

No place at the policy table? Failing those most in need

Featuring Angela Gardner



THIS TIME ON CODE WACK!

What challenges do people living with disabilities face when it comes to accessing quality health care? And are they being included in decisions about health policies that affect them?

To find out, we spoke with **Angela Gardner**, a disability rights advocate who lives in the Los Angeles area. Her work focuses on helping people with disabilities in the areas of employment, education, healthcare, services and support to live independently in the community.

This is the first of two episodes with Angela.

SHOW NOTES

WE DISCUSS

Tell us a little about yourself, Angela.

"I am a California native, born in Los Angeles. I currently still live in Los Angeles, in a city called Whittier.

"I'm a person with a disability - autism, learning disabilities, and ID – intellectual disability. I became an advocate while working in a special education school....

"I work with advocacy organizations and on social media by bringing education resources and awareness about issues and needs for people with disabilities." – **Angela Gardner**

Can you give an example of the challenges faced by people living with disabilities under our current healthcare system?

"Medi-Cal [in California] or Medicaid, as it's called nationwide, ... provides healthcare benefits and long-term services and supports like in-home care, ... help with the daily care needs, bathing, dressing, feeding, home cleaning, et cetera, medication and devices that people with a disability may use.

"And currently there are income caps to Medicaid. I'm on Medicaid myself.

"That causes disabled people to choose between employment and healthcare and their long-term services and supports." – **Angela Gardner**

And what does the disability community think now that programs to prevent the spread of COVID are winding down?

"... there's just this concern, you know ... that we've totally been left out of all the policy decisions that our elected officials have been making since, you

know, they decided to end the COVID emergency and all the things that went along with it.

“A lot of people with disabilities feel abandoned that ... their needs weren't taken into account at all. . . ” – **Angela Gardner**

Helpful Links

[Hand in Hand, the Domestic Employers Network](#)

[6 Barriers to Disability Inclusion That Need to Be Brought Down,](#)
Institute of Entrepreneurship Development

[Why travelers with disabilities worry about Biden's end to COVID public health emergency,](#) *USA Today*

[Disability stories: personal perspectives of people with disabilities on navigating the U.S. health system,](#) *National Library of Medicine*

[Health system access challenges of people with disabilities increased during Covid-19 pandemic,](#) *National Library of Medicine*

[Disability Rights California's Summary of The Governor's Proposed 2023-24 Budget,](#) *Disability Rights California*

Episode Transcript

Read the full [episode transcript](#).

Biography: Angela Gardner

[Angela Gardner](#) is a disability rights advocate and former special education teacher.

She currently is a member of Hand in Hand, an organization that focuses on access to in-home care for people with disabilities and the workers/caregivers who provide care.

She is also an affiliate and board member of [Healthy California Now](#), a coalition of organizations that advocate for a universal, single payer healthcare system for all.

Angela lives in Whittier, California, a city in Los Angeles County.

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