



Volume 7, No. 45 November 18, 2025
608-243-5670 | info@gwaar.org | gwaar.org



Leadership Opportunity  Applications welcome!

Openings available on our Board of Directors

gwaar.org/join-the-gwaar-board



Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) News

Need to Know

Reminder: Now hiring Veteran Self-Directed Program (VSDP) Care Consultant

Ideal candidate will be located in Central, South-Central, or West-Central WI.

[View the full job description: https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008591](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008591)

To apply, send cover letter and resume to Lisa Drouin, VA Programs Manager: Lisa.Drouin@GWAAR.org

Advocacy

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

Nice to Know

State

AB 410/SB 410 - grants for falls prevention awareness and initiatives (Healthy Aging Grants)

Healthy Aging Grants fund **evidence-based community programs** like *Stepping On*, which are proven to reduce falls by 31%. These programs equip older adults with practical tools to reduce fall risk, manage chronic conditions, and maintain physical activity—significantly reducing the need for emergency medical responses and hospitalizations.

Healthy Aging Grants provide training, infrastructure, and program access that community partners need to address the root causes of **preventable falls**. These grants will:

- **Reduce preventable injuries** that currently overburden our families and systems,
- **Support collaborative local efforts** with public health and aging services, public safety, and healthcare organizations, and
- **Promote dignity, independence, and health** for older adults across Wisconsin.

The number of falls emergency medical services (EMS) responds to are increasing by nearly 10,000 a year statewide and made up over 20% of all 911-related ambulance runs last year.

-continued-

We need your help to encourage members of the state legislature's Senate [Health Committee](#) to schedule a vote on SB 410 and members of the state Assembly [Health, Aging and Long-Term Care Committee](#) to schedule a hearing on AB 410.

Health Committee:

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/committees/senate/2966>

Health, Aging and Long-Term Care Committee:

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/committees/assembly/2923>

Take Action:

Please see the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) [Action Alert](#): <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008794>



SB 578/AB 598 – Patient’s Representative Legislation (Next of Kin)

Wisconsin state legislators introduced legislation ([SB 578/AB 598](#)) that creates “Patient Representatives” who would be given the authority to consent to patient admissions to nursing homes *without requiring a petition for guardianship or protective placement*. This legislation is similar to [Assembly Bill 1088](#) which was introduced last session; opposed by GWAAR and other aging, disability, and legal advocates; and failed to pass in the Senate before the session ended.

SB 578: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/related/proposals/sb578.pdf>

AB 598: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab598>

Assembly Bill 1088: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2023/proposals/ab1088>

On Nov. 11, 2025, the Senate Health Committee voted (4-1) to pass [SB 578](#). The bill is now available for scheduling a vote by the full Senate. The [Assembly Health, Aging and Long-Term Care Committee](#) held a public hearing on [AB 598](#) on Wed., Nov. 12, 2025. The Assembly committee has not yet scheduled a vote on this legislation.

Assembly Health, Aging and Long-Term Care Committee:

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/committees/assembly/2923>

GWAAR and other aging, disability, and legal advocates oppose this legislation, as we believe this legislation creates risk for patients and family members, has legal and operational issues, and does not resolve the issue it was designed to address - quick transition of hospitalized patients who have become incapacitated to make health care decisions, are medically ready to be discharged, and do not have a Power of Attorney for Health Care (POAHC). Additionally, this legislation is more expansive than “Next of Kin” laws existing in other states. **No other states allow next of kin financial decision-making powers.**

Take Action:

Please reach out to your State Senator and Assembly Representative to share your thoughts regarding this legislation that is moving quickly. For more information, see WAAN’s [Action Alert](#) and a grid (created by Polly Schumaker, GWAAR’s Guardianship Support Center attorney)

Comparison of Wisconsin Power of Attorney for Health Care and Patient Representative Proposal:

<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008800>

Action Alert: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008799>



Speaker's Task Force on Elder Services – Upcoming Dates

The State [Assembly Speaker's Task Force on Elder Services](#) held their second [Informational Hearing in Wausau on Mon., Nov. 17, 2025](#). The Task Force has scheduled their third [Informational Hearing in La Crosse on Nov. 20](#). Unfortunately, **both hearing notices indicate only “invited speakers” will be permitted to testify**. The date for what is likely to be the last hearing scheduled has not yet been set but is expected to take place in Madison.

