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Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) News

Nice to Know

GWAAR Executive Director testifies at AB259 public hearing

John Schnabl, GWAAR, Executive Director and member of WAAN, testified at public hearing held by the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care on October 10, 2023 regarding AB 259: "100-day prescription drug supplies under SeniorCare and amending an administrative rule related to 100-day prescription drug supplies permitted under SeniorCare."

To view John's testimony, click here: <https://bit.ly/45Ae3Bf>

View the hearing: <https://wiseye.org/2023/10/10/assembly-committee-on-health-aging-and-long-term-care-7/>



Testifying were the following...

- 28:25 - Rep. Karen Hurd, 68th District (Fall River)
- 40:27 - Leslie Fijalkiewicz, ADRC of Chippewa County, director
- 51:45 - John Schnabl, GWAAR, Executive Director and member of WAAN
- 58:25 - David Bowen, AARP
- 1:05:00 - H.J. Waukau, Legislative Director, DHS

Reminder: Accepting Applications: GWAAR Advisory Council

The Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. (GWAAR), is looking for thoughtful, civic-minded, energetic individuals to fill vacancies on its Advisory Council. Advisory Council Members are involved in a variety of activities that support aging programs including promotion of quality improvement of aging services and individual and organizational advocacy. Advisory Council Members are expected to maintain community relationships to promote agency visibility and help achieve agency goals. If you are looking for a challenging volunteer opportunity where your skills can make a difference in program planning, development, and implementation – please see the following and apply.

View the application: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2005628>

If you have any questions about volunteering on the Advisory Council, please contact Nick Musson at nick.musson@gwaar.org.

Advocacy

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

Nice to Know

State Legislation Update: SeniorCare and Healthy Aging Grants

Last week (while I was on vacation of course), two committees of the state legislature held public hearings on two bills supported by GWAAR and the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN).

• SeniorCare 100-day Prescription Refills

On Tues., Oct. 10, the Assembly Health, Aging and Long-Term Care Committee (<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/committees/assembly/2664>) held a public hearing on AB 259 (<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/proposals/ab259>) / SB 263 relating to allowing SeniorCare participants to purchase a 100-day supply of certain medications.

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, SeniorCare participants were allowed to purchase 100-day supplies for certain prescription drugs instead of the 34-day supply normally allowed. SeniorCare participants found the temporary 100-day refill authorization to be beneficial as it reduced the number of trips to the pharmacy and reduced their co-pays. Prescriptions refilled every month require co-pays of \$5-\$15 each, which is a cost of between \$15 - \$45 per medication over the course of three months. During the public health emergency, SeniorCare participants could receive a 3-month supply for only \$5-\$15 per medication total. Though program revenue was decreased by the reduction in co-pays, any loss of funds was more than made up for by the reduction in dispensing fees to pharmacies; a win/win. Unfortunately, with the end of the public health emergency, 100-day refills are no longer permitted.

This legislation previously passed unanimously by the full Senate. The next step is for the Assembly's Health, Aging and Long-Term care Committee to schedule a vote on the bill. If your state Representative is on this committee, please reach out to share how this bill will help older adults in your community. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) suggested the bill be amended to apply the 100-day refill allowance to all Medicaid programs. We support this amendment! Stay tuned for additional updates.

• Healthy Aging Grants

On Thurs., Oct. 12, the Senate Health Committee (<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/committees/senate/2672>) held a public hearing on AB 418/SB 407 (<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/proposals/sb407>). This legislation provides \$378,000 in each fiscal year of the 2023-25 fiscal biennium to a private, nonprofit entity to support evidence-based health promotion programs and healthy aging.

This legislation has also been referred to the Assembly Health, Aging and Long-Term Care Committee.

A state investment in Healthy Aging Grants will:

- Ensure the long-term sustainability of the Falls Free Wisconsin Center and expand access to Stepping On and other programs to reach more people, reduce falls and save dollars, and
- Sustain the infrastructure needed to support local program providers and ensure that programs are accessible to people throughout the state.

We need to encourage the Senate Health Committee to schedule a vote on SB 407 and the Assembly Health, Aging and Long-Term Care Committee to hold a hearing on AB 418. If your state Senator or Representative is on either of these committees, please reach out to share how this legislation will help to reduce falls, improve the self-management of chronic conditions, increase physical activity, and preserve independence — all while reducing the burden and costs to health care and public safety. Watch for more updates.

Reminder: ACL Seeking Comments on Proposed Rule for APS Functions and Grant Programs

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) (<https://bit.ly/3toAOui>) to modify the implementing regulations of the Older Americans Act of 1965 to add a new subpart (Subpart D) related to Adult Protective Services (APS).



