NADE wishes both of these individuals well in their future endeavors.

Replacing Mr. Ross as Chairman of the Advisory Board will be Hal Daub and NADE would certainly want to extend a warm greeting to him. Mr. Daub served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1981-89 and served on the Subcommittee on Social Security during that time. Most recently, he has served as the Mayor of Omaha, Nebraska. NADE looks forward to working together with Mr. Daub in providing strong guidance and leadership for the disability program.



Certification Now!

by Michele Namenek, Continuing Education Chair,
and Melissa Robertz, Certification Chair

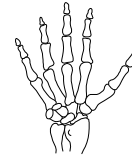
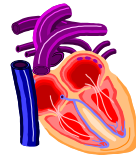
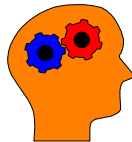
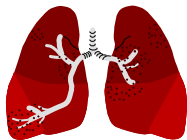
NADE HAS LONG BEEN IN the forefront of providing professional training for professional staff through regional and national training conferences. In addition, NADE members have had the opportunity to become Certified Disability Professionals since 1971.

This year, NADE Certification becomes more meaningful for its members and the constituents we serve. The certification process has been enhanced by NADE's new requirement that NADE certified members become recertified every three years. Beginning April 1,

2002, members must submit a record of the required 25 Continuing Education credits every three years in order to maintain professional certification. The records must be submitted to the NADE Certification Committee chairperson who will issue recertification certificates commencing in April 2005. All training related to professional/work development will be eligible for CE credits. SSAIVTs, training sessions at NADE conferences and all other training related to professional/work development are eligible for CE credit. (One hour of training = one CE credit).

Please obtain and complete an application for certification if you are not already certified. Join the ranks of NADE members throughout the nation who are committed to professional growth and development, and providing world class service at a time when the disability workforce is undergoing constant change due to national scrutiny.

As further refinements of the re-certification process are developed, they will be promulgated to the membership. If you have any questions about the process, feel free to contact the Chairperson of NADE's Certification Committee or your regional certification representative.



**The Kalamazoo Subchapter of the Michigan Association of Disability Examiners
Invites you to attend the Great Lakes Regional Training Conference
May 9 and 10, 2002 at the Battle Creek Inn**

In this conference you will hear from Dr. Claudia Osborn, author, lecturer, interviewed on Dateline. She will share from her own personal experience of the difficulties of having a traumatic brain injury.

Also, Leslie Leicht, MD, from the University of Michigan Medical Center Post Polio Clinic, will be speaking on Post Polio Syndrome.

Representatives from the National Multiple Sclerosis Society will be speaking and there will be a presentation by the Jackson County Organ Transplant Support Group.

Paws with a Cause will be sharing how canines can assist people with various impairments to function safely in their normal daily activities.

We will hear from a representative of the Office of the Inspector General speak on how and what they investigate for fraud as it relates to the Disability Determination Service.

Our Regional Social Security Administration's Office of Disability will discuss the current and future status of the Disability Program.

NADE President elect, Ken Forbes will address the conference.

Registrations and hotel information will be mailed soon. Plan now to attend this exciting training conference.

For additional information contact Tom Ward at Tom.A.Ward@ssa.gov or 616 337-3509

Traverse City Subchapter Reactivates

by Susan Heckendorn, Traverse City DDS

IN LESS THAN TWO MONTHS, the Traverse City subchapter of MADE, grew from four members to twenty-four, and still counting!

This group of enthusiastic and dedicated members has already been active with fund-raising, training initiatives and community service projects during its short time together. Officers were recently elected, and monthly chili and soup lunch meetings have been well attended and successful in raising much needed seed money. A recent guest was our agency director, Linda Dorn, who is also a NADE member.

During the holidays, the chapter sponsored an office-wide pet food drive for the local animal shelter. It was so successful that we plan on making it an annual event. We also sold Paczkis for Fat Tuesday, and are sponsoring an upcoming lunch seminar regarding the early retirement package recently offered to Michigan's state employees. Thankfully, most of our new Made members are not eligible!

Our other committees are actively planning future training and charitable events and we plan on a strong showing

at the regional NADE conference in Battle Creek in May, and the national conference in Oregon.

The Traverse City DDS is one of four offices in Michigan with 123 employees, many of whom have 20 to 30 years of service. We live, work, and play in a resort community with miles of beaches, golf courses, ski resorts, and beautiful scenery. We often are affectionately referred to by the other offices as the "Pine Cones".

While considered somewhat of a laid back office when it comes to our casual dress and atmosphere, we take our work very seriously. So while our NADE sub-chapter had been inactive for a while, it wasn't due to lack of concern about our profession. The sub-chapter just needed a kick-start!

Our mounting workload pressures, prototype issues, and the desire to effectuate change through NADE's voice provided the needed catalyst. This chapter's growth is an example of ex-president Sue Heflin's philosophy of what one-on-one recruitment can accomplish. In May 2001, I had been approached by Sue and Jeff Price at the policy forum in Arizona to

rejoin NADE. It had been over 15 years since my membership had lapsed, and I agreed to consider re-joining and try to reactivate our chapter.

For the next month, I received "gentle" reminders about our discussion, (although at times I jokingly referred to it as stalking). I had no reservations whatsoever about NADE, but wasn't sure if I could find the time to commit to a recruitment effort. In fact, I was trying to simplify my life and not take on so many responsibilities. However, I decided I would give it my best shot and set a goal of recruiting at least ten new members, and then see where it went from there.

With assistance from our state president, Mimi Wirtanen, and training at the national NADE conference in Austin, Texas in October, I forged ahead. Thanks to a wonderful group of dedicated and hard working co-workers who willingly took up the challenge, we now have an up and running sub-chapter comprised of examiners, doctors, clerical support, managers, and directors.

We hope to meet you all at the upcoming conferences!



Silver Corporate Member

PSSU

PENNSYLVANIA SOCIAL SERVICES UNION
LOCAL 668 SEIU, AFL-CIO-CLC

Joan Bruce
President

2589 Interstate Drive
Harrisburg, PA 17112

717.657.7677 800.932.0368 FAX 717.657.7662

Gold Corporate Member

HEALTH MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES

301 North Charles Street
Suite 100
Baltimore, MD 21201
410.332.0185

Contact: Susan L. Marshall

Mid-Year, from page 1

- Awards committee submitted a wording change on President's award. Board moved to accept changes to include subchapters for consideration the President's award.
- Discussion on current practice of benefit continuation on Failure to Cooperate (FTC) cases. Moved and passed that NADE write a position paper stating opposition to current regulations that allow benefit continuation in FTC cases.
- Discussion on Hearing cases in which additional development is requested by Hearing Officer (HO). Moved and passed that the HO be given the ability to do short form decision in all fully favorable allowances.
- Certification: Board approved proposal for recertification of Medical Consultants and Support Staff. Medical consultants will be required to have 25 hours and Support staff will need 15 hours of continuing education to be recertified. Also passed that one hour of training will equal one hour of Continuing Education (CE) credit. Moved and passed that members will be responsible for keeping track of CE hours for recertification. Documentation is to be turned into the Certification chair upon completion of the appropriate hours. Recertification begins as of April 1, 2002 and members have three years in which to obtain the necessary CE credits.
- Membership Director Susan LaMorte urged Regional Directors to notify chapters that \$50 membership grants are available again this year. All renewals received after April 1 will apply to the next membership year
- Discussion on new definition of past relevant work - Board directed the President to write a letter endorsing the idea of reducing the documentation of past 15 year work history.
- Length of the Delegate assembly - Debi Gardiner agreed to write a letter to DDS Administrators to explain the importance of the NADE Delegate Assembly at the Annual Training Conference as it is the only opportunity to conduct business. DDS luncheon with Administrators will be an informal gathering with a brief report on NADE activities by the NADE board.
- Discussed the need to advise chapters when they have a national award winner. President Price will add that charge to the Awards Chair to notify the chapter president and the state administrator.
- Moved and passed to establish a Photography contest as part of annual awards. Publications Director will set the parameters.
- Moved to allow a links from the NADE website to the corporate members if there is no cost to NADE.
- Board approved 2002 Voting rules as proposed by Elections and Credentials committee. (see page 28)
- Solicitation of corporate sponsors at regional and national conferences - we should not sell time to any one. Some sponsors are getting too many requests for financial support. Gold members are allowed to set up an exhibit at no cost at conferences. Chapters should not be soliciting corporate member support from corporate members outside of their region.
- Established an ad hoc committee chaired by Sue Heflin to develop regional and national protocol guidelines. Debi Gardiner, Susan LaMorte, and Ken Forbes to serve on committee also.
- Website contract with Envision was renewed.
- Board drafted a proposal to send to SSA Commissioner Barnhart which covers the full scope of the disability process from taking the application in the Field Office through levels of appeal.
- Board approved proposal with a narrative, which was to be sent out to the board for comment before it was sent to the Commissioner.
- Associate Commissioner of Disability Ken Nibali responded to President Price's letters regarding the resolutions passed at the 2001 Delegate Assembly. (see pages 16-17)

NADE Thanks
Dr. Ward Jankus
Neuropsychological Associates of Southwest Missouri
Becker Law Office **and** **L & S Associates Inc**
for their continued corporate support.

Be It Resolved... To Get Involved

by Dean Crawford, resolutions Chair

LOSE WEIGHT, STOP SMOKING, GET a new job, make more money. What do all these have in common? They are some of the most popular New Year's resolutions. It has come time for NADE's call for resolutions. Obviously NADE can't lose weight or stop smoking but the organization can accomplish many things through its resolutions. A resolution is a formal statement of opinion adopted by an assembly or group. In previous years, there have been several resolutions adopted by the NADE Delegate Assembly. At last year's NADE conference, the delegates voted on a resolution to ask SSA to compile an index to the Listing of Impairments. A letter was sent by the NADE President to SSA asking for this index and it has been discussed.

