



# The Ability Center

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## **The Ability Center Selects Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio for Community Partnership Award**

(SYLVANIA, OH – October 12, 2020) The Ability Center awards Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio (HCNO) their annual Community Partnership Award to recognize a collaborative effort to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This award is presented each year to a local organization that works alongside The Ability Center on specific initiatives that positively impacts people with disabilities. According to the World Health Organization, currently around 10% of the world's population, or roughly 650 million people, live with a disability.

As part of the region's coordinated COVID-19 response, guidelines were developed for northwest Ohio's 32 hospitals to help healthcare providers objectively allocate ventilators and other resources if there are any shortages. The hospitals are members of the Northwest Ohio Healthcare Emergency Management Coalition, which is coordinated by HCNO.

A coalition task force comprised of physicians, attorneys, ethicists, patient advocates, nurses and other professionals collaborated to develop this guidance to ensure everyone receives the best care possible. The guidance also ensures that any patient care decisions faced by northwest Ohio's healthcare providers during the COVID-19 pandemic or other crises are fair and non-discriminatory, not arbitrary.

Jan Ruma, Vice President of HCNO shares, “On behalf of our member hospitals, I am honored to accept The Ability Center’s 2020 Community Partnership Award. We have worked with The Ability Center over the years to advocate and address a variety of community health issues, from access to healthcare and transportation to disaster preparedness. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, updated healthcare allocation of scarce resources guidance was needed. A regional task force was formed, and we immediately asked The Ability Center to participate.”

HNCO will be recognized as part of The Ability Center’s annual [ADA Seminar](#). This year, the four-part series will be done virtually via Zoom and welcome national experts and local panelists to explore how the disability community has been impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Katie Hunt Thomas, Disability Rights Attorney and Director of Advocacy explains, “The Ability Center of Greater Toledo prides itself on collaborating with partners to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are met. We are lucky to have found a staunch partner in HCNO, which ensured that disability rights were an instrumental piece of its recent guidance to area hospitals on the scarce allocation of resources during this time.”

### **Health Care Equity During a Pandemic, HCNO Presentation (Community Partnership Award)**

Webinar: Thursday, October 15th, 2020  
10:00 – 11:00 a.m. (1 Credit Hour)

Visit The Ability Center’s [seminar page](#) to sign up to view and receive the recording.

All webinars will be archived on The Ability Center’s website.

**About The Ability Center:** In 2020, The Ability Center celebrates 100 years of service. The northwest Ohio agency strives to make our community the most disability friendly in the country through advocating, educating, partnering, and providing services supporting people with disabilities. The Ability Center has served the seven counties of Lucas, Ottawa, Wood, Fulton, Henry, Defiance, and Williams since 1920.

**Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio:** Incorporated in 1972, the Hospital Council of Northwest Ohio (HCNO) is a member-driven organization that represents and advocates, through a politically neutral forum, on behalf of its member hospitals and health systems. HCNO provides collaborative opportunities to enhance the health status of the citizens of northwest Ohio.

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