[Assembly Speaker's Task Force on Elder Services:](#)

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/committees/assembly/3035>

Wausau Nov. 17 Informational Hearing: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/raw/cid/1954108>

LaCrosse Nov. 20 Informational Hearing: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/raw/cid/1954584>

The task force wants to identify ways to improve the quality of life for older Wisconsinites and is focused on programs, services, and policies that help older people maintain independence in their own homes, encourage social interaction and community engagement to combat isolation and loneliness, prioritize physical wellbeing and financial independence, and prevent elder financial exploitation.

To ensure task force members hear from all those wishing to share information related to successful programs and services to help older Wisconsinites remain living at home or the challenges faced by older people planning to age in place, **please watch for an action alert coming soon**. In the meantime, you are encouraged to contact members of the task force directly. You will find contact information below.

Task Force Members are:

- [Representative Snyder \(Chair\)](#)
- [Representative Doyle \(Vice-Chair\)](#)
- [Representative Melotik](#)
- [Representative Gundrum](#)
- [Representative VanderMeer](#)
- [Representative Novak](#)
- [Representative McCarville](#)
- [Representative Taylor](#)

Federal

Federal Government Shutdown Ends & FoodShare

On Wed., November 12, the longest federal government shutdown in U.S. history (43 days) ended when Congress passed a spending package which the President then signed into law. **The spending package included a Continuing Resolution (CR) which funds portions of the federal government (like Older Americans Act [OAA] programs and the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Provider Acts [MIPPA]) through January 30, 2026**, but does not address the expiring Affordable Care Act (ACA) enhanced subsidies. The spending package also included three appropriations bills which will fund several key operations for the remainder of the federal fiscal year (Sept. 30, 2026), including full funding for SNAP (FoodShare in Wisconsin).

With federal funding for SNAP now secured, **the Wisconsin Department of Health Services does not anticipate any further disruptions of FoodShare for the remainder of the federal fiscal year**. FoodShare members will get their December benefits on schedule. Members may continue to use benefits on their QUEST cards. FoodShare members can check their FoodShare balance by calling QUEST Card Services at 877-415-5164.

The CR provides a temporary solution for the remaining nine appropriations bills that still need to be passed, including the bill for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) which includes OAA and other aging services funding. **Advocacy is still needed to ensure OAA programs are protected in a future CR or in a final spending bill**. Stay tuned for updated advocacy materials from our federal partners in the coming weeks.

Webinar: Federal Funding Fallout 2025 Updates and Q&A

Friday, November 21 | 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

English registration: <https://bit.ly/FedFunds1121>

Spanish registration: <https://bit.ly/FedFundSpa1121>

Cuts to federal Medicaid spending continue to be a top concern, however other programs important to people with disabilities may cut through the reconciliation bill process, and the administration is making changes at several federal agencies including the Dept. of Health and Human Services, Social Security, and Education that directly impact people with disabilities.



Data Management

[Carrie Kroetz](#), Data Management and Technology Coordinator

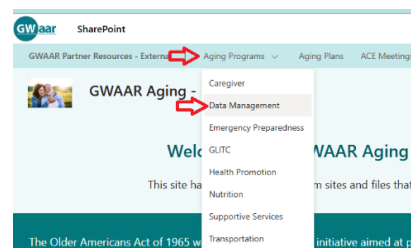
Nice to Know

Reminders

All webinars are recorded and posted on the GWAAR Partners Resources site and accessed by registered users.

