

Congratulations! As a young person with special health care needs who is getting ready to apply for or start a new job, you will be better prepared to succeed by planning ahead. There is nothing better than cashing a paycheck! Your goals are to keep small problems small and to stay as well as you can. Here are some things to think about:

HEALTH CARE LOGISTICS

Health Routines & Treatments—What type of health care services do I need on a daily, weekly or monthly basis? Think about your routines. Which can be done before work, after work or during lunch or break time?

Health Services Outside of the Workplace— How much time does it take to get these services? Be sure to include travel and waiting time, as well as time for the procedure and/or appointment. What types of supports do I need in order to get health care (this includes transportation, interpreters, special equipment and more)?

Avoiding Missed Days at Work—During what hours and what days of the week are the services I need available? Do my health professionals have office hours or late afternoon appointments that will help me minimize time away from my job. What are my employer's policies about taking off time and/or changing my schedule in order to get medical care? How many vacation days and sick days will I get?

Health Care Insurance – Will the job offer me adequate health insurance? Which health plan best meets my medical needs and my budget? How much does it cost per month to get health insurance at my job? How much will I have to pay for things I need that are not covered and for co-pays? Does the plan allow me to continue seeing the doctors I see now? Do I need to continue with Medicaid or Medicare insurance? Ask a trusted friend, a work colleague or someone who has a similar health need for advice. Sometimes the office manager at your doctor's office can tell you which plans are better for the services you need.

WORK LOGISTICS

Work Hours & Weekly Schedule – What hours and days of the week will I work? Will the medical care that I need be available on days and times when I am not scheduled to work? In terms of both my need for on-going medical care and my stamina, should I plan to work full time or part time? How many hours per week do I need to work in order to get the employee health insurance? Sometimes working full time is too much. Many companies still provide benefits to employees who work at least 32 hours a week. If traditional work hours conflict with your medical routines or transportation needs, ask about flexible time – different start times or telework options.

Work Environments: Staying Well – Do my special health care needs affect my work environment? For example, do I need to be in an air-conditioned room, need a warm room temperature? Am I able to sit or stand on the job? Am I sensitive to perfumes and other smells? Do I need an electrical outlet to plug in my medical equipment? Do I need to take medications or receive medical treatments during the time that I am scheduled to work? Can I handle this by myself, or do I need some help with this? What do I need to tell my employer about my special health care needs?

Emergency Plan & Disability Maintenance – What about services needed in case of emergency – such as an illness, accident, problem with medication, broken equipment? How easy or how complicated is it to get help in these situations? Can some services come to me at the workplace? Do I need additional help in quickly evacuating the office if the elevators do not work or the accessible exit can not be used?

RESOURCES: HEALTH ISSUES & WORK

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION

Questions and answers about the Americans with Disabilities Act

www.usdoj.gov/crd/ada U.S.

Site provides an overview, technical information and complete text of the law on the ADA.

THE JOB ACCOMMODATION NETWORK (JAN)

Office of Disability Employment Policy – U.S. Department of Labor

www.jan.wvu.edu

Provides a toll-free consulting service that offers information about job accommodations and employment for people with disabilities. (They offer only information, not help in getting a job). Also has information about the ADA and many other links. Section for consumers has detailed fact sheets on accommodations for many disabling conditions, tip sheet for seeking employment, sample letters requesting on-the-job accommodations, and information for employers, government offices, educational programs, and more.

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT INSTITUTE

www.vcu.edu/busweb/esj

Site offers WorkWorld© training, free software and information to help people with disabilities make better decisions about employment by using “decision-support software” to get accurate answers about earning money, eligibility for government health benefits and understanding the impact of work incentives. Software for free download at www.workworld.org

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION ON DISABILITY

www.nod.org/findingjobs

Site offers lots of advice about job-hunting, resume writing, ADA, resources, employment success stories.

WORK SUPPORT

www.worksupport.com

Clearinghouse for information, resources, research and training related to the employment of people with disabilities.

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HRTW Phase II Projects are currently active in Arizona, Iowa, Maine, Mississippi, and Wisconsin.

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