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Join us for Aging Advocacy Day May 9!

www.gwaar.org/aging-advocacy-day-2023 | #WIAgingAdvocacyDay2023 #WIAAD

Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) News

Need to Know

Sharing Staff Changes, Request for County/Tribal Aging Unit Directors

Receiving prompt, accurate and vital information from the State of Wisconsin and GWAAR is vital for strengthening all areas of your aging program and serving your Older Americans better. Please take the time to reach out to your assigned GWAAR Older American Consultant, to advise of management and staff contact changes when they occur, and then enter those changes in the State SharePoint Directory. To get to the State Directory, please click on this link: <http://bit.ly/40XN4hz> The State has also created a tutorial video on how to enter changes. You can go directly to the tutorial video by clicking here: <https://bit.ly/41biLDS>

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Rosanna.mazzara@gwaar.org or meganm.takahashi@dhs.wisconsin.gov.



Advocacy

[Janet Zander](#), Advocacy and Public Policy Coordinator

Nice to Know

Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) Action Alert – State Budget Campaign Week Four

The state legislature's Joint Finance Committee has only one public hearing remaining on the 2023-2025 state budget.

The remaining public hearing is:

- **Wednesday, April 26, 2023** - Lakeland Union High School 9573 State Highway 70, Minocqua

See the Joint Finance Committee 2023-2025 Biennial Budget Public Comment Website (<https://legis.wisconsin.gov/topics/budgetcomments/>) for additional information.

With so much at stake for older adults and caregivers, we must use every opportunity available to provide input on the 2023-2025 state budget. This is the fourth and final week of the **Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network's (WAAN) four-week campaign to educate members of the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) about pressing issues impacting the lives of older Wisconsinites. The campaign includes strategies for connecting**

with members of the JFC, your own state Senator and Assembly Representative, as well as opportunities to educate the public and media about WAAN's priority issues.

WAAN has created a theme for each week in April to help coordinate our messages. The themes each week cover issues of importance to older adults and caregivers.

Our final theme is:

- April 24 – *Caregiving: Family Caregivers/Long-term Care Workforce

(*Get your comments submitted early the final week of the campaign, as the online portal and email address could close after the final hearing on April 26th.)

Action needed this week:

Action Step 1 – Submit budget comments related to needed investments and supports for Family Caregivers and the Long Term Care Workforce (see talking point resources below) to the Joint Finance Committee using their online portal: www.legis.wisconsin.gov/topics/budgetcomments. (If you prefer, your comments may also be submitted to the Joint Finance Committee using the following email address: budgetcomments@legis.wisconsin.gov.)

Action Step 2 – Send emails to your own state elected officials. Send one email to your state Assembly Representative and another to your state Senator. To find out who your state legislators are (and to find their contact information) visit <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/> and enter your home address in the box under “Who are my Legislators?” **Let your legislators know how these issues impact you personally or those you serve. Be sure you include your address, so they know you are a constituent or are serving constituents in their district.**

Action Step 3 – Share this message with board members, program participants, volunteers and community members and partners and ask them to take action too!

Additional Optional Action Steps -

Share your story (see Five Steps for Creating Powerful Personal Testimony

<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007740>). **Caring for Wisconsin Family Caregivers –** Are you one of the nearly 600,000 family caregivers in Wisconsin? In addition to caregiving do you also work full or part-time?

Have you left the workforce or reduced work hours (or turned down promotions) due to your caregiving responsibilities? Are you juggling caregiving, work, and raising your own family? Are you spending money out or your own pocket to help meet the needs of your loved one? Are you eligible for the state’s Family and Medical Leave program? If yes, can you afford to use the unpaid leave program if you have no paid sick or vacation time left? Are you able to find respite care? Can you afford to pay for respite care? How has caregiving (or needing a caregiver) impacted your life – home, work, personal health, finances, and family?

Repair and Rebuild the Long-Term Care Workforce – While the majority (65%) of older adults with long-term care needs depend exclusively on family and friends, are you one of the nearly one-third of older adults who need to supplement the care received from family with support provided by paid providers? What has been your

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Caring for Wisconsin Family Caregivers

The key to remaining independent, engaged and connected


WAAN's Position: Caring for Wisconsin family caregivers saves the state money, helps working caregivers remain in the workforce and provides the supports needed to help sustain them in their caregiving roles.