<https://gwaar.sharepoint.com/sites/PartnerResources> | Aging Programs | [Data Management](#)

The first of many End-of-Year review reports have been posted to the GWAAR SharePoint site under Aging Programs/Data Management library. Please review this and address any issues indicated for your Aging Unit (also, please review the 09-04-25 GWAAR PeerPlace EOY Series - General Errors to Review recording). If you have questions, please let [Carrie Kroetz](#), know.



Deadline Dates to know

- 2026 Budget (yet to be posted) – due TBD
- FFY Variance Report – December 12

Family Caregiver Support

[Bryn Ceman](#), Caregiver Programs Specialist

Need to Know

Reminder: Caregiver Coordinator Statewide Meeting – Agenda Now Available!

Tuesday, November 25 | 10:00 a.m.

We're looking forward to connecting with all of you for our upcoming Caregiver Coordinator Statewide Meeting! ☀️

Location: Virtual Teams Meeting: <https://bit.ly/4oWGDxm>

Join us for training, discussion, and updates that will support your work with family caregivers across Wisconsin. 💬

👉 **View the agenda here:**

<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008804>



Nice to Know

📍 National Family Caregivers Month Partner Toolkit Now Available!

This November, let's celebrate National Family Caregivers Month (NFCM) by spreading awareness, appreciation, and action for the millions of family caregivers who make a difference every day. 🧡💖



The National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) has released its 2025 Partner Toolkit — a comprehensive resource designed to help organizations, advocates, and community partners join the national conversation. 🌍💡

Inside the toolkit, you'll find:

- 🗣️ Key messages and social media posts to raise awareness
- 📄 Downloadable graphics and logos
- 📰 Sample press releases and proclamations
- 💡 Ideas for events, outreach, and storytelling

Access the toolkit here:

👉 https://www.caregiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/NFCM_2025_Partner-Toolkit.pdf

Family Caregiving video series available

💡 I'm excited to share our new short video series spotlighting family caregiving, the cornerstone of our aging services ecosystem.

Each video explores what caregivers need throughout the lifespan, how to recognize those needs, and where to find trusted support across Wisconsin. Visit [WisconsinCaregiver.org](https://wisconsin caregiver.org) to learn more.

I invite you to watch, share, and engage, especially if you're a working caregiver, part of the aging services network, a caregiver advocate, or involved in workforce development.



Two Jobs, One Paycheck: Supporting Wisconsin's Working Caregivers:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K40CJFmjRyk>

Fiscal

[Carrie Kroetz](#), Data Management and Technology Coordinator

Need to Know

Reminders

The Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources (BADR), collaborating with GWAAR, has created for your completion the AFCSP Mid-Year Report. This report serves to gather fiscal expenditure information on the AFCSP Contract for the period of January 1st, 2025 through June 30th, 2025. The purpose of this report is to provide information to BADR and GWAAR for mid-year review to ensure accuracy between what is reported to BADR in GEARS vs what an agency is reporting they are actually spending on services, administration costs and staff training for the period mentioned.

The deadline for submission is Friday, November 21st, 2025.

-continued-

If you have questions, please reach out to:

- Lynn Gall - BADR Program Technical Support - Lynn.Gall@dhs.wisconsin.gov
- Bryn Ceman - GWAAR Program Technical Support - Bryn.Ceman@gwaar.org
- Carrie Kroetz - GWAAR Data/Fiscal Technical Support - Carrie.Kroetz@gwaar.org

This form is also posted on the GWAAR SharePoint site in the Fiscal Resources library for registered users.

<https://bit.ly/3KNZiWz> | Upcoming Trainings | [AFCSP Mid-Year Report.xlsx](#)

****Deadline Dates to know****

AFCSP Mid-Year Report – November 21/2026 Budget (yet to be posted) – due TBD

FFY Variance Report – December 12

Health Promotion

[Angie Sullivan](#), Health Promotion Program Specialist

Need to Know

Quarterly Health Promotion Webinar replay now available!

