



Volume 5, No. 19 May 17, 2023
Office (608) 243-5670 Fax (866) 813-0974
info@gwaar.org www.gwaar.org



Join us in person for our next A Commitment to Excellence (ACE) Meeting!

July 12, 2023 | Greenwood Country Club in Wausau, WI

Register today



Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) News

Nice to Know

Celebrate Older Americans Month

May is recognized as Older Americans Month. To celebrate this year's theme of Aging Unbound, consider hosting a special event or organizing a group project such as a community garden or mosaic art project. For more ideas and materials to support your activities, visit the Administration for Community Living's website:

<https://acl.gov/oam/2023/older-americans-month-2023>. You

can also use the engAGED calendar of social engagement opportunities to find ways to promote social engagement throughout the year:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b855bd5cef372d1e9a8ef0e/t/62c4851ea16501756e22f01e/1657046303638/engAGED+Calendar+Flyer-22-508.pdf>.



AGING UNBOUND: MAY 2023

Career Opportunities with GWAAR

GWAAR currently has a few [employment opportunities](#). If you're passionate about delivering innovative support to lead aging agencies as we work together to promote, protect, and enhance the well-being of older people in Wisconsin, join us! Current opportunities include:

- Public Interest Elder Law Attorney
- Care Consultant
- Communications Coordinator
- Elder Abuse Coordinators
- Fiscal Program Assistant

Advocacy

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

Nice to Know

State Budget Update

Earlier this month, the legislature's Joint Finance Committee passed a budget motion removing over 540 items from the Governor's Executive budget. **The items removed include some of the priorities of the Greater Wis. Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. and the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network** including (but not limited to):

- Housing grants and loans,
- Supports for those who are homeless,
- Increased funding for the State Housing Tax Credit (to help address the need for affordable housing),
- Automatic voter registration,
- Family Caregiver Tax Credit,
- Family and Medical Leave (FML) expansion and FML benefits insurance,
- Homestead Tax Credit expansion,
- Full Medicaid Expansion,
- Funding for implementation of a minimum fee schedule for certain home and community-based services (HCBS)
- provided through the state's Medicaid waiver programs (Family Care and IRIS),
- Funding for the Wis. Personal Caregiver Workforce Careers program to support a professional certificate program,
- Healthy Aging Grants,
- Broadband Expansion funding,
- Broadband Line Extension Grant Program funding,
- Digital Equity Program,
- Regional Transportation Authority supports, and
- Funding for coordination of services for non-drivers.

The JFC indicated these and other items removed from the budget will not be discussed further as part of the budget and will not be added back into the budget. This does not mean the proposals can never be discussed again and certainly does not mean the needs have gone away. What it means is any action taken on these proposals this session will have to take place as stand-alone legislation, separate from the budget process.

That said, there are still important aging network priorities in the budget. These items are not guaranteed to remain in the final budget and won't necessarily remain unchanged, but for now they are still at least under consideration. **Among the proposals under consideration are several of WAAN's priorities**, including (but not limited to):

- Base funding increases for Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), as well as funding for:
 - Caregiver support services,
 - Tribal Aging & Disability Resource Specialists (ADRS), and
 - Building a centralized ADRC website and database,
- Increasing respite funding by \$200,000,
- Sustaining the 5% rate increase for HCBS Family Care program providers,
- Rate increases for Direct Service Professionals providing services in the Family Care program,
- Rate increases for personal care workers,
- Increase funding for Adult Protective Services,
- Funding to increase the capacity of the Guardianship Support Center and to manage the training modules for future guardians, and
- Increased funding for Mass Transit aides and specialized transportation for capital assistance grants.

JFC will likely be making decisions on these and other items still under consideration in the next month. **Last week, approximately 250 advocates participated in Aging Advocacy Day** (200 in-person and 50 virtually). Advocates educated their state legislators about critical funding needs for ADRCs, family caregivers and paid care workers, home-delivered meal services funding (which was not included in the Governor's budget), and transportation supports. The timing of our advocacy day could not have been more perfect. State legislators

are currently busy drafting budget motions supporting funding for specific proposals they wish to see included in the final 2023-2025 State Budget. **We have received word that budget motions for all four of the Aging Advocacy Day priorities are in the works! Additionally, a budget motion is in the works for funding to build the capacity of the Guardianship Support Center.**

To ensure we keep this momentum going and help these priorities cross the finish line, your continued advocacy on these issues is needed. We cannot make this happen without YOU! **We need you to:**

1. **Contact your legislators by e-mail, mail, or phone** and ask them if we can count on them to support these aging network priorities. If your legislator is not on the Joint Finance Committee, ask them to also contact their Joint Finance Committee budget buddy and urge them to support the proposals.
2. **Identify FIVE other people in your Senate and/or Assembly district and help them send an e-mail or make a call regarding the aging network's priority issues.**
3. **Commit to responding to any "Immediate ACTION Needed" messages** you get from me asking you to contact your legislators.