You will soon be gathering at your Regional conferences. This is the perfect time to discuss a resolution with others, vote on it, and submit it to your regional Resolutions Committee member. The Resolutions Committee members are listed below.

There is a proper form for a resolution and it is presented below as well. Resolutions must be presented to the committee and the committee will review them and submit them to the NADE board. Resolutions are then voted on by the delegates at the NADE conference. If you have any questions, you may contact your regional committee member or myself.

The format for a resolution is:

- WHEREAS: (statement of the facts)
- WHEREAS: (more relevant facts)
- WHEREAS: (continue as needed)
- THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: (the opinion/position you want supported by NADE)

The length of the resolution depends on how many reasons you have to inform the membership so they have all the information necessary to vote on the resolution.

Resolutions Committee Members are:

Dean Crawford, Chair
 11215 Research Blvd. #2035
 Austin, TX 78759
 512.437.8585
 Dean.Crawford@txdds.state.tx.us

Southwest Region
 Bill Dunn
 P.O. Box 149198
 Austin, TX 78714
 Bill.Dunn@txdds.state.tx.us

Great Lakes Region
 Marleen Nielsen
 P.O. Box 5
 Deerfield, WI 53531
 608.266.8055
 marleen.nielsen@ssa.gov

Great Plains Region
 Cecelia Bamford
 3640 S.W. Topeka Blvd., #100
 Topeka, KS 66611
 785.267.4440, ext. 210
 Cecelia.Bamford@ssa.gov

Mid-Atlantic Region
 Eugene Person
 1708 Tulip Street
 Wilmington, DE 19805
 302.761.8325
 eugene.person@ssa.gov

Northeast Region
 Barbara Huber
 169716.847.39869 Parker Blvd
 Tonawanda, NY 14150-8744
 Barbara.Huber@ssa.gov

Pacific Region
 Robert Henry, M.D.
 425 Brighton Avenue
 Oregon City, OR 97045
 503.945.6314
 Robert.Henry@ssa.gov

Southeast Region
 Lynne Powell
 PO Box 738
 Tybee Island, GA 31328
 912.356.2914
 Lynne.Powell@ssa.gov



Gold Corporate Member

The MASH[®] Program
 Medical Advocacy Services for Healthcare, Inc.

ATTN: RETIREES - Interested in temporary work on periodic basis? Contact Rich Fairbanks
 1.800.667.6274

(FAX) 505.923.7312 800.880.MASH

STATE OF MICHIGAN
FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY

235 South Grand Avenue
 Suite 1414
 Lansing MI 48909

Charles A. Jones

Office of Reengineering and Quality Management Director
 517.335.4655 Fax 517.241.8390

Focus is Solvency, Service and Stewardship Office of Strategic Management Working on a Five Year Plan

by Ken Forbes, President-elect

STRATEGIC AND PERFORMANCE PLANNING ARE the issues that Sue is involved with now. The strategic plan is a five-year forecast usually updated every three years. Though it normally would not be done until the end of 2003, having so many changes in the new administration, will result in a revision being published before the end of 2002.

Three Ss—Solvency, Service, Stewardship. Not much we can do within the agency to affect solvency. However, there is a clear control issue on stewardship and service. And, there is a balancing act required to deal with both since the two are often in conflict.

Since September 11 the stewardship issue has taken on a new meaning. Specifically, the use of the SSN as a national identifier. Plans that were in place to automate the process of assigning SSNs are now being rethought.

SSA's administration of the SSI program has put them on the high-risk list for the General Accounting Office (GAO). SSA is working very hard to be removed from the high-risk list and appears to be making progress in documenting that the person receiving benefits is the person entitled to receive them.

The disability program is a very high priority for the current administration. Specifically, what kind of service

are we delivering? Automation, process modification, and other approaches have been tried but the program is still clearly not providing world-class customer service. Sue suggests that the commissioner is willing to try anything that can realistically get us to where we need to go.

By the end of March, she will present a service delivery budget to Senate Finance Committee. It will address disability because this is where the most action is. She will be addressing the question of what are realistic resource needs in order to allow SSA to provide the service requested. This will demonstrate the gap between what is being provided and what we could provide.

There is a new message with this administration – stop apologizing and start explaining. SSA has a history of painting a rosy picture and unrealistically reflecting costs. The plan this year is to be much more realistic in planning.

Clearly SSA will not come out as high on the handout list for getting a piece of the federal pie as some of the other programs that have taken on more critical need in the eyes of the public and the President.

Besides the commissioner and her attitude, there is a new management focus: Managing human capital (baby boomers); competitive resourcing, elec-

tronic government, financial management, integrating budget performance – tie actions to outcomes; all driven by the President's management plan.

The President's budget shows an increase for SSA, but not much. It doesn't increase at the level of the workload increases.

SSA will likely focus more effort on the 800 number, to make for better service to the claimant. They also expect to be doing more redeterminations.

When asked how the work of the unit she manages correlates to the 2010 vision, Sue responded that the 2010 vision was a service vision and the work being done on strategic planning will incorporate what was done there.



Sue Roecker discusses SSA's primary concerns with the NADE Board - Solvency, Service and Stewardship.

Gold Corporate Member




1701 West 2450 South
Ogden, Utah 84401

Toll Free: 1.800.548.9092
Contact: Mike Powell

"World Class Service From Coast To Coast"

www.mdsiphysicians.com

Gold Corporate Member



Medical Testing and Examination Centers

MedTex of Dallas 6363 Forest Park Suite 810 Dallas, TX 75235 214.631.3139 Fax 214.350.1155 medtexd@swbell.net	MedTex of Fort Worth 1550 W. Rosedale Suite 202 Fort Worth, TX 76104 214.631.3199 Fax 214.350.1155 medtexd@swbell.net	MedTex of Houston 8200 Wednesbury Suite 260 Houston, TX 77074 713.773.3077 Fax 713.337.0337 rmedtex@swbell.net
---	---	--

Good Bye Green Screen

VERSA's next generation DDS software bids farewell to the Green Screens that have served the DDS community for 18 years.

iCE, short for Internet CaseExpert, encompasses the power of VERSA's legacy DDS software and serves it on a full color graphical user interface. For the technically inclined, it's a true web-based, three-tier, open architecture.

Case management and adjudication is an increasingly demanding and complex responsibility for both the public and private sectors. VERSA has over 18 years experience in developing customized case management systems for public agencies managing entitlement programs. This experience has made possible the implementation and enhancement of its DDS application, making it a full-featured case management system. Today, almost half of all U.S. claims are processed on the VERSA system.

For the DDS community today, the VERSA system:

- Acts as a "technology assistant" for adjudicators with user-defined logic, providing electronic to-do lists and driving automated claims assignment.
- Reduces confusion and error with an auto-code function that eliminates the need to memorize codes.
- Increases efficiency and reduces processing time by utilizing an e-business component that enables medical evidence collection, exam requests, exam scheduling, automatic follow-ups, etc.
- Manages activities and provides reporting and statistical tools to measure performance.
- Creates an extensive storage capability for optical records and user-created letters.
- Enforces security at several levels with advanced security components.
- Automatically delivers and captures financial data via an interface to the state fiscal system.
- Serves as a turnkey, scalable solution.

As the next generation of the VERSA System, iCE will not only deliver the level of sophistication built into the existing solution but will do so with the power made possible by the technology today.

The iCE solution will:

- Be Section 508 compliant.
- Be multilingual.
- Enhance screen navigation by making the user interface less cumbersome.
- Enable desktop integration by seamlessly invoking other popular applications such as word processing, spreadsheet, etc.
- Enhance usability by adhering to an established graphical user interface standard that employs tried and proven techniques for enhancing user effectiveness.
- Deliver a Windows based user interface, which commands the highest level of familiarity among computer users, home and commercial alike.
- Make possible, Internet access over a virtual private network with the same capability as that available at the office.

VERSA is one of North America's leading developers of innovative and state of the art computer systems. For over 30 years the VERSA team has successfully delivered computer solutions to improve the operations and effectiveness for our clients.

We provide end-to-end development services from analysis of requirements through system design and architecture to development, deployment and support. We pride ourselves on getting it right the first time - every time. We depend upon strong project management skills and follow a full lifecycle methodology.

To reduce the risks of starting from scratch, choose a solutions provider with a comprehensive system that's customized to your specific requirements and is continually adapted to new technologies and business requirements.

	Brenda Riddell Vice President Case Management Solutions
	Tel 416.493.1833 Fax 416.493.5824 briddell@versasys.com www.versasys.com
VERSA Systems Ltd. 200 Consumers Road Suite 800 Toronto ON M2J 4R4	VERSA Management Systems Inc. 110 North Kenilworth Ave., #7-A Oak Park, Illinois 60301-1218

NADE Announces 2002 NADE Awards Criteria

by Susan Smith, Awards Chair

NOW IS THE TIME FOR NADE members to acknowledge the accomplishments of other NADE members through the NADE Awards. A NADE member/chapter cannot be recognized without first being nominated. The nominating procedures and descriptions of awards for 2002 are outlined below.

There has been one change made in the Awards criteria. This change is found in the criteria for the President's Award. This award is open to any NADE Chapter or Subchapter.