The proposed rules exercise ACL's authority to regulate APS systems. According to ACL, there are currently no Federal standards for APS systems, leading to wide variation in policies and procedures and resulting in inconsistent service delivery across States and confusion for APS systems and the general public, including victims of adult maltreatment. Historically, APS programs and administrators have lacked reliable information and guidance on best practices and standards for conducting case investigations and for staffing and managing APS programs. These challenges have impaired States' ability to respond in an effective and timely way to reports of adult maltreatment and to assess client outcomes and the effectiveness of the services they are providing. Nationally, this results in a fragmented and unequal system that can hinder coordination and lead to the absence of critical support for some people experiencing maltreatment. The proposed regulation will create a national standard to elevate evidence-informed practices, bring clarity and uniformity to programs, and improve the quality of service delivery for adult maltreatment victims and potential victims.

To be considered, comments on the proposed rule must be received or officially postmarked no later than November 13, 2023. ACL seeks feedback from all who are seeking to improve implementation of APS programs. Input from the aging and disability networks, as well as the people served by APS programs, is particularly crucial.

Comments can be submitted:

Online at <http://www.regulations.gov> (Enter "2023-19516" in the search bar, select ACL's proposed rule, and then click the blue "comment" box at the top left of the page.)

By mail to: HHS Administration for Community Living Administration on Aging

Attention: Stephanie Whittier Eliason

330 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20201

For additional information see ACL's Fact Sheet "Establishing Adult Protective Services Regulations" (<https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2023-09/AdultProtectiveServicesRegs.pdf>).

Reminder: DHHS Seeking Comments on Section 504 Proposed Rule to Strengthen Prohibitions Against Discrimination on the Basis of Disability

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is committed to protecting the civil rights of individuals with disabilities under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (section 504). To implement the



prohibition of discrimination on the basis of disability, the Department proposes to update and amend its section 504 regulation. The proposed rule (<https://bit.ly/45fkt8H>) would add new provisions that clarify existing requirements under section 504 prohibiting recipients of financial assistance from the Department (recipients) from discriminating on the basis of disability in their programs and activities, including in health care, child welfare, and other human services. The proposed rule includes new requirements prohibiting

discrimination in the areas of medical treatment; the use of value assessments; web, mobile, and kiosk accessibility; and requirements for accessible medical equipment, so that persons with disabilities have an opportunity to participate in or benefit from health care programs and activities that is equal to the opportunity afforded others.

The proposed rule would also update the definition of disability and other provisions to ensure consistency with statutory amendments to the Rehabilitation Act, enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008, the Affordable Care Act, as well as Supreme Court and other significant court cases. It also further clarifies the obligation to provide services in the most integrated setting. Finally, the proposed rule would make other clarifying edits, including updating outdated terminology and references.

The proposed rule seeks comment on a variety of issues to better understand individuals' experiences with health care and human services discrimination on the basis of disability and recipients' experiences in complying with federal civil rights laws.

To be considered, **comments on the proposed rule must be submitted on or before November 13, 2023.** You can submit comments, identified by RIN 0945-AA15:

Electronically through <http://www.regulations.gov>, or **by mail or by hand delivery or courier** to the following address only:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, Attention: 504 NPRM (RIN 0945-AA15),
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201.

The Department will also be conducting a Tribal consultation meeting on October 6, 2023, from 1 – 3 p.m. To participate, you must register in advance at:

<https://www.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsceGqpzsJEwi5AQ8pvdIholm7Xp4hwLs#/registration>

For additional information see the HHS Civil Rights Fact Sheet, "Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability Proposed Rule Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973."

<https://www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/for-individuals/disability/section-504-rehabilitation-act-of-1973/fact-sheet/index.html>

Family Caregiver Support

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

Nice to Know

Caregiver Coach Training available

Are you in need of CEU? Are you a professional working with family and informal caregivers? This weekly training may be a great fit for you and become a Caregiver Coach!

The Caregiver Coach Training is offered Weekly, November 1 - December 19, 2023, through UW-Stevens Point.

This module is approved for the following continued educational units:

ICF – 21 CCEU • NCHWC – 5 CE



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To complete this course, claim their CEUs, and receive a certification, students are required to write a reflective assignment and receive feedback on it.

Learn more: <https://www3.uwsp.edu/conted/Pages/Caregiver-Coaching.aspx>

Reminder: Advanced access to Marketing Toolkit for National Family Caregiver Month

In preparation for National Family Caregiver Month, the Wisconsin Family & Caregiver Support Alliance or WFACSA team has developed a Marketing Toolkit that we would like to share with our community partners in advance of November 1.