To obtain **email addresses for your legislators**, go here for the complete list of Senators:

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/legislators/senate> and for your Assembly Representatives, go here: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/legislators/assembly>.

To send a message via the **U.S. postal service**

- Direct mail to your **state Senator** to: **P. O. BOX 7882, Madison, WI 53707-7882**
- **Assembly Mailing Address** is: **PO Box 8952** (for Reps. with last names ending in A-L) or **PO Box 8953** (for Reps. with last names ending in M-Z), Madison, WI 53708

To reach your legislators by phone use the **state Legislative Hotline:**

- In Madison, dial 266-9960.
- Outside of Madison dial toll-free at 1-800-362-9472

You can also find your legislator's phone number using the:

- Senate Office Directory:
<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/raw/path/Publisher/WSL/FrontPage/Senate/200%20-%20Senate%20Directories/010%20-%20Senate%20Office%20and%20Staff%20Directory>
- Assembly Phone Directory:
<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/raw/path/Publisher/WSL/FrontPage/Assembly/200%20-%20Assembly%20Directories/050%20-%20Assembly%20Phone%20Directory>

Family Caregiver Support

[Bryn Ceman](#), *Older Americans Act Consultant - Family Caregiver Support Specialist*

Need to Know

Caregiver Support Community Statewide Webinar

May 23 | 10 am

Join us for the May Caregiver Support Community Statewide Webinar May 23. This meeting will include an Advocacy Update, Department of Health Services and GWAAR Updates and a presentation from Trualta. For more information, visit <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007789>.

New Campaign Launch: Act on RAISE

The National Alliance for Caregiving – along with leading patient advocacy, aging and disability rights groups - launched Act On RAISE, a campaign to drive action on the National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers, our country's first whole-of-society blueprint on family caregiving. Individuals and organizations are invited to sign up (<https://www.actonraise.org/join-us/>) to be campaign partners.



Biden Administration Executive Order on Caregiving can be viewed here:

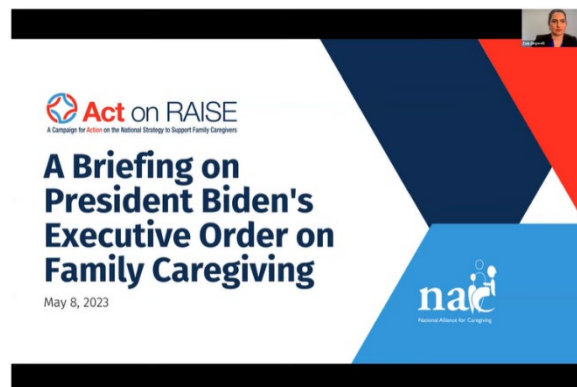
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/04/18/executive-order-on-increasing-access-to-high-quality-care-and-supporting-caregivers/>

As many of you might have heard, President Biden signed an executive order that makes aging and disability care more affordable, enhances access to home and community-based services (HCBS) for veterans, improves job quality for direct care workers and makes it easier for family caregivers to access federal care programs, among other things. Learn more about Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) budget priorities here: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007623>.

Nice to Know

In case you missed it! A Briefing on President Biden's Executive Order on Family Caregiving

A briefing was held on May 8, 2023, on the Biden-Harris Administration's Executive Order on increasing access to high-quality care and supporting caregivers. The briefing highlighted how the Executive Order's actions impact family caregivers and build on the National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers. The panelists discussed how policymakers can continue to support family caregivers by driving action on the National Strategy and by raising the visibility of America's **53 million family caregivers**. During this webinar, you will hear from experts from AARP, the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, PHI, and the National Alliance for Caregiving. To view the recording, visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f106yUFO_GU.



Compelling Video about Caregiving: Man Enough to Care

In the first episode of "A Love That Comes Full Circle" actor/director Justin Baldoni, former NFL star Devon Still, actor Nathan Kress, author and comedian Zach Anner, and long-term care expert Robert Espinoza open up about their experiences giving and receiving care and discuss the importance of caregiving. Nathan shares about caring for his wife throughout her journey with endometriosis and his fear of potentially acting as a caregiver for his daughter as well due to the same illness. To view episode one, titled "Man Enough", click here: <https://bit.ly/3pP65oH>. This series is produced by Caring Across Generations.