NOMINATING PROCEDURES

- 1) Each chapter is responsible for selecting and nominating their own members on the approved forms (available through your chapter president).
- 2) Nominations must be submitted by **June 1, 2002** to the National Awards Chair.
- 3) The nomination form should be typed and should explain in detail how the nominee exemplified the specific criteria of each award.
- 4) A one-page typed attachment is permissible if needed.
- 5) Each chapter is limited to one nomination per award.

All nominations, as well as ballots, will be submitted to the Awards committee members (one from each region) by the Awards Chair. The results will be announced at the Awards luncheon at the NADE conference in Portland, Oregon.

Nominations must be received by **June 1, 2002**. Please send nominations to:

Susan Smith
5781 Coldcreek Dr.
Hilliard, OH 43026
or FAX to:
888-672-5261
Attn: Susan Smith

If you have other questions, please call Susan Smith at (614) 438-1879.

NADE AWARDS CRITERIA

The **PRESIDENT'S AWARD** is to be given annually and presented by the NADE President in recognition of an outstanding Chapter or Subchapter.

Criteria for Eligibility: (a) Any organized NADE Chapter or Subchapter which has demonstrated outstanding achievement by innovation of programs for improving medical and other professional community relationships. Such activities as panel presentations, speeches, publication of bulletins, newsletters, circulars or other efforts to improve the quality of medical reporting or reporting of vocational assessments or the use of other professional information which can be utilized for the factual and effective documentation of disability determinations; (b) Any chapter activities which have enhanced working relationships among its professional communities.

The **CHARLES O. BLALOCK AWARD** is a service award to be presented annually and on a continuing basis in the name of the founder of NADE. It is made in recognition of an individual who has made extended efforts and major contributions toward the organizational advancement of NADE.

Criteria for Eligibility: (a) The recipient may be any professional member of the National Association of Disability Examiners who is employed either full or part-time; (b) The recipient shall have provided outstanding leadership in the development and substantial expansion of his/her State Chapter, Regional, and/or the National organization; (c) The recipient shall have shown consistent efforts over a period of at least three years toward the organizational advancement of NADE; (d) The recipient may be a committee chairperson, a National Board Member, a Chapter President, or any Member who has promoted the advancement of NADE to an outstanding degree.

The **NADE AWARD** is to honor and recognize the disability professional of the year who has made outstanding contributions not only to the service of the

claimant in accordance with his/her expertise but has contributed substantially of his/her time and talent to promote harmonious and more effective working relationships among his/her professional community. The award shall be presented annually at the National Conference.

Criteria for Eligibility: (a) Anyone who is professionally identified as a disability professional, employed full or part-time; (b) Any NADE member engaged as a professional in any capacity, i.e. Medical Consultant, Adjudicator, Vocational Evaluation Consultant, Supervisor, etc.; (c) Anyone who has consistently shown outstanding achievement by the use of initiative and humanitarian efforts and ability to effectively assist in the Social Security disability process.

The **JOHN GORDON AWARD** is presented in the name of John R. Gordon to a supervisor in the disability program and is designed to honor and recognize superior performance in a supervisory capacity.

Criteria for Eligibility: (a) Any supervisor who is professionally identified as a NADE member; (b) Any supervisor who by his/her initiative and resourcefulness promotes cohesiveness in his/her work group; (c) Any supervisor who provides further incentive for personal growth and professionalism among the individuals he/she supervises; (d) Any supervisor who acts in his/her executive capacity in the promotion and maintenance of morale; (e) Any supervisor who exceeds the requirements of his/her role in facilitating the workloads of his/her Agency.

The **LEWIS BUCKINGHAM AWARD** is a professional award to honor and recognize a leader of the National Association of Disability Examiners either at the Regional or National level.

Criteria for Eligibility: (a) This person must consistently have shown outstanding achievement by the use of initiative and humanitarian efforts to further advance the professionalism and goals of the National Association of Disability Examiners; (b) The recipient must have contributed at least (10) years of continu-

ous service to the organization; (c) The recipient should have served on the national Board of Directors.

The **DIRECTOR'S AWARD** is to honor and recognize an outstanding member of the support staff who demonstrated work performance efficiency and characteristics which contribute to the efficient operation of the unit and the morale of coworkers.

Criteria for Eligibility: (a) Any clerical or paraprofessional employee who is

employed either full or part-time and is a member of NADE; (b) The recipient must have shown outstanding leadership and work performance among his/her peer group.

The **EARL B. THOMAS AWARD** is to be presented annually in the name of a charter member of NADE who is actively supportive of NADE as an association of disability professionals.

Criteria for Eligibility: (a) The recipient must be a member and active

supporter of NADE; (b) The recipient must be the administrator of a State or Federal agency or be the top administrator of a Regional or Satellite DDS and have been so for three years; (c) The recipient must have contributed significantly to the program in ways consistent with the policies of NADE, beyond the normal administrative duties of his/her position.

The **FRANK BARCLAY AWARD** is presented annually in recognition of an individual who has demonstrated exceptional ability to motivate and challenge or to develop or promote programs which motivate and challenge personnel in a disability program and/or develop programs designed to motivate/challenge such personnel in personal and professional growth through human resource development.

Criteria for Eligibility: (a) The recipient must be a member of NADE; (b) The recipient must be assigned to job duties on a full or part-time basis. Examples of potential nominees include, but are not limited to, training officers, civil rights office employees, human resource management personnel, etc.; (c) The recipient must have notable accomplishments in the area of human resource development, consistent with policies and objectives of our professional organization.

The **ROOKIE OF THE YEAR AWARD** is to be given annually to honor and recognize a disability professional who has made a significant contribution on a local, regional, and/or national level to the National Association of Disability Examiners.

Criteria for Eligibility: (a) The recipient must have been a member of NADE for less than two years, at the time of nomination (June 1), regardless of the number of years of service in a DDS; (b) The recipient must have made a significant contribution to their local, regional, and/or national level of NADE.

NADE Correspondence



SOCIAL SECURITY

Office of the Commissioner

January 25, 2002

Mr. Jeffrey H. Price
President
National Association of Disability Examiners
Post Office Box 243
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602-0243

Dear Mr. Price:

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for sending the latest edition of the NADE Advocate. I appreciate your thoughtfulness. Your articles were very enlightening and I most certainly will share them with my staff.

I am delighted to be serving as Commissioner and I look forward to working with you and all of the Association's members.

Sincerely,

JoAnne B. Barnhart

Commissioner



NADE's Response To SSA



Jeffrey H. Price, President
Post Office Box 243
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602-0243
Phone 919.212.3222 or 800.443.9359, ext. 4056
Fax 919.212.3155
E-mail Jeff.Price@ssa.gov

February 26, 2002

Ms. JoAnne Barnhart, Commissioner
Social Security Administration
500 E Street, S.W.
Suite 850
Washington, D.C. 20254

Dear Commissioner Barnhart:

On behalf of the National Association of Disability Examiners (NADE), I would like to express our appreciation for your willingness to take time from your busy schedule to meet with NADE's executive officers last week. We are encouraged by your commitment to resolve the issues that confront the disability program and we renew our pledge of support to assist in that endeavor.

We agree that prototype does not represent the future for the disability claims process. However, we believe that there were successful components in that process and these components can be utilized in a new model that emphasizes customer service delivery but recognizes the necessity of being affordable. As we promised, NADE has developed a design for a disability claims process that emphasizes these factors. It places additional emphasis on more early contact with the claimant. We believe this is the focal point of good customer service and adds quality to decision making. We are pleased to submit this proposal for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey H. Price, President
National Association of Disability Examiners

cc: Martin Gerry, Deputy Commissioner for Disability and Income Security Programs
Linda McMahon, Deputy Commissioner for Operations
Ken Nibali, Associate Commissioner for Disability
Social Security Advisory Board
Social Security Subcommittee, U.S. House of Representatives

NADE Proposal for New Disability Claims Process

1. Intake of new disability claims at the Social Security Field Office would not be significantly altered from the current practice with the following exceptions:
 - a. Greater emphasis would be placed on the inclusion of detailed observations from the claims representative.
 - b. The claimant would be provided with a clear explanation of the definition of disability by the claims representative. The definition would also appear on the signed application.
 - c. SSA's web site should clearly indicate that this is a complex process that would be better served if the claimant filed the application in person at the Field Office.
 - d. Quality review of the Field Office product would be added to demonstrate SSA's commitment to build quality into the finished product from the very beginning of the claims process.
 - e. SSA's outreach activities would combine education with public relations. The Agency's PR camp would remind potential claimants of the definition of disability with the same degree of enthusiasm as the Agency's efforts to encourage the filing of claims.
 - f. Greater emphasis would be placed on claimant responsibility.
2. DDS receives the new claim and assigns the claim to a disability examiner. The Disability Examiners initiates contact with the claimant to:
 - a. The Disability Examiner will verify alleged impairments, medical sources and other information contained on the SSA- 3368.
 - b. The Disability Examiner will provide a clear explanation of the process and determine if additional information will be needed.
 - c. The Disability Examiner will inform the claimant of any need to complete additional forms, such as Activities of Daily Living questionnaires.
3. Expand the Single Decision Maker (SDM) concept to:
 - a. Include more claim types.
 - b. Allow more disability examiners to become SDMs.
 - c. Standardize national training program for all components of the disability process.
 - d. Establish uniform criteria for becoming SDMs.
 - e. Standardize performance expectations for all components of the disability process.
4. If the initial claim is denied by the DDS, the denial decision will include an appeal request with the denial notice that the claimant may complete and return to the DDS.
 - a. The requirement for a clear written explanation of the initial denial will remain a major part of the adjudicative process.
 - b. Process Unification rulings should be reexamined and, if necessary, modified to clarify how the initial disability examiners should address credibility and other issues.
 - c. Claimant responsibility will be increased in the new process.