Budget Priorities

1. **Create a Wisconsin state tax credit** (up to \$500) to ease the financial expenses of caregiving. In Wisconsin, income tax credit reductions for family caregivers for respite care, like-assistive technology, adult day services and other needed equipment and services are needed for their most needed areas.
2. **Expand Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Policies.** Knows Wisconsin is one of the few states that has a Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) benefit, including those who work for employers with fewer than 50 employees, workers caring for individuals outside their own employer, and those who cannot afford to take unpaid leave. Expanding state leave policies to apply to employers with fewer than 50 employees and including grandparents, granddaughters, siblings and other extended family members of persons with close affinity relationships who are taking on caregiving or caregiving roles will save the state money, keep people working and provide the flexibility caregivers need to meet their responsibilities outside their caregiving roles. Create a paid family leave program would ensure those with excess of family leave could afford to use it.
3. **Increase Funding for Respite Services.** grants to more family caregivers and help pay for respite services.

Legislative Requests

1. Keep flexibility in the Alzheimer's Family and Caregiver Support Program (AFSCP). Law requires additional funding to support the aging population's increasing needs for family caregivers. Waiver is provided during the COVID-19 pandemic to allow the AFSCP program to provide family members to provide respite care as well as the annual 12-hour cap on respite care. It is essential to continue these practices beyond 2023. Family caregivers are leaving the workforce or leaving their own home to meet caregiving obligations. A family should be cared for in their own home, as far as possible, in their community, for as long as possible.



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Repair and Rebuild the Long-Term Care Workforce

Support Aging in Place, Preserve Independence, and Save Money

WAAN's Position: Repair and rebuild the long-term care workforce by increasing home and community-based provider rates, providing ongoing funding for initiatives designed to better recruit, support, and retain long-term care workers, expanding Wisconsin's family and medical leave program, and incentivizing earned income.


One older adult, older adults want to remain in their own homes. Studies have demonstrated aging in place can promote higher quality of life and self-esteem. The shortage of long-term care workers is resulting in a lack of needed services for older adults and people with disabilities who are dependent on care to meet their daily care needs. The number of people living at home also are older adults is increasing, yet many lack the services they need to do so safely, as family members have been stepping up to fill the care gaps left by unpaid family and waiting lists for services, but as caregiver education and a lack of family members to fill the gaps and meet all the care needs is putting the well-being of older adults and people with disabilities at risk of hospitalization and more expensive residential care. Additionally, the lack of long-term care workers, including home and community-based services has left older adults and people with disabilities stuck in hospitals and nursing homes long after they are ready to return home, as it can take months to find in-home care.

Budget Requests

1. **Provide a 25 percent increase in the Family Care capitation rates, with a corresponding increase in Medicaid rates to enable providers to sustain their operations.** Waiver for the long-term care workforce. Capitation rates are needed to repair and rebuild the long-term care workforce.

Legislative Requests

1. Increase funding for Family and Caregiver Support Program (AFSCP). Law requires additional funding to support the aging population's increasing needs for family caregivers. Waiver is provided during the COVID-19 pandemic to allow the AFSCP program to provide family members to provide respite care as well as the annual 12-hour cap on respite care. It is essential to continue these practices beyond 2023. Family caregivers are leaving the workforce or leaving their own home to meet caregiving obligations. A family should be cared for in their own home, as far as possible, in their community, for as long as possible.



experience trying to find (or help someone else find) a long-term care worker (personal care worker or home health worker) to provide needed care in your home? Are you a family member that had to step in to fill the care gaps left by unfilled shifts by paid agencies and workers or for waiting lists for services? Are you or someone you love stuck in a hospital or nursing home due to the lack of long-term care workers providing home and community-based services? If you are trying to help someone find in-home care, how long is it taking? Are there waiting lists? Are you a paid provider of in-home services? If yes, are you able to continue providing these essential services or are low wages, lack of benefits – including access to paid family and medical leave, or fear of losing childcare or food benefits impacting how many hours you are able to work and/or if you can continue in this line of work at all? How has the shortage of paid caregivers impacted your life – home, work, personal health, finances, and family?

See WAAN’s Caring for Wisconsin Family Caregivers Issue Brief

(<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007623>) or Repair and Rebuild the Long-Term Care Workforce Issue Brief (<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007727>) for more information on the aging network’s budget asks and talking points.

In addition to sharing your personal story in your written comments to JFC consider one or more of these additional actions:

- A. **Write a letter to the editor!** Using your story and/or talking points on either of the issues (see below) write a short letter to the editor (usually around 200-250 words) to your local daily or weekly paper.
- B. **Prepare articles for your agency newsletter related to these budget topics** (and/or submit an article to your local newspaper regarding funding needs of ADRCs, elder justice needs, or home-delivered-meals).
- C. **Share a budget message on your social media sites and tag your state Senator and Assembly Representative.** Find social media links for state legislators here: <https://www.wispolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/230303Directory.pdf> (Senators see pg. 8 and Assembly Representatives see pgs. 9 & 10).
- D. **Attend an in-district listening session with your legislator(s).** Many legislators are holding listening sessions in their districts. Sign up for your legislator’s electronic newsletters and watch for opportunities for you to connect with your legislators.
- E. **Invite your legislators for a site visit or to attend an agency event or board meeting.** This is a great way to help your legislators hear about and see the great work you are doing.

