

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BBI Awarded Research Contract to Study Tax Policy and Reimbursement for Personal Assistance Services

Researchers at Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) at Syracuse University have been awarded a contract of \$224,000 to study the current and future implications of tax policy as it relates to coverage of expenses for personal assistance services (PAS) in the home and/or workplace. The project is being funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) as part of a Research and Training Center which will be managed by the University of California, San Francisco.

PAS are often the difference for millions of individuals with disabilities between independent and productive lives and complete dependence on public assistance. There is no single source of funds that guarantees coverage of PAS expenses. BBI researchers Michael Morris and Steve Mendelsohn will analyze current tax and social policy in terms of coverage of PAS expenses directly to an individual with a disability and/or indirectly through a third party such as an employer. BBI will identify innovative state approaches to the coverage of PAS expenses and will develop new policy recommendations to advance personal freedom and community participation for persons with significant disabilities nationwide.

“This study will continue BBI’s pioneering policy research to open up expanded opportunities for individuals with disabilities to be contributors in the workplace and economic mainstream,” said Michael Morris, BBI CEO and the project’s lead researcher.

“BBI’s partnership with the RRTC on PAS is a logical extension of our joint efforts to assist people with disabilities to overcome barriers to independent living and economic self-sufficiency,” stated University Professor and BBI Chair Peter Blanck. “It is our goal to have BBI-developed policy recommendations be enacted into law at both a state and federal level.”

Please read the abstract for the RRTC on PAS below. **For more information, please contact Charlene Harrington, the Project Director at the University of California - (415) 476-4030. For more information on the BBI research activities, please contact Michael Morris at (202) 296-2046.**