5. The denied claim will be housed in the DDS for the duration of the period of time the claimant has to file an appeal. During this period of time, claims could be electronically imaged (with adequate resources – this would further the electronic file concept).
6. The appeal of the initial denial will be presented to the DDS. Upon receipt of the request for an appeal, the claim will be assigned to a new disability examiner. Under this proposal:
 - a. This appeal step would include sufficient personal contact to satisfy the need for due process.
 - b. The appeal decision, if denied, would include a Medical Consultant's signature.
 - c. The decision would include findings of fact.
 - d. There would be a provision to include an automatic remand to DDS on appeals for denials based on failure to cooperate.
7. The record should be closed at the conclusion of this appeal (including allowing sufficient time for explanatory process before the record closes).
8. Appeal to the Administrative Law Judge must be restricted to questions of law rather than de novo review of the claim.
 - a. The DDS decision needs to have a representative included in the hearing to defend the decision.
 - b. There must be an opportunity to remand to DDS but such remand procedures must be carefully monitored to prevent abuse and remands should only occur for the purpose of correcting obvious errors.
9. There needs to be a Social Security Court to serve as the appeal from OHA decisions.
 - a. The Social Security Court will serve as the final level of appeal.
 - b. The Social Security Court will provide quality review of ALJ decision.
 - c. The Appeals Council would be eliminated, limiting the total number of appeal steps within SSA to three. Appeals beyond the ALJ level would be presented to the Social Security Court.
 - d. The Social Security court would be restricted to rendering only a legal decision based on the application of the law.

This proposal was submitted to SSA following the unanimous vote of NADE's Board of Directors on February 23, 2002 to endorse this design for a new disability claims process.

Explanation of New Disability Claims Process Proposed by NADE

NADE considered various alternatives to the current disability claims process before deciding on this process as representing the hope for a claims process that truly provided good customer service while protecting the trust funds against abuse. It was our intent to develop a vision for what the total program should look like and not just the DDS piece of the puzzle. We believe in the concept of "One SSA" and our proposal is submitted based on the belief that all components within the disability program should be united in the commitment to providing good customer service at an affordable price. Quality claimant service and lowered administrative costs should dictate the structure of the new disability program.

The critical elements identified in the NADE proposal are:

- The expansion of the Single Decision Maker concept to all DDSs and expanding the class of claims for which the SDM is able to provide the decision without medical or psychological consultant input. Continuing Disability Review cases (CDRs) and some childhood and mental cases can easily be processed by SDMs.

- More early contact with the claimant by the DDS to explain the process and to make the process more customer friendly. The Disability Examiner is able to obtain all necessary information while clarifying allegations, work history, and treatment sources. The claimant is educated about the process so they know what to expect.
- Housing the initial claim folder on denied claims in the DDS pending receipt of an appeal of that denial. This will effectively eliminate significant shipping costs incurred in transporting claims from the DDS to the Field Office and then back to the DDS. Costs of storage in the DDSs would be significantly less than the postal fees incurred by SSA in the current process. Housing the claims at the DDS instead of the Field Offices could save as much as \$20 per claim in shipping costs. It will also reduce processing time by eliminating a hand-off.
- Closing the record after the appeal decision is rendered. NADE believes that closing the record prior to any subsequent ALJ hearing is critical to generating consistency, providing good customer service, restoring public confidence and reducing the costs of the disability program. Without it, there will continue to be two programs, one primarily medical and one primarily legal, with two completely different outcomes. We are unclear as to the degree of personal contact that would be required to satisfy the due process requirement at this appeal level and would defer to SSA the decision as to how much contact is needed and how the requirement could be met. Is a face-to-face hearing necessary or can a phone interview suffice? Even the former, conducted in the DDS, would be substantially less costly than the current hearing before the ALJ. The DDS hearing would allow the claimant to receive a much more timely hearing than the current process allows. NADE also believes that the role of attorneys and other claimant representatives would be significantly diminished as the opportunity for reversal of the DDS decision would be lowered substantially. The DDS hearing would be an informal hearing, lessening the impact attorneys have at this level.
- NADE believes that the current 60 day period granted to claimants to file an appeal should be reexamined in light of modern communication and greater ability of claimants to file appeals more quickly. Reducing the time allowed to file an appeal would produce cost savings to the program and aid the claimant in obtaining a final decision much more quickly.

The additional costs incurred by the DDSs in this new process would be paid for from monies reallocated from OHA and from the cost savings created by less folder movement between the DDSs and the Field Offices. Political decisions will have to be made to reallocate these funds and these decisions will not be popular. Because of turf guarding by the various components within SSA and a general unwillingness to accept change, NADE believes that the victim in past efforts to develop a comprehensive disability claims process has been the claimant. The question must be asked, "Who do we serve, ourselves or the claimant?"

NADE envisions a claims process that would reinforce the medical decision made by the DDS and limit the OHA legal decision to addressing only points of law. NADE believes this proposal would produce a high level of consistency for the disability decisions rendered by the DDSs while significantly reducing the opportunities for OHA to reverse DDS decisions. This would help restore public confidence in the system, provide good service to the claimant and reflect good stewardship since the entire process should prove to be less costly than prototype or the traditional process. The decision as to whether a claimant is disabled would rightfully remain primarily a medically based decision. Claimants who appeal the DDS decision to an ALJ would be entitled to hire legal counsel if they wish. Likewise, SSA would employ a legal representative to define the legal merits of the DDS decision. Each side would present legal briefs in support of their position, rather than appearing in person, and the ALJ would make the decision based on review of the claim file and the legal briefs. If necessary, the ALJ could be permitted to request that both sides appear in person but this should be only for rare circumstances. Unless the law was incorrectly applied, the DDS decision would be affirmed. Any appeal of the ALJ decision would be made to the Social Security Court and either side could appeal.

The proposal is predicated on the assumption that sufficient staffing and resources would be made available to the DDSs. It is also predicated on the need for SSA to clearly define the elements that will satisfy the process unification initiatives. It is critical that SSA should provide clarification of what steps must be followed and provide the funds necessary. To minimize the need for additional resources, we believe the process unification rulings should be modified in accordance with the recommendations that have been proposed by various workgroups. Failure to adhere to this recommendation could result in the likelihood of additional lawsuits throughout the country that will make it mandatory for DDSs to adhere to regulations for which they are not funded. Such a situation would have serious consequences for the ability of the DDSs to provide good customer service and also meet the requirements established by the courts.

The current prototype experiment will conclude in four months. An exit strategy for those states involved in this experiment must be developed and a new process put into place that will avoid the necessity of SSA having to operate two distinctly different disability programs. Significant training and reallocation of resources will be needed. Therefore, it is imperative that decisions are made as soon as possible as to what course of action is deemed acceptable. Thank you.

NADE Correspondence



SOCIAL SECURITY

Associate Commissioner

Mr. Jeff Price, President
NADE
Post Office Box 243
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602-0243

Dear Mr. Price:

Thank you for your letter requesting that SSA prepare an index to the Medical Listings. You suggested that we obtain, and consider adoption of, an index to the Medical Listings prepared by Dr. Alan L. Cowles from the: Kansas DDS.

We are certainly interested in anything that can help disability examiners and medical consultants better do their jobs. In order to respond to your request in an informed manner, we obtained a copy of the index prepared by Dr. Cowles in January, 1998, from the Kansas City Regional Office. Dr. Cowles' index correlates to the 1998 Blue Book, i.e., the publication titled Disability Evaluation Under Social Security.

The current Blue Book was published in January, 2001. It is available in three formats, including paper publication, as well as in PDF (<http://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/2001bluebook.pdf>) and HTML (<http://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/>) formats in electronic versions. Formatting requirements are different for each version, and pagination variations occur accordingly. While the index prepared by Dr. Cowles contains an extensive, list of topics, the page references cited in the index do not correlate to any of the current versions of The Blue Book.

The Medical Listings are presently undergoing major revisions. As the revisions are effectuated, the Blue Book and SSA web sites will be revised and upgraded. The Blue Book is organized by body system, in all three formats, to facilitate the work of adjudicators and consultants. Although we do not have a search tool or index available in the paper publication, both of the electronic formats do contain navigational features. The PDF format utilizes a search engine in the "Find" function of the electronic software that is very effective in searching the document for precise information. The HTML format has navigational tools that allow the user to search the entire document by section and by individual listing. There are plans to upgrade the search capacity for this version as the Blue Book and website are reissued and redesigned. Creation of an index to the Medical Listings would require appropriate, but different, pagination citations in all three versions, and would require extensive editing with each revision, major or minor, of the Blue Book. Because the search capabilities of the electronic versions are fairly sophisticated, especially as contained in the PDF version, we feel that the labor intensive effort of creating an up-to-date index would be largely duplicative of these search capabilities. Rather than develop new paper-based products, we believe that working on electronic solutions is the preferred choice.

Thank you for bringing this issue to our attention and for your ongoing work in facilitating the work of disability examiners and consultants.

If you have any further questions, please free to contact me.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Martin Gerry".

cc: Martin Gerry

NADE Email Correspondence

From: Margaret Malone **Sent:** Friday, March 01, 2002 9:53 AM
To: Jeff.Price@ssa.gov
Subject: Thank you

Jeff -

Thank you for sending me NADE's proposal for revamping the disability adjudication structure. I commend you and NADE for your thoughtful approach to the issues. I am especially impressed by the fact that you look at the whole picture - not just the part (however important) that concerns you directly. This kind of broad analytical thinking is essential if real and positive change is to occur. The recommendations that you make should be seriously discussed and considered. I hope NADE will continue to contribute to the dialogue.