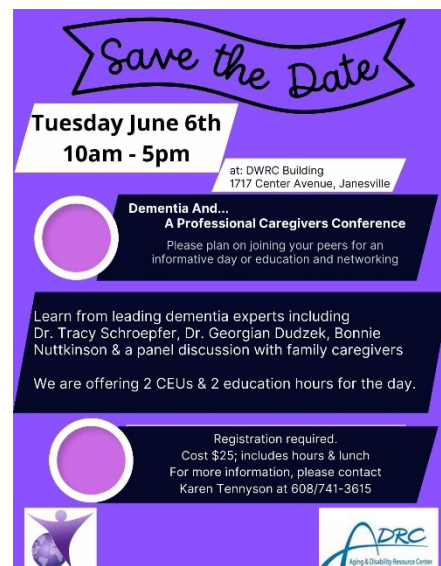
Save the Date: Conference in Rock County

June 6 | 10 am

The ADRC of Rock County is Hosting a Dementia And... A Professional Caregivers Conference. Learn from leading dementia experts including Dr. Tracy Schoepfer, Dr. Georgian Dudzek, Bonnie Nuttkinson and a panel discussion with family caregivers.

Two CEUs and two education hours will be offered for the day.

Registration is required. Cost \$25: includes hours & lunch. For more information, please contact Karen Tennyson at (608) 741-3615 or visit <https://bit.ly/3WbWy73>.



Reminder: Learn More about Kinship

Interested in learning more about Kinship? What to know about dynamics in a Kinship and how to be supportive as a professional? Please take time to listen/view these excellent training opportunities.

1. Family Dynamics in Kinship Families: Implications for Services and Programs with Dr. Joseph Crumbley - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=-tcz6t-5WNs>. A webinar, led by world-renowned kinship expert Dr. Joseph Crumbley, provides a framework describing the unique family dynamics of kinship families. Learn how to use this framework when engaging these families and developing kinship programs and services.
2. The Unique Dynamics of Shared/Co-Parenting in Kinship Families - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7VHR_KMjXc. Dr. Joesph Crumbley teaches us shared/co-parenting strategies that provide well-being, safety, and stability for children in kinship families.



Health Promotion

[Angie Sullivan](#), Older Americans Act Consultant - Health Promotions Specialist

Need to Know

Reminder: Old Americans Act Title III-D (Health Promotion) Frequently Asked Questions Document Updated

Did you know there is a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document located on the GWAAR website? OAA Title III-D funds are required to be spent on high-level evidence-based programs to improve health and well-being and reduce disease and injury. Programs must meet the evidence-based criteria as defined by the Administration for Community Living (ACL): <https://acl.gov/programs/health-wellness/disease-prevention>. You can learn more about the provisions and priorities of OAA Title III-D by reviewing this document. Please contact Angie Sullivan at angela.sullivan@gwaar.org if you have any questions regarding this document.

Nice to Know

Reminder: Virtual Event: Everybody's Business - Gain Skills to Help Prevent a Tragedy

May 19 | Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Learn the myths and facts of suicide and mental health, and equip yourself with knowledge to help anyone at risk of suicide through QPR (Question. Persuade. Refer.) Suicide Prevention Training. This event is free and open to the public. Register today at

<https://namisoutheastwi.org/community-education/qpr/qpr-registration/>.



Our Epidemic of Loneliness & Isolation: The Surgeon General's New Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community

Recently, the Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness unveiled its 2023-2024 policy priorities and recommendations for the 118th Congress and the Biden Administration. Join the coalition in advocating for their policy agenda, which aims to prevent social isolation and loneliness and enhance social connection for all Americans. For more information, visit <https://www.endsocialisolation.org/>.



Nutrition

[Pam VanKampen](#), Older Americans Act Consultant - Nutrition Specialist/Senior Center Representative

Nice to Know

Virtual Event: Nuts and Bolts Hmong Dining Site

June 28 / 2-3 pm

Please join us on June 28 from 2-3 pm as we feature ADRC-CW, Portage and Dunn County as they talk about their experiences working with the Hmong community in their counties to offer a meal site that honors their culture.

A very special thank you to Ronda James, Kristi Cooley and Bernie Allen. The meeting will be recorded but we hope you can join us live to ask questions and learn from the panelist and your peers.

To join, click here: <https://bit.ly/3WazUfo>

Meeting ID: 264 490 811 490

Passcode: vdxKRF

Call in information: (608) 338-1382, Phone Conference ID: 496 088 561#

Virtual Event: Nuts and Bolts Hmong Dining Site

May 31 / 2-3 pm

Is your program considering implementing a HDM waitlist or prioritizing the number of meals a person receives? If yes, please join us Wednesday May 31 from 2-3 pm as we review the Meal Prioritization process and templates that we would like the GWAAR service area to follow.