Your voice matters! The more of us that participate in the hearings and the weekly campaign activities, the more legislators will hear what issues are important to aging advocates and older adults.

Aging Advocacy Day 2023 – Registration & Parking

Registration Closes at 5 p.m. today

There are approximately 190 participants registered for Aging Advocacy Day. **Registration closes today at 5 p.m. (Wednesday April 26, 2023).** Please get your registrations in as soon as possible.

Registrations can be completed here: Aging Advocacy Day 2023 Registration - <https://gwaar.wufoo.com/forms/z11p6eil0dbk2o8/>

Parking

There will be limited valet parking available “for a fee” at the Best Western Premier Park Hotel (22 S. Carroll St.). For additional parking options near the State Capitol



(and the hotel) go to: Wisconsin State Capitol Parking (the closest city of Madison parking ramp is Capitol Square South) at <https://en.parkopedia.com/parking/building/wisconsin-state-capitol-dane-wi/?arriving=202304260900&leaving=202304261100> or to: <https://visitdowntownmadison.com/park>. Later this week, a map with parking instructions will be posted to our website at: <https://gwaar.org/aging-advocacy-day-2023>.

Family Caregiver Support

Bryn Ceman, Older Americans Act Consultant - Family Caregiver Support Specialist

Nice to Know

First WCSIC Convening Meeting

May 10, 2023 | 10:00 a.m. - Noon

Wisconsin Coalition for Serious Illness & Caregiving (WCSIC) will have their first convening meeting on Wednesday, May 10 from 10 am to noon. The purpose of WCSIC is to organize stakeholders, raise awareness of issues in serving seriously ill individuals and their caregivers and collaborate to create solutions around common goals and projects.

Currently, 16 state serious illness coalitions exist. While these state coalitions are in various stages of development, have differing goals and are composed of diverse stakeholder groups, they all share the same mission: to improve serious illness and end-of-life care in their state.

Other state coalitions have provided resources and networking opportunities, including:

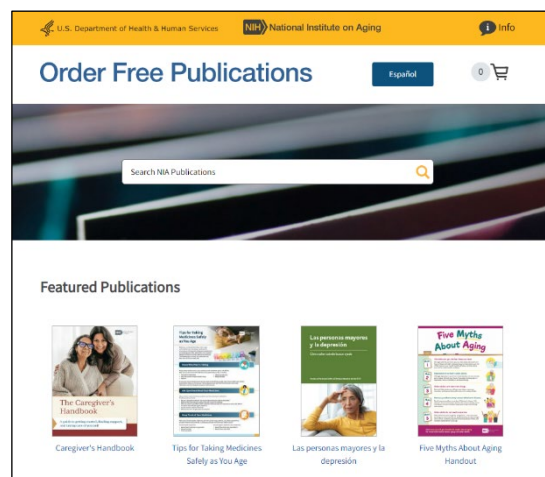
- Community Engagement Toolkit for State Coalitions
- Measurement Tools
- Annual C-TAC National Summit
- Monthly State Coalition Member Workgroup Calls
- Access to Issue Briefs (ex. Advancing State Models to Influence Federal Policy)

If you are interested in joining us on May 10, please contact Susan M Wurzer, Candidate | MBA Applied Leadership & Decision-Making, Fellow | Social Entrepreneur in Residence at swurz581@uwsp.edu.

Three Great Spots for Caregiver Resources

Looking for flyers, posters or newsletter articles? Here are a few places to look:

- National Institute on Aging offers free orders on their publications, and they are also available in Spanish! <https://bit.ly/3AuX8mr>
- Trualta has customizable brochures, flyers, and postcards. Bookmark this link: <https://trualta.docsend.com/view/s/qi6pwprjtjbeypg2>. Navigate to the "Marketing" folder, then click on "Wisconsin Caregiver - Marketing Template & Instructions". Here you can log in to Canva and create your own county-specific materials!



- GWAAR website at <https://gwaar.org/family-caregiver-marketing-toolkit>. Here you can find fact sheets, newsletter articles, and 2023 Newsletter Publications and Links here: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007655>.