Margaret (Staff Director - SSA Advisory Board)



SOCIAL SECURITY

Office of the Deputy Commissioner

Mr. Jeffrey H. Price, President
National Association of Disability Examiners
P. O. Box 243
Raleigh, NC 27602-0243

Dear Mr. Price:

This is in response to your letter dated November 26, 2001. I regret the delay in responding, but I wanted staff to carefully consider your proposal that the Social Security Administration create an additional exception to the medical improvement review (MIR) standard. Your proposal, if implemented, would allow for an exception to the MIR standard if the claims folder containing the comparison point decision (CPD) and supporting evidence could not be located, and current evidence shows that the beneficiary's impairment is non-severe. You ask that the Social Security Regulations be modified to permit this additional exception.

The Social Security Regulations that describe the MIR standard and the exceptions to MIR (20CFR 404.1594 and 20CFR 416.994 and 416.994a) implement sections 223(f) and 1614(a)(4) of the Social Security Act, as amended, respectively. In order to create an additional exception to the MIR standard, Congress would have to amend the Act by adding language to mandate this (or any) additional exception. Only then could the Regulations be supplemented or modified to include this exception. For the reasons explained below, we do not believe this proposal is viable. However, we are pursuing some promising initiatives you might be interested in to address this issue.

The exception, if implemented, would, in effect, make the beneficiary accountable for the Agency's inability to properly store and retrieve his or her claims folder when the case is selected for a CDR, and essentially would circumvent the intent of the MIR standard. It also would create an inequity in which the CDR for two similarly situated beneficiaries would have different outcomes solely because the CPD folder could not be located for one of them. We believe strongly that the MIR standard, despite the administrative challenge it occasionally poses, has over the years been a major stabilizing force in the disability program. It is one of the key factors that has enabled SSA to process several million CDRs resulting in thousands of appropriate cessations with a high level of public acceptance.

One way we are addressing the folder storage and retrieval issue is by working to reduce the number of full medical CDRs initiated on cases with matured medical reexamination diaries. The CDR profiling and mailer process, using form SSA-455-OCR-SM, is a near-folderless alternative to the full medical CDR. Each fiscal year, we are able to process an increasing percentage of cases with matured medical reexaminations diaries under this process. Although the CDR profiling and mailer process does not affect how many folders will be found when needed, it does reduce the need to look for them in the first place and the consequences of folder misplacement, loss or destruction.

We also have made considerable efforts to refine and improve the folder retrieval and reconstruction processes themselves. To this end, the processes and procedures in POMS DI 13015, DI 20500 and DI 40525 were extensively revised in January 2001. These instructions provide the field offices (FOs) and processing centers (PCs) procedures and clues/hints for locating both title II and title XVI folders including a listing of the queries needed to help in the search. Also, the instructions clearly state that the FOs are responsible for the retrieval of title II folders not located in the PCs. Finally, the instructions include an exhibit of a SSA-5002 that must be used by the FO to document all efforts to locate the missing folder. If the documentation is missing or incomplete, DDSs are instructed to return the folder to the FO to assure that a thorough search was conducted.

In addition, SSA has made great strides in its folder storage and retrieval operations over the past several years. Dedicated facilities such as the National Records Center (the CAVES), the Wilkes-Barre Folder Servicing Operation (WBFSO) and the Rolling Heights Building (the Megasite) have significantly improved the folder retrieval success rate.

Finally, as part of the "eDib" initiative, SSA is pursuing an electronic folder. The basic objective of the target process is to be totally paperless, where all essential material from the disability folder will be captured and stored electronically. The electronic folder will provide a single point of access to disability data housed in SSA systems and a repository to store information currently stored in the paper folder thus eliminating the lost folder problem.

Thank you for your concerns and interest in this matter. NADE's input is valuable to us. Although we cannot pursue this proposal, please do not hesitate to continue sharing your thoughts and ideas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'K. Nibali'.

Kenneth D. Nibali
Associate Commissioner
for Disability

NADE Correspondence

Jeffrey H. Price, President
Post Office Box 243
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602-0243
Phone 919.212.3222 or 800.443.9359, ext. 4056
Fax 919.212.3155
E-mail Jeff.Price@ssa.gov

January 16, 2002

Commissioner of Social Security
POBox 17703
Baltimore, Maryland 21235-7703

Dear Commissioner:

The National Association of Disability Examiners (NADE) welcomes this opportunity to offer comments on the "Revised Medical Criteria for Determination of Disability, Musculoskeletal System and Related Criteria". Revisions to the musculoskeletal listings demand careful scrutiny because a vast portion of disability claims are adjudicated under these listings. These proposed changes will, therefore, significantly impact DDS operations.

Earlier comments regarding the new musculoskeletal listings cautioned that these listings may result in the need for more documentation for these claims, resulting in higher administrative costs while also increasing the processing time for these cases. We concur with these comments.

NADE has supported SSA's process unification initiatives and the need to improve the accuracy and quality of decision making. We concur that the need to assess functional ability is important in determining disability. A majority of disability claims adjudicated under the musculoskeletal listings already require some degree of functional assessment. We perceive that the new listings, which propose to introduce additional subjective criteria to the listings, represent an extension of the process unification initiatives. However, SSA has historically inadequately funded the costs of implementation of these initiatives and has failed to follow up to ensure their successful implementation. We are pleased to see recognition that there will be "some administrative costs associated with these final rules." However, **it is essential for SSA to offer concrete evidence that the real costs of implementing the new listings have been considered and that adequate resources have been allocated to ensure successful implementation.** We believe one of the largest obstacles to the successful implementation of new disability policy in the past has been SSA's failure to adequately plan for the costs of the implementation of new disability policy.

With additional subjective criteria added to the listings, the number of disability claims that can be adjudicated quickly will be reduced and the need for adjudicators to seek more documentation of functional ability will increase. It is important for SSA to demonstrate that these factors have been considered. SSA should expect that the need for more documentation will result in an increase in the costs associated with case development as well as increasing the time required to adjudicate each case. This will have a negative impact on production statistics. It is unrealistic to believe that adjudicators have an infinite amount of time to pursue additional documentation requirements. The additional time spent on these cases will have to be created from overtime or additional staffing. Higher production costs + higher processing times may be an equation that is viewed by the public as a poor business practice. This may lead to a decline in public confidence in the disability program.

We were baffled by SSA's response to earlier comments regarding the need for additional documentation that, "We are not convinced that, even if there are more decisions at steps four and five of the sequential evaluation process, this will result in more development and increased processing time." **We strongly dispute any suggestion by SSA that adjudicating claims at steps four and five in the sequential evaluation process can be done as quickly and as efficiently as claims decided earlier in the process.** It is far easier and less time consuming to process claims earlier in sequential evaluation when only medical factors are considered. Claims that require subjective consideration of functional abilities and other vocational factors will require more time to develop than claims that are decided on the basis of objective medical factors alone. SSA is ignoring reality to believe otherwise. SSA has also indicated that they do not feel that additional contact with claimants will be necessary to secure information regarding functional ability. We would simply ask the question, "If not from the claimants or other third parties, where does SSA believe that adjudicators will obtain this information?" **If, as expected, the revised listings result in more decisions at steps four and five of sequential evaluation, then this will clearly result in more development costs and increased processing time.**

It is essential that the Social Security Administration and the Congress recognize that any listings which stress a finding of disability on the basis of how the individual is functioning will require more development and increase the complexity of the decision making process. This should be clearly evident from the increased subjectivity and documentation requirements of the mental listings and the impact this has had with regard to the adjudication of these claims. The proposal to add functionality to the musculoskeletal listings will have a similar impact. **It is essential that adequate resources be provided, including appropriate staffing levels and training, to ensure that the new listings**

are implemented appropriately, fairly and uniformly.

In order to promote national uniformity in the development and adjudication of disability claims, NADE has consistently expressed the need for ongoing, joint training for adjudicators and QA reviewers at all levels. Unfortunately, this has not occurred. With regard to these new listings, SSA stated, "...as always, we will train our adjudicators on the final regulations so that they will be familiar with the new criteria." Based on past experience, we do not believe this response adequately addresses the need for training and education. The new listings differ significantly from the current listings and ongoing, joint training is essential for successful implementation.

The revised listings increase the subjectivity involved in decision making. Therefore, we believe it is important for all components to be trained together so that future decisions made using these new listings are as consistent as possible and do not result in an increase in the number of errors charged by the federal review components. If the new listings are to be implemented uniformly, then all components of the disability program, including DDS adjudicators, Administrative Law Judges, and the federal review components must receive comprehensive, ongoing joint training.

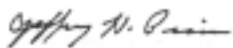
It is also important that the language used in the new listings be clear to all adjudicators. SSA must avoid the use of ambiguous terminology or use of terms that could be open to different interpretations. For example, the NPRM states, "Measurements of joint motion are based on the techniques described in the chapter on the extremities, spine, and pelvis in the current addition of the 'Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment' published by the American Medical Association." Although this publication may be "...used throughout the country by physicians and surgeons," we do not believe it is readily available in most DDSs or Hearing Offices. Also, while we recognize that the reference to the "*current edition*" is intended to "ensure that only the most current standards are used," the use of such terms are open to differences in interpretation and they do not promote decisional uniformity. **Limitation of motion is a significant and relevant finding in the musculoskeletal listings. To ensure consistency and uniformity, the techniques used to measure this should be described in the listings themselves, rather than by reference to a publication not readily available to most adjudicators.**

We do not, at this time, support the removal of current listing 1.05B (osteoporosis) or listing 1.08 (osteomyelitis or septic arthritis). While the number of applicants alleging disability under these listings may be relatively small, that should not be the basis for removing these listings. Rather, it may be an argument for their retention. An experienced adjudicator could recognize the nature and functional implications of these impairments whether or not they are included in the listings. However, the reality is that the DDSs are losing experienced staff at an increasingly rapid rate. Under these circumstances, impairments that are rarely seen could be overlooked by adjudicators with limited experience. Therefore, we would urge that these listings be retained.