Please have your questions ready for this interactive discussion and peer sharing.

If you haven't already done so, please listen to the Meal Prioritization video or PPT in our Nutrition EXT Share Point site in the Meal Prioritization folder. You can use these materials to help you shape your waitlist local policy as well.

We look forward to the discussion.

To join, click here: <https://bit.ly/3o3PXzc>

Meeting ID: 285 236 270 335

Passcode: uVDMUH

Call in information: (608) 338-1382, Phone Conference ID: 142 481 461#

Transportation

[Nick Musson](#), Older Americans Act Consultant – Transportation

Need to Know

Volunteer Driver Program Survey

We all know how important volunteers are to the operations of aging and disability programs across the state. We need to eliminate as many barriers to volunteering to retain and recruit as many volunteers as possible. Volunteer driver auto insurance is one of those barriers.

Volunteer driver programs are losing volunteers as a result of personal auto insurance companies non-renewing coverage or increasing premiums on volunteer driver auto policies. Insurance agencies classify commercial activity as receiving any compensation, even mileage reimbursement, and are non-renewing coverage or increasing rates as a result.

GWAAR's goal is to develop and pass legislation to modify state law to prohibit an insurer from increasing the rate, or denying, nonrenewing or cancelling an insured volunteer driver solely for acting as a volunteer driver or for reimbursement of actual expenses, including mileage reimbursement.

To accomplish our goal, we need to understand the make-up of volunteer driver programs across the State to be able to effectively share with the State legislature the impact and value your programs bring to the most vulnerable populations in our communities. We will be using a survey to access the data we need to accomplish our goal.

The information collected, through the survey, will be used to create an overview of volunteer driving programs within the state of Wisconsin to present to the State legislature and to the public to get support for legislation to protect our volunteer drivers. Organization/agency contact information will be collected in case we need to follow-up with additional questions.

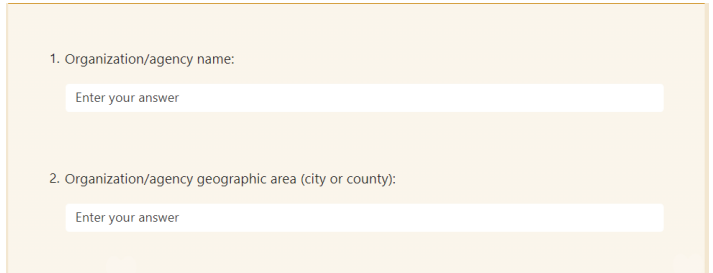
Please share this survey to help us connect to as many volunteer driver programs across the State. Volunteer driver programs take many forms, it could be a home delivered meal program or a program dedicated to seniors or individuals with disabilities. We want to be all inclusive when we talk about volunteer driver programs so share with partners, departments and organizations or agencies associated with volunteer drivers.

Complete or share the survey by using this link: <https://forms.office.com/r/emx41RRMw7>

Survey timeframe: May 3, 2023, to May 24, 2023

Please share the survey with other volunteer driver programs.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Nick Musson (608) 228-8092 or nick.musson@gwaar.org.



1. Organization/agency name:

Enter your answer

2. Organization/agency geographic area (city or county):

Enter your answer

Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol

[Ingrid A. Kunding](#), Senior Medicare Patrol Project Manager

Need to Know

COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Expired May 11, OTC Test Cost Coverage Changes

The COVID-19 Public Health Emergency expired Thursday, May 11, 2023. This means changes for Medicare beneficiaries as it relates to over-the-counter (OTC) COVID-19 tests.

Laboratory tests for COVID-19 that are ordered by the beneficiary's provider will still be covered with no out-of-pocket costs for people with Medicare. OTC tests will still be available, but there may be out-of-pocket costs and coverage of these tests may vary by insurance type.

Medicare does not generally pay for OTC products. The Public Health Emergency made an exception, and that exception ended May 11, 2023.

For beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare Part B, coverage will continue with no out-of-pocket costs for appropriate laboratory-based COVID-19 PCR and antigen tests when ordered by a provider.

For beneficiaries enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan, it is advised to check directly with the plan, as some plans may provide more access to testing.

We have been hearing from beneficiaries across the state lately, with concerns about suspected fraud related to the OTC COVID-19 test claims being submitted to Medicare without permission from or knowledge of the beneficiary. Some of the tests appear to be on auto-renewal and we are encouraging people to end those auto-renewals as quickly as possible so that there are no out-of-pocket costs incurred by the beneficiary when the Public Health Emergency ends and Medicare is no longer paying for these tests.