The Toolkit can be used by you and your organization throughout the month of November to offer caregiver education, resources, and opportunities to connect. You will note that each week has a focus area. Clicking on each week's blue focus area brings you to jpegs, articles, videos, and other content applicable to our state's family and informal caregivers. **You are encouraged to share this content starting on November 1.**



Please be advised that additional links and resources may be added throughout the month of October. For example, we hope to include the Governor's Proclamation for National Family Caregivers Month once it becomes available. For this reason, please be sure to come back to these active links for the most up-to-date information.

View the Marketing Toolkit for National Family Caregiver Month:

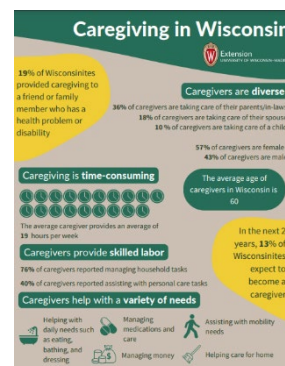
<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007912>

New caregiver infographic available from UW-Extension

Take a peek at this wonderful infographic from our wonderful partners as UW Extension. It's available just in time for the upcoming National Caregiver Month in November.

It can be found in our Family Caregiver Marketing Toolkit under "Fact Sheets."

View the infographic: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007917>



Health Promotion

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

Nice to Know

WI Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness (WCESIL) webinar TODAY from 2:00-3:00 p.m.

We are providing this Zoom link for anybody who may be interested in joining this meeting on Tuesday, October 17, 2023.

Zoom meeting link: <https://dhs.wi.zoomgov.com/j/1607595188>

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Connection of Depression and Mental Health with Social Isolation and Loneliness

Speaker: Kathleen Pater from NewBridge Madison

Kathleen is an LCSW and her team supports low income older adults all around Dane County by doing in-home assessments and short term interventions, along with referrals to mental health programs. They also do education and support for all 12 focal points in Dane County.

October is depression and mental health awareness month. Kathleen will provide information about this topic and how it connects to social isolation and loneliness.

Preparing for Social Isolation and Loneliness Awareness Week

Speakers: Kris Krasnowski and Shayna Schertz

We are 4 weeks away from Social Isolation and Loneliness Awareness Week, and there's lots going on! Kris and Shayna plan to discuss what's being planned and how you can be impacted and even get involved!

Meeting link: <https://dhs.wi.zoomgov.com/j/1607595188>

New! Falls Free Wisconsin (FFWI): Interactive Home Safety Challenge

The long-awaited FFWI Home Safety Challenge is now complete! The Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA) is excited to share this resource and encourage you to use and share it with your local communities.

Here are a few ideas on how to do this:

- Set up a table at a local falls (or other health or safety related) event with a couple of computers so people can go through it and others can watch.
- Use it in presentations with older adults and go through it as a larger group (this may be helpful for those that aren't as comfortable with technology).
- Inform your colleagues about it so that they can use it as a resource and/or refer others to it.
- Share it on your social media, and/or link to it on your website.
- Share it with your friends, family members, and neighbors!



View the video: <https://fallsfreewi.org/prevent-falls/surround/interactive-home-walk-through/>

Reminder: Quarterly Health Promotion Webinar

Tuesday, November 7 | 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Save the date for the next Quarterly Health Promotion Webinar taking place on Tuesday, November 7, 2023 from 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. After some GWAAR Updates, the majority of the agenda will be spent in breakout groups learning from each other about health promotion community partnerships, challenges, successes and any emerging trends. Health Promotion Coordinators from various counties will be leading the small groups.

Registration Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwrcuihpjlvHNQcsM3z2rtI9R0dIJY8wsSH>

Nutrition

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

Nice to Know

Webinar: Dive into Our Latest Social Connection Research

Hosted by: Meals on Wheels

Tuesday, October 24 | 1:00 p.m.

New research demonstrates what Meals on Wheels programs have known anecdotally for decades: Social connection programs are effective and truly make a difference in the lives of older adults. Join Learning @ Meals on Wheels America and researchers from Brown University on Tuesday, October 24 from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. to learn about recently released qualitative research report Effective Solutions to Address Social Isolation and Loneliness Through Meals on Wheels and how you can apply the learnings in your own work and generate ideas to build your own research partnerships with academic groups. Whether you are starting a new social connection program, refining existing programs, fundraising for your programs or thinking about a future research project, this webinar will equip you with new knowledge and strategies to aid your next steps.

Read the research: <https://bit.ly/3tBh8Ue>

Register for the webinar: <https://bit.ly/3txqQad>