Finally, the need for proper public education should be addressed. The public must be educated about the shift in focus created by these new listings. The medical community, from which we derive the objective medical evidence that is used as the basis for our subjective assessment of functional ability, should be properly educated in how they can best assist adjudicators with the responsibility to assess functional ability.

NADE supported the effort by SSA to develop these revisions. We are pleased that advances in medical technology, diagnosis and treatment have been considered. We are disturbed by SSA's apparent attempt to disclaim the impact these changes will have on the disability program. We are encouraged by SSA's statement that, "We will carefully monitor these musculoskeletal listings to ensure that they continue to meet program intent...." We believe careful monitoring by SSA will be essential and we offer the expertise of our Association to assist in this effort.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey H. Price, President

Great Plains Region Plans Another Great Conference

May 1-3, 2002

Conference Hotel - Ramada Inn Airport

1301 W Russell St, Sioux Falls SD 57104 (605) 336-1020

Room Rate: \$35 Single, \$70 Double (+ 9% tax) Register under Disability Determination Services

Questions/Information:

Contact Doreen Turner 605.367.5499 ext 104 email to: doreen.turner@ssa.gov

Ella Timm 605.367.5499 ext 108 email ella.timm@ssa.gov

Looking for a Change? The Wisconsin DDS Is Looking For Experienced Disability Examiners.

The Wisconsin Disability Determination Service (DDS) is filling examiner positions to evaluate Initial Adult claims, under the Social Security Act and Regulations.

The DDS is located in Madison, recently rated as 'Best Small City for Families', and 'Most Environmentally Friendly City', just minutes from The Capitol Square and Downtown. Its location on five lakes provides a special quality of living.

We have a relaxed dress code and an outstanding flextime plan. You'll be working in a collegial environment, with user friendly automation that helps you keep on top of your caseload.

The starting salary is \$32,556 per year. A six month probationary period is required. The job title is Disability Determination Specialist - Objective.

The Wisconsin Civil Service System offers a generous benefit package, including health insurance, short term disability, vacation, professional development, sick leave, and retirement benefits. The positions are included in the Professional Social Services Unit of the Wisconsin State Employees Union.

Knowledge of the Social Security Administration disability program and substantive aspects of Titles II, XVI and XIX of the Social Security Act, state and federal regulations governing Initial Disability Claims, medical and vocational evaluation, as well as the ability to analyze material, and come to objective conclusions in terms of established criteria, are required for consideration.

Apply with an Application for State Employment form (DER- MRS-38), a current resume and a cover letter describing your background, including where you received your experience, your role and responsibilities, and the length or duration of your experience relative to disability determination service, including experience making case decisions (include the types of claims you have reviewed).

Send the above materials to:

Bernadette M. Connolly
DHFS/BPER
Room 555 1
West Wilson Street
P.O. Box 7850
Madison, WI 53707-7850
FAX (608) 267-2147
onnobm@dhfs.state.wi.us

The application for State Employment form (DER-MRS-38) can be downloaded from <http://der.state.wi.us/static/appmat.htm>
call our request line at (608) 267-9893.

Applications will continue to be accepted until the needs of the service are met. A first review of materials will be conducted on March 4, 2002.

Further information about this position may be found at:
http://jobs.der.state.wi.us/scripts/annoc_display.asp?docid=webANN5533.htm
or by contacting Sally Fitzer at 608-266-0490 or sally.fitzer@ssa.gov

Educating Congress

by Martha Marshall, Legislative Director

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION CAN HAVE A profound impact on the disability program (think Welfare Reform legislation and the legislatively mandated review of children's claims!). One reason for scheduling the NADE mid-year Board meeting in Washington, DC is that it allows the Board to meet with key Congressional staff. NADE members understand the nuts and bolts of the disability program. We need to know what legislation is pending or planned and we need to let Congress know how that legislation will impact our jobs and their constituents.

Prior to this year's Board meeting, the NADE President; President-Elect; Past-President; SSA Liaison; and Legislative Director met with Jenna Lewis of the House Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Social Security; Matt Weidinger, Staff Director of the Subcommittee on Human Resources; and Steve Robinson, Chief Social Security Analyst for the Senate Finance Committee. Last year's meetings with Congressional staff focused on the need to eliminate the five month waiting period and Representative Barney Frank's recently introduced bill to do this. This year's meetings dealt



*Jenna Lewis discusses the concerns the House subcommittee on Social Security has received from their constituents - delay of disability decisions.
(from left: Sue Heflin, Ms. Lewis, Jeff Price and Ken Forbes)*

primarily with the importance of having a single, national disability program and the need for SSA to make some final decisions about Prototype.

Jenna Lewis also met with the full Board later in the week. She apologized (as she had in the earlier meeting) for the last minute cancellation of the hearing on "Challenges Facing the New Commissioner" and assured the Board that this hearing would be rescheduled—and that NADE would again be invited to present oral testimony. E. Clay Shaw, Jr, Chair of the Subcommittee on Social Security, is also hoping to continue the

series of hearings designed to provide a "top to bottom" review of the disability program. Hopefully at least one or two of these hearings will be scheduled. However, the events of September 11, 2001 have changed a lot of priorities in Congress.

In every communication with Congress NADE stresses the need for adequate resources to administer the disability program. SSA's administrative budget must be sufficient to support a nationally uniform, equitable disability process and that message was reinforced in each meeting this year.

You Won't Want to Miss the NE/SE/MidAtlantic Tri-Regional Conference

Louisville, KY

May 7-10, 2002

Hyatt Regency Hotel

Details can be viewed at www.nade.org

Gold Corporate Member

**LAKE SHORE
MEDICAL CLINIC, LTD
55 East Washington Street
Suite 3800
Chicago, IL 60602
312.558.9190**

Gold Corporate Member

**FOREST PARK MEDICAL CLINIC
100 North Euclid Avenue
Suite 900
St. Louis, MO 63108
314.367.6600
Contact: Camille Greenwald**

You Have A Great Body

*by Gail Gore, R.N., Idaho DDS
National Chairman for Organ Donation/Transplant*

AS AMERICANS WE ARE USED to having the freedom to get what we want, how we want it, and pretty much when we want it. We are not very good at waiting for things, not in lines, not for our turn, nor for something that would make our lives more comfortable/happy/ or to improve our lot in life. Well why not, if you can afford it/ need it/ want it/ or have the ability to get it? But what would it be like if all of your resources couldn't help you, and your life depended on it? I mean your job, your financial resources, your doctors, and your family and friends could not keep you alive without an organ transplant, and there just wasn't one available for you? Just take a moment and imagine what that would be like.

To date 71,000 people in America alone are on a waiting list for an organ transplant. Every 14 minutes a new name is added to a transplant waiting list, and the list is growing at the rate of 30,000 people a year. If the lifesaving organs they are waiting for do not become available, they will die. Sixteen people die every day waiting for organs that never become available. Many people need multiple organs for transplant.

Of the two million people who die in the United States each year, approximately 14,000 are believed to be viable donors, yet only 5,000 of these actually become donors. The remaining 9,000 are lost. At an average of 5 lives saved per donor, that represents 45,000 lives lost needlessly each year. Thousands of these lives could be saved if organ availability could be maximized. While over 85% of the American people approve of organ donation, only 35% actually donate. Thousands of potential recipients die each year due to lack of organ availability. Currently, there is a 3 to 1 ratio between waiting patients and life saving organ donation.

The technology to save these lives already exists. Organ transplants are performed daily throughout the world. Often it is the only procedure available that can save the lives of terminally ill individuals. Each week seems to bring new breakthrough news in transplant technology. Our understanding of the medical, pharmaceutical, and procedural requirements for success has grown dramatically in a very short period of time, including the development of new anti-rejection medication and promising new research. Unfortunately in contrast to the success in the area of transplantation science, we continue to face a critical shortage of organs. Thousand of potential recipients die each year due to a lack of organ availability. One does not have to die to become an organ donor. New technology has provided ways that we can share organs, and even parts of organs. Can you help?

The steps necessary to become an organ donor are not as difficult or as time consuming as one might think.

1. First contact your nearest transplant/donor center and ask for an organ/tissue donor card.
2. Sign the organ/tissue donor card, and carry it in your wallet or purse at all times. Have two people witness your signature, preferably family members.
3. If you have a driver's license, find out from your local motor vehicle department how you can indicate on your license that you want to be an organ and tissue donor.
4. Tell your family members that you have decided to become an organ and tissue donor, so they will understand your wishes and support them.
5. If you are under age 18, you may need to take additional steps to make a valid donation declaration.

The most common asked question is, "If I get on the organ/tissue donor list, do I have to stay on it the rest of my life, or can I change my mind later on"? No, you do not have to stay on the list indefinitely, you can change your mind at any time, and it is a simple procedure to get off the list, but I hope that you won't.

There is a need for all of us to come together in order to overcome the complexities and misconceptions surrounding organ donation. With your help, we can solve this worldwide health emergency in the near future. You really do have a great body, and it is miraculous in how it is able to sustain life.

If you think you might like to become an organ donor but really would like more information or have question please visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services web site at www.organdonor.gov or call: 1-888-ASK-HRSA.

National Organ/Tissue Donation Awareness Week is April 22-26, 2002.