In case you missed it, the November 4th Quarterly Health Promotion Webinar recording is now available.

If you are interested in offering a new virtual option for Strength Training and Brain Health, the administrators of Vivo (a new OAA Title III-D eligible program in WI) give an overview of the research behind their program along with outcome data.



In addition, St. Croix County ADRC gave an example of an innovative social connection event in their community. Brown County provided examples of how they have "reframed" their marketing materials for health promotion programs. GWAAR and WIHA also shared important updates.

View the replay: <https://youtu.be/IPB-q4Habeo>

Prescriptions, Supplements, and Everything in Between

Understanding the link between medications and preventing falls as we age

Tuesday, December 9 | 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Presenters: Nancy Shea, RPh, BCGP, GCAPn, Mike McKinnis, PhD., MOT, OTR

Join the Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA) for a free, informative webinar to learn how different medications- including prescriptions, over-the-counter medications may impact our risk of falling. The presenters will present about what to watch for, when to ask questions, how to work with healthcare providers to keep us steady on our feet, and how to manage our medications safely.

This is a great opportunity for your Aging Unit or ADRC to host a watch party!

Registration: <https://bit.ly/4pn65Wt>

View the flyer - <https://wihealthyaging.org/age-well-series/>

Prescriptions, Supplements, and Everything in Between

Understanding the link between medications and preventing falls as we age

Falls Free Wisconsin Age Well

Join us for an informative webinar to learn how different medications—including prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, and supplements may impact our risk of falling. We'll talk about what to watch for, when to ask questions, how to work with our doctor or pharmacist to keep us steady on our feet, and how to manage our medications safely.

Tuesday, December 9
1:00-2:00 p.m. CST
FREE WEBINAR

Presenters: Nancy Shea, RPh, BCGP, GCAPn & Dr. Mike McKinnis, PhD., MOT, OTR

Whether we take just a few medications or many, this webinar will give us tips to help protect our health, independence, and falls resiliency!

[Register Here](#)

wiha
Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging
<https://wihealthyaging.org>

Reminder: Health Promotion 101 (OAA Title III-D Refresher)

Monday, December 15 | 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Need a Refresher on Health Promotion (OAA Title III-D)?

Join us for an upcoming webinar that provides an overview of the Older Americans Act Title III-D: Health Promotion and Disease Prevention provisions and priorities.

We'll cover key topics including:

- Locating approved evidence-based health promotion programs
- Data collection and reporting requirements
- Voluntary contributions
- Available resources and support

This session is open to Health Promotion Coordinators, Aging Unit Supervisors, ADRC Directors, and fiscal or data reporting staff.

Register today to strengthen your understanding and ensure your program is aligned with Title III-D goals!

Registration: <https://bit.ly/4nNzQhS>



Nutrition

[Kristi Cooley](#), Nutrition Program Specialist

[Jean Lynch](#), Program Specialist Manager

[Pam VanKampen](#), Nutrition Program & Senior Center Specialist

Nice to Know

Reminder: Free Event to Support Safe Holiday Meals: Turkey Talk With All the Sides To Dish

Monday, November 24 | 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.

As families prepare for the big holiday meal, many have questions from thawing a turkey safely to making sure leftovers are safe to enjoy. This [free one-hour office hours event](#) offers trusted guidance from food safety experts in real time. Anyone can drop in, ask their questions, and get clear answers that help keep celebrations safe and healthy.

Webinar registration: <https://bit.ly/4nPWhtc>

Social media toolkit:

<https://fightbac.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Turkey-Talk-Outreach-Toolkit.pdf>



Food safety webinar replays available

If you missed them the first time, now's a great chance to catch these webinar replays packed with practical tips to help people feel confident and safe in the kitchen this holiday season.

