



## Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) News

### Nice to Know

#### **GWAAR holiday schedule**

We will be closed on Wednesday, December 24 and Thursday, December 25 this week for the Christmas holidays. We will also be closed on Thursday, January 1, for New Year's Day.

Wishing you happy holidays from your friends at GWAAR and hoping you have a safe and enjoyable holiday break!



#### **2026 Regional Learning Exchanges**

Locally based health and wellbeing organizations are invited to upcoming Regional Learning Exchanges hosted by the Wisconsin Owns Wellbeing (WOW) Collaborative. Events take place January-April 2026.

During each Regional Learning Exchange, participants will:

- Celebrate and learn from community collaborations already operating in the region
- Discuss priority issues, challenges, and opportunities in the region, connecting them to broader state and national trends
- Begin to develop strategies to grow or enhance collaboration at all stages of development
- Identify ways that statewide partners can better support and learn from local partners to make meaningful collaborative impact, regionally and statewide
- Build and strengthen relationships across organizations

**Register today for the event that best matches your service area!**

- [Jan. 27, 2026: Market on River, Chippewa Falls](#)  
registration: <https://bit.ly/4qkIN3P>
- [Feb. 17, 2026: Lake of the Torches, Lac du Flambeau](#)  
registration: <https://bit.ly/4sbmRda>
- [Mar. 4, 2026: St. Norbert College, De Pere](#)  
registration: <https://bit.ly/4aMP2cr>
- [Mar. 19, 2026: Baraboo Arts, Baraboo](#)  
registration: <https://bit.ly/4qsIpAx>
- [Apr. 15, 2026: Waukesha Area Technical College, Pewaukee](#)  
registration: <https://bit.ly/3MHUyTH>

**View the flyer:** <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008840>

**Read the press release:** <https://bit.ly/4s9vfK7>



## **Reminder: We're Hiring: Veteran Self-Directed Program (VSDP) Care Consultant**

This role involves travel across North Chicago, Tomah, Madison, Milwaukee, and Minneapolis VAMC catchment areas.

Ideal candidates will have a degree in Social Work or related field (Bachelor's required, Master's preferred) and be based in Central, South-Central, or South-Eastern Wisconsin.

View the full job description:

<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008591>

**View or share on LinkedIn:** <https://bit.ly/48tiHEF>

**View or share on Facebook:** <https://bit.ly/4iPGF1B>



## **Reminder: GWAAR ED updates**

If you're registered as a learner for GWAAR ED there are a few updates you may want to check out.

**New:**

- Guardian Support Center – Welcome

**Revised:**

- Transportation – Welcome and Transportation 101
- Elder Abuse Program – Welcome and Elder Abuse Program 101



If you previously completed GWAAR ED training courses which have been updated, the replacement content is available as a reference without needing to retake the courses.

All of these modules are also included in the Aging Director curriculum in GWAAR ED for learners who registered in 2025 a new aging director and are currently enrolled in the Learning Journey "Aging Training Curriculum."

To register for GWAAR ED, fill out the form found on our website: <https://gwaar.org/gwaar-ed>: <https://gwaar.wufoo.com/forms/z95v3sv0qqhoha/>

After you complete registration, you will receive an email with a link to create your password. If you do not see this email within two business days please check your junk folder, or contact us.

Questions about enrolling in GWAAR ED, course progress, or course feedback can be directed to Lucia Mennen at [gwaar.ed@gwaar.org](mailto:gwaar.ed@gwaar.org).

## **Reframing Aging and Disability in Wisconsin**

Learn the research, apply the strategies, and join the movement!

Through the leadership of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network, we are taking steps to advance effective communication strategies about aging and disability.

We are committed to ending ageism and ableism in Wisconsin. Our mission is to advance a fair and complete story about aging and disability: one that values every person, at every stage of life, and every ability. Through reframing our communication and expanding our mindsets, we will improve the quality of life for all of us.

To stay informed as the work and opportunities evolve, we invite you to join the Champion's List, which is a monthly email of training opportunities, thought provoking articles, and examples of reframing.

**Join the Champion's List:** <https://wiha.wufoo.com/forms/w152jg3f0s6pwd6/>

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## National Center to Reframe Aging Training

These free, 1-hour webinars will introduce the key concepts of reframing and provide proven communications strategies that will reduce the negative health and policy impacts of ageism and ableism.



Registration is required.

**These are the only two trainings scheduled in 2026.**

*Thursday, January 15, 2026 | 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.*

[Reframing Aging and Disability in Wisconsin for Health Care Professionals](#)

**Registration:** [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_FzVArKUXSISUw0LZUn0HHw](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_FzVArKUXSISUw0LZUn0HHw)

This is tailored for health care professionals, but all are welcome.

*Wednesday, February 11, 2026 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.*

[Reframing Aging and Disability in Wisconsin](#)

**Registration:** [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_TFO4fZzFSIO81sEKhjRaeQ](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_TFO4fZzFSIO81sEKhjRaeQ)

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## Advocacy

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

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### Nice to Know

#### **Speaker's Task Force on Elder Services Update – Action Alert Corrected**

The Speaker's Task Force on Elder Services is planning to gather one additional time in early Jan. 2026 (the date has not yet been determined) to discuss proposal ideas, they have not formally decided if they will be gathering any additional presentations/testimony at the hearing.