Nominations Requests

NADE WANTS YOU!

by Mia Adams, Nominations Chair

Although the annual conference is several months away, it time to ask members to submit nominations for NADE President Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer.

While these positions pose many challenges, the process for becoming a candidate is simple. Interested individuals must submit a recent photo and a short resume announcing your candidacy. Please send your candidacy information to me or your Regional Representative serving on the Nominations Committee by May 1, 2002, in order to meet the Advocate deadline. Nominations will also be taken from the floor during the Delegate Assembly.

As chairperson of the nominations committee, I urge you to lend your skills and expertise to NADE in any of these positions: our organization is GREAT and can only maintain it's impact through your support.

If you have questions feel free to get in touch with me or your Regional Representative at the contacts below.

Mia Adams, Chairperson

1845 Borman Court
St. Louis, Missouri 63146
Phone 314.340.3700
Fax 314.340.4666
Email Mia.Adams@ssa.gov

Great Plains Region Representative

Allyn Elliott
3640 S.W. Topeka Boulevard, #100
Topeka, Kansas 66611
Phone 785.267.4440, ext. 257
Email Allyn.Elliott@ssa.gov

Great Lakes Region Representative

Diane Kruchten
E12778 West Point Drive
Merrimac, Wisconsin 53561
Phone 608.267.7468
Email diane.kruchten@ssa.gov

Southwest Region Representative

Sandy Moore
701 Pulaski Street
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
Phone 501.582.3030
Email Sandra.Ellen.Moore@ssa.gov

Mid-Atlantic Region Representative

Olaitan Kowobari
4328 Varnum Place, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20017
Phone 202.442.8515
Email olaitan.kowobari@ssa.gov

Pacific Region Representative

Jason Driskell
1565 Alford Road
Salvisa, Kentucky 40372
Phone 800.928.8050
Email Jason.Driskell@ssa.gov

Southeast Region Representative

None designated: contact Regional Director

Northeast Region Representative

None designated: contact Regional Director

Call: 1.800.269.0271

Write: SSA Fraud Hotline
P.O. Box 17768
Baltimore, MD 21235

Fax 410.597.0118
e-mail oighotline@ssa.gov

You hold the key.....



To report fraud,
waste,
abuse or
mismanagement

MEMBERSHIP — NOW'S THE TIME

by Susan R. LaMorte, Membership Director

The annual renewal date is closely approaching and **NOW** is the time for us to begin planning our recruitment and retention activities. We are now offering instant new membership applications on-line by MasterCard and Visa as well as giving current members the option of renewing their memberships using credit cards on a secure server at NADE's official website www.nade.org.

I am happy to report as of March 4, 2002 our membership is up and we have 1988 members. We had an increase of 197 members of which 135 of these members are brand new members!

We all need to continue to work together in meeting our goal of each member recruiting **ONE NEW MEMBER**, as well as retaining and keeping the members we have active.

To assist the chapters in their recruitment efforts, membership recruitment/retention packages were distributed earlier this year. The package included recruitment flyers, sample letters, activity ideas and an open letter from our President Jeff Price along with NADE's accomplishments. NADE membership videos are also available. Membership grants are still available to assist chapters in their recruitment/retention efforts. To obtain any of the membership recruitment material or a membership grant, just contact me at (973) 648-3572 or anyone of the Regional Membership Committee members listed below.

Ellen Cook – Great Lakes
(217)782-2266

Alden Peterson – Great Plains
(402)471-2520

Reginald Stepney – Mid-Atlantic
(202)442-8538

Russell Mojcher – Northeast
(860)466-6162

Natalie Elwood – Pacific
(503)945-6328

Karen Gunter – Southeast
(850)487-0625

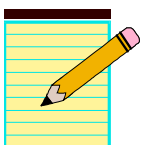
Tom Epperson – Southwest
(405)840-7770

Recruiting new members **NOW**, will enable these new members to participate in the upcoming Regional Training Conferences, as well as keeping them fully informed of the major issues facing our profession today. Attending training conferences and other activities gives us all a chance to energize and approach our workloads with renewed energy as well as networking with professional colleagues locally, regionally and nationally.

NADE will again sponsor a membership contest. There will be three categories: small (25 or less), medium (26-75) and large (76- or more). Cash prizes and certificates will be awarded at the National Training Conference this fall in Portland, Oregon. More information on the contest will be distributed to the chapters shortly.

NADE's strength is our MEMBERS and their involvement. Our presence will be stronger, our voice louder and our effectiveness enhanced with increased active membership.

NOW's the time to recruit new members. Let's do it today!



PLEASE NOTE: NEW MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Starting with this year's renewals, all current members will be issued a new NADE membership card without an expiration date. Only new members joining will receive new membership cards in the future.

Report by the General Accounting Office to the NADE Board

by Terri Klubertanz, Great Lakes Regional Director

Kay Brown, Carrol Peterson and Daniel Bertoni from the GAO shared the following information with the NADE Executive Board at its annual mid-year meeting in Washington D.C.

GAO is very interested in disability programs. In addition to SSA disability, they have included VA disability and VR training and rehabilitation as topics to evaluate in their research on how disability policies should exist in our country.



Kay Brown (second from right) explains current GAO studies on Social Security. (From left: Shari Bratt, Dan Bertoni, Carrol Peterson, Kay Brown, and Jeff Price.)

Kay Brown stated that she wanted to highlight four items.

1. There is a report coming out on March 1 regarding SSA's efforts to reengineer the Social Security Disability process. Prototype, Hearing Process Improvement and Disability Claims Manager are highlighted in the report. The "gist" of the report is that SSA has failed miserably in meeting any of the redesign goals and GAO will have some recommendations on next steps.
2. GAO also will be presenting testimony to Congress on the hearing that has been postponed twice regarding the Management Challenges facing the new Commissioner. Their main points will be that there is a "relative constant set of unresolved challenges" that have yet to be addressed. A major challenge is the use of the SSN. GAO has surveyed federal, state and local governments and how SSNs are being used and how they are being safeguarded. There is a companion group in the Department of Justice looking at identity theft.
3. GAO is in the early stages of a job they have initiated on disability definitions, what's happening in the world of work and are programs such as SSA and VA disability keeping pace with changes to date, and just as importantly, should they? They plan to make some recommendations as to what federal disability should look like.
4. SSI continues to be on GAO's "high risk list" for fraud, abuse and waste and Commissioner Barnhart met with Bob Robinson, their Director of disability, to discuss how long they anticipate this continuing.

Carrol Peterson stated that her area is very involved with looking at the implementation of and evaluating the mandates in the Ticket to Work Act. They will be looking at:

- The effect of the SGA level on work of DI beneficiaries
- Tax incentives that employers have to hire and retain disabled individuals
- Coordination of DI and SSI work incentives
- SSA's history of running demonstrations (this report is not due out until 2004)

In addition, other areas of interest are to:

- Reexam potential racial disparities in SSA decision making process for individuals with disabilities
- Human capital management – want to pay more attention to DDS's in that process
- Planning effort for future work on disability programs and processes – involving SSA, VA, VR and ADA access issues

Dan Bertoni stated that his areas of focus are:

- Management Operations Issue, such as monitoring of 401Ks
- Revisit SSI – and the continuing problem with insufficient verification of financial aspects as well as medical "feigning" – GAO sees a lot of room for process improvements. They have visited four states, regional and field offices to research and evaluate how effective are the Continuing Disability Investigation (CDI) units, whether there's enough of them and trying to determine what are the remaining vulnerabilities in this program.
- Unemployment insurance overpayments. They have found that states aren't doing a good job of matching names with SSNs and DOBs.
- SSA's enumeration process and its ability to verify alien and non-alien status.

NADE Board Members 2001-2002

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Jeff Price
PO Box 243
Raleigh, NC 27602
919.212.3222 ext. 4056
800.443.9359
Fax 919.212.3155
Jeff.Price@ssa.gov
QA Case Consultant

PAST PRESIDENT

Sue Heflin
P O Box 1271
Jackson, MS 39215
601.853.5672
Fax 877.808.3279
SueH127@aol.com
Division Director

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Ken Forbes
PO Box 13670
Salem, OR 97309-1670
503.945.6330
Fax 503.373.7202
Ken.Forbes@ssa.gov
Operations/Systems Manager

SECRETARY

Shari Bratt
PO Box 82530
Lincoln, NE 68501-2530
402.471.2663
Fax 402.471.2969
skb@www.nedds.state.ne.us
Hearings Officer

TREASURER

Lyle E. Larson
817 West Russell, Suite 101
Sioux Falls, SD 57104
605.367.5499 ext 127
Fax 605.367.5485
Lyle.Larson@ssa.gov
Hearings Officer

REGIONAL DIRECTORS

GREAT LAKES

Terri Klubertanz
PO Box 7886
Madison, WI 53707
608.266.7604
Fax 608.266.8297
theresa.klubertanz@ssa.gov
QA and Special Projects Supervisor

GREAT PLAINS

Sherry Sheely
9202 S Sugarstone Circle
Highlands Ranch, CO 80126
800.332.8087 ext 720
303.752.5720 ext 720
Fax 303.752.5642
Sherry.Sheely@ssa.gov
Hearings Officer

MID-ATLANTIC

L. Kay Welch
170 W Ridgely Road
Suite 310
Timonium, MD 21093
410.308.4324
Fax 410.308.4303
Linda.K.Welch@ssa.gov
Vocational Technical Specialist

NORTHEAST

Brenda Kaselis
208 Hunts Meadow Road
Whitefield, ME 04353
207.287.7961
Fax 207.287.7964
Brenda.Kaselis@ssa.gov
Hearings Officer