Recorded Webinars | Partnership for Food Safety Education:

<https://fightbac.org/free-resources/recorded-webinars/>



Reminder: Nourishing Connections: Celebrating Food, Family, and Culture

In November we honor Diabetes Awareness Month, Native American Heritage Month, Family Stories, and Caregiver Month. It's a great time to celebrate the powerful connection between food, family, and culture. From managing diabetes to embracing Native traditions and recognizing the vital role of caregivers, each story reminds us that nourishment is more than what's on our plate—it's how we connect, support, and sustain one another.

View November NOURISH Step:

<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008784>

Enjoy your favorite holiday traditions while still feeling your best! See how simple it can be to balance celebration with wellness through small, practical choices. Get ready for the holidays while taking a NOURISH Step!

View December NOURISH Step: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008788>

For additional information and resources, including landscape versions of these resources, visit:

<https://gwaar.org/nourishstep>

Or find the 2025 Monthly Nutrition Ed Handouts on the GWAAR SharePoint site (registered users):

<https://bit.ly/4oFMzN>



Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol

[Ingrid A. Kunderling](#), Senior Medicare Patrol Program Director

Nice to Know

Reminder: November Scam Spotlight: AI and Medicare Scams

The November Scam Spotlight focuses on artificial intelligence (AI) and Medicare scams.

It's important for people to be aware of what AI is and what to watch out for.

AI itself isn't good or bad; it is a tool. The intentions and ethics of those who create and deploy it are what determine whether it helps or harms society.

Read the November Scam Spotlight:

<https://bit.ly/3LODNWb>

Wisconsin SMP
SCAM SPOTLIGHT

Beware: AI & Medicare Scams Are on the Rise!

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is growing rapidly and that means scams are growing with it. Artificial Intelligence (AI) are programs that are able to "learn" and adapt to information it is given. This means it can write messages on its own, holding conversations with people and responding in real time. Scammers are using this to create believable fraud schemes!

Common AI and Medicare Scams

- Voice cloning or deepfake calls impersonating Medicare or doctors**
 - Scammers use AI to generate realistic sounding voices (or even altered video) to pretend they are from Medicare, a doctor's office, or another trusted institution.
Example: They call you saying "we're from Medicare, we need to confirm your Medicare number/social security/bank info" or "you're eligible for a new benefit" and pressure you.
- False claims or billing for services not provided**
 - Fraudsters may use AI to generate realistic looking medical records, documents, or billing forms to bill Medicare for services or medical equipment you never received.
Example: You receive a piece of medical equipment (braces, medical supplies, etc.) you never asked for; then Medicare gets billed.
The risk: Your Medicare number gets used without your knowledge, which can lead to future complications (misbilling, identity issues).
- Identity theft / impersonation of beneficiaries**
 - Scammers may gather personal information (via social media, data breaches, etc.), then use AI to generate fake identities or alter patient records so they can submit claims under someone's Medicare number.
Example: Someone steals your Medicare number and uses it to get health services, medical equipment, or prescriptions. You may not even realize it until you check your statements.
- Telehealth / online "doctor" scams**
 - Scammers set up fake telehealth websites, fake doctor chats, or use chatbots/AI to simulate a medical consultation, then ask for your Medicare details or bill Medicare for the "visit".
These scams can lure you by saying "you're eligible for a free equipment," "new Medicare benefit," or "you must sign up now."
- During Open Enrollment**
 - During times like Open Enrollment, scammers ramp up efforts claiming: "You have to switch your plan now," or "you're eligible for a special benefit," or "we need to verify your Medicare number."
Once you respond, the scam can lead to giving away your Medicare number, plan details, or setting you up with a fake plan.

AI itself isn't good or bad — it's a tool. The intentions and ethics of those who create and deploy it are what determine whether it helps or harms society.

If you experience a possible AI scam with your Medicare information, call the Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol at 1-888-818-2611 to report the possible scam.

SMP
Senior Medicare Patrol
Protecting Medicare Payers

This project was supported, in part, by grant number 90NPPG0102, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201