PACIFIC

Micaela Jones
P O Box 45563
Boise ID 83711
208.327.7333 ext 321
Fax 208.327.7331
Micaela.Jones@ssa.gov
QA Specialist

SOUTHEAST

Ruth Trent
P O Box 1000
Frankfort, KY 40602
502.564.8050 ext. 4176
Fax 502.564.5033
Ruth.Trent@ssa.gov
Professional Relations Officer

SOUTHWEST

Chuck Schimmels
P O Box 24400
Oklahoma City, OK 73124-0040
405.840.7138
Fax 405.840.7523
Charles.Schimmels@ssa.gov
Unit Case Consultant

CHAIRPERSON-COUNCIL OF CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

Jane Bradley
18 Roosevelt Road
Springfield, IL 62703
217.782.8321
Fax 800.291.0177
Jane.E.Bradley@ssa.gov
Disability Claims Adjudicator II

APPOINTED DIRECTORS

LEGISLATIVE

Martha Marshall
2704 Frank Street
Lansing, MI 48911
517.373.4398
Fax 517.373.4347
Martha.Marshall@ssa.gov
Professional Relations

MEMBERSHIP

Susan R. LaMorte
675 Joralemon Street
Belleville, NJ 07109
973.648.3572
Fax 973.648.2802
Susan.Lamorte@ssa.gov
Regional Manager

PUBLICATIONS

Donna Hilton
1117 Sunshine Drive
Aurora, MO 65605
417.888.4152
Fax 417.888.4069
Donna.Hilton@ssa.gov
drhilton@sofnet.com
Professional Relations Specialist



Gold Corporate Member
INDUSTRIAL MEDICINE ASSOCIATES, P.C.

280 Dobbs Ferry Road
White Plains, NY 10607
(800) 245-4245 EXT 396
(914) 323-0300

Contact: Barbara J. Young
Director of Government Services
www.industrialmed.com

Gold Corporate Member

QTC MEDICAL GROUP, INC.
1350 S. Valley Drive
Suite 101
Diamond Bar, CA 91765
800.260.1515

NADE Committee Chairpersons

AWARDS

Susan Smith
3308 Dresden St
Columbus, OH 43224
614.438.1879
Fax 614.438.1358
Susan.X.Smith@ssa.gov
Disability Adjudicator II

CERTIFICATION

Melissa Robertz
1427 Bright Court, NE
Keizer, OR 97303
503.566.6678
Fax 503.373.7202
Melissa.L.Robertz@ssa.gov
Disability Analyst

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Michele Namenek
99 Washington Avenue
20th Floor, Room 2010
Albany, NY 12260
518.486.7784
Fax 518.486.1205
Michele.Namenek@ssa.gov
Training Coordinator

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

Donnie Hayes
P O Box 243
Raleigh, NC 27602-0243
800.443.9359 ext 4371
Fax 919.212.3246
Donnie.Hayes@ssa.gov
Disability Hearing Officer

**DDS ADMINISTRATORS/
SSA LIAISON**

Debi Gardiner
521 Parish Boulevard
Mary Esther, FL 32569-3425
850.244.2763 ext 209
Debi.Gardiner@ssa.gov
Claims Representative

ELECTIONS & CREDENTIALS

Paula Christofolletti
78 Regional Drive, Building 2
Concord, NH 03301
603.271.3341 ext 332
Fax 603.271.1114
Paula.Christofolletti@ssa.gov
Claims Examiner

HEARING OFFICER

Cynthia K. Mejia
8007 Brookings Court
Elk Grove, CA 95758-6592
901.263.5012
Fax 800.900.6267
Cynthia.K.A.Mejia@ssa.gov
Case Adjudication Bureau

HISTORIAN

Jim Teramani
1416 Eagle Ridge Run
Belair, MD 21014
410.638.6034
Fax 410.308.4400
James.Teramani@ssa.gov
Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist

LITIGATION MONITORING

Doug Willman
P O Box 82530
Lincoln, NE 68501-2530
402.471.3641
Fax 402.471.3616
Dwillman@neb.rr.com
DDS Director

LONG RANGE PLANNING

Sharon Belt
3024 Dupont Circle
Jefferson City MO 65109
573.526.7021
Fax 573.526.2950
Sharon.Belt@ssa.gov
Director of Program Development

NADE/SSA SYSTEMS LIAISON

Dale Foot
2295 North Fairview Lane
Rochester Hills, MI 48306-3931
517.241.3688
Fax 517.373.2149
Dale.Foot@ssa.gov
District Manager

**NATIONAL DISABILITY
PROFESSIONALS WEEK**

Carolyn Dockery
P O Box 243
Raleigh, NC 27602
1.800.443.9359 ext 4182
Fax 919.212.3248
Carolyn.Dockery@ssa.gov
Program Assistant

NOMINATIONS

Mia Adams
1845 Borman Court
St. Louis, MO 63146
314.340.3700
Fax 314.340.4666
Mia.Adams@ssa.gov
Eastern Regional Manager

NON-DUES REVENUE

Malcolm Stoughtenborough
P O Box 24400
Oklahoma City, OK 73124
405.840.754
Fax 512.437.8900
Malcolm.Stoughtenborough@ssa.gov
Disability Specialist III

**ORGAN DONATION/
TRANSPLANT**

Gail Gore
1505 McKinney
Boise, ID 83704
208.327.7333
Fax 208.327.7331
Gail.Gore@ssa.gov
Senior Adjudicator

RESOLUTIONS

Dean Crawford
11215 Research Blvd
#2035
Austin, TX 78759
512.437.8585
Dean.Crawford@ssa.gov
Disability Examiner

**Ad Hoc Committee
PROTOTYPE**

Christa Royer
PO Box 4446
Shreveport, LA 71134
318.869.6555
Fax 318.869.6406
Christa.Royer@ssa.gov
Disability Examiner II

Check the appropriate box in each section.

<input type="checkbox"/> New Member
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
<input type="checkbox"/> Full \$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate \$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Full Support \$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Retiree \$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate \$200.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Silver Corp. \$350.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Gold Corp. \$500.00

NADE Membership Application

(Please print name, title & designation as desired on your Membership Certificate)

Name _____
Prefix First Middle Last Suffix

Professional Designation _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Local Chap # _____ Wk Phone (_____) _____ Email _____ @ssa.gov

NADE's membership year runs from July 1st through June 30th each year. Your membership will expire on the June 30th following your join date.

Exception: All new memberships received between January through June will receive an expiration date of June 30th of the following year. NADE does not prorate dues.

Mail to: National Association of Disability Examiners State National Bank NADE Account P.O. Box 599 Frankfort KY 40602
(Make check payable to NADE)

Change Of Information Form For: (Name) _____

CHANGES: (ONLY ENTER CHANGED DATA)

Name _____ Professional Designation _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

*Local Chapter # _____ Daytime Phone (_____) _____ Email Address _____ @ssa.gov

Other: _____

Mail or Fax To: Susan R. LaMorte 675 Joralemon Street Belleville, NJ 07109 Susan.Lamorte@ssa.gov Fax 973.648.2802

Election Rules Approved At Mid Year Board Meeting

by Paula Christofolotti Sawyer, Elections and Credentials Chair

VOTING RULES FOR THE 2002 DELEGATE assembly were approved by the NADE Board at the Mid Year Board meeting held in Washington DC in February. The following rules will be followed in voting at the 2002 National Training Conference.

Voting Rules

I. Elections

A. Current Membership is:

1. Used to determine the number of votes each Chapter or State is entitled to cast (i.e. one vote for each current member); and
2. Determined by the most membership printout issued prior to National Conference.

B. Disagreements with the membership printout:

1. Shall be resolved between the Membership Committee Chair and the appropriate Regional Director.
2. Shall be reported to the Elections and Credentials Chair before voting begins.
3. Which are not raised and resolved prior to voting shall be resolved by application of voting rule I.A2.

C. Proxies must be presented to the Chair of the Elections and Credentials Committee before voting begins and:

1. For the Chapter or State with no delegates, written proxy will allow another delegate from the same region to cast the votes.
2. For the Chapter or State with no delegates and no written proxy, the appropriate Regional Director may cast the votes.
3. A Regional Director unable to attend the Delegate Assembly must furnish written proxy to a region member allowing that person to cast the votes of any absent Chapter or State of the region.

D. Contested Elections shall:

1. Be resolved by majority vote in secret ballot.
 - a. Each state or chapter shall vote separately.
 - b. A member of the Elections and Credentials Committee shall issue the proper number of ballots to the Regional Directors.
 - c. Each state or chapter may split their authorized votes in any whole number combination.
 - d. Members of the Elections and Credentials Committee, or NADE members appointed by the Elections and Credentials Committee Chair, shall count the ballots and report the Delegate Assembly.
2. Be repeated as a runoff election between the two candidates with the highest votes in the event that one candidate does not receive a majority of the votes.
3. Allow an observer at the request of any candidate provided:
 - a. The name of the observer is submitted in writing to a member of the Elections and Credentials Committee.
 - b. The request is made no later than one hour prior to the convening of the Delegate Assembly for the election.
 - c. The observer in no way interferes with the counting of the ballots

II. Credentials

- A. To be eligible to serve as an officer of NADE, the candidate must be a current member of NADE, registered as a full member.
- B. The chair of the Elections and Credentials Committee shall verify membership with the Chair of the Membership Committee prior to the election.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DISABILITY EXAMINERS
PO BOX 4188
FRANKFORT KY 40603

Address Service Requested

PRSR STD US POSTAGE PAID SPRINGFIELD MO PERMIT #616