As a reminder, the task force is looking 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 contact the Task Force members using this Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) Action Alert** - <https://bit.ly/48T5s1c>. Note: The original action alert was not allowing non-constituents of the task force members to contact task force members, this has been corrected. All messages using the action alert link will be sent to the following eight Assembly Representatives serving on the task force):

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

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The Action Alert is designed to let you **personalize your email message to task force members**. Highlight for task force members how services and supports like transportation, home-delivered meals, fall prevention programs, Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), family caregiver support, and financial exploitation prevention and early intervention help older Wisconsinites remain safely in their homes.

See WAAN's advocacy alerts (<https://gwaar.org/waan-advocacy-alerts>) and 2025 issue briefs (<https://gwaar.org/waan-issues-and-initiatives>) for more information and talking points.

## **Federal Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Update**

The continuing resolution (CR) passed last month included three appropriations bills that funded several key federal operations through the remainder of the federal fiscal year, ending September 30, 2026. This included full funding for SNAP (FoodShare in Wisconsin). The U.S. Senate is now working on a package of five additional appropriations bills—Defense; **Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education** (which includes funding for the Older Americans Act [OAA] and other aging services); Commerce, Justice, and Science; Interior; and Transportation—HUD—to fund most of the federal government for Fiscal Year 2026 (which ends on September 30, 2025).

Passage of this “minibus”—a legislative package that combines several of the 12 annual appropriations (spending) bills into a single bill—could help avoid another partial federal government shutdown when the current CR expires at the end of January. However, there is still no agreement on four remaining spending bills.

Senators left for the holidays without completing the amendment process for the minibus, meaning negotiations and votes are expected to resume in early January. Final approval by the House and President Trump will still be required to secure full-year funding for these five appropriations bills beyond the short-term CR.

**It is critical for the final appropriations bill to include funding increase recommendations for OAA programs and that nothing is cut.**

### **Take Action:**

**Please urge your members of Congress to retain the appropriations levels set out in the Labor/HHS bill, which increases funding for Title III B Supportive Services, and to support the Senate's recommendations for funding for Title V of the OAA, the Senior Community Service Employment Program.** If you are prohibited from asking for increased funding, share with Senators Baldwin and Johnson and your U.S. Representative how OAA services are helping people in your community to remain living at home and how community members are impacted when those services cannot be delivered due to lack of funding and waitlists for services.

**Find contact information** for your U.S. Senators here - [U.S. Senate: States in the Senate | Wisconsin](https://www.congress.org/senators/wisconsin) and for your U.S. House Representative here - <https://www.house.gov/representatives#state-wisconsin>. Contact information can also be found on the GWAAR website here: [Wisconsin Members of the 119th Congress](https://gwaar.org/wisconsin-members-of-the-119th-congress).

## **Weekly Federal Funding Fallout2025 Updates and Q&A webinar**

*Friday, January 9 / 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.*

**English Registration:** <https://bit.ly/FedFunds1926>

**Spanish Registration:** <https://bit.ly/FedFundsSpa1926>



## Family Caregiver Support

Bryn Ceman, Caregiver Programs Specialist

### Nice to Know

#### Research study: Custodial grandparents raising teenage grandchildren

The University of Cincinnati is recruiting participants for a research study focused on the experiences of custodial grandparents raising teenage grandchildren. Led by Dr. Tina Dothard Peterson, this study aims to better understand the challenges, strengths, and support needs of grandfamilies.

**What's involved:** Participants will take part in interviews and brief surveys, with a possible follow-up interview.

Flexible participation options:

- In person, by telephone, or virtually - based on participant preference.
- ⏳ Time commitment: Up to 2 hours
- 💳 Compensation: \$40 gift card in appreciation of your time

📞 If you know of an interested caregiver, please ask them to use this contact for more information:

Dr. Tina Dothard Peterson, University of Cincinnati,  
513-556-3517, [Dothartl@ucmail.uc.edu](mailto:Dothartl@ucmail.uc.edu)

<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewfile/id/2008841>

IRB #: 2024-0735 | *The University of Cincinnati is an Equal Opportunity Institution*



### Are you a grandparent raising a teenage grandchild?

You might be eligible for a research study if you are:

- Primary caregiver for a grandchild
- Primary caregiver is 40 or older
- Grandchild is 12 years of age or older
- Grandchild resides in the home with you at least 3 days per week
- Living anywhere within the United States
- Willing to talk by telephone, virtual, or in person

- Activities: Interview, short survey, follow up phone review
- Total time involved: Up to 2 hours
- Compensation: \$40 gift card

#### For more information contact:

Principal Investigator: Tina L. Dothard Peterson, PhD, MPH, CSW, FCSA  
Associate Professor  
University of Cincinnati School of Social Work  
Phone: 513-556-3517; Email: [dothartl@ucmail.uc.edu](mailto:dothartl@ucmail.uc.edu)  
Facebook: [DrTinaLPeterson](https://www.facebook.com/DrTinaLPeterson) IRB#: 2024-0735  
"University of Cincinnati is an Equal Opportunity Institution"

#### Reminder: New Senate Hearing: Aging in Place & The Power of Community

The U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging recently held a hearing, "Aging in Place: The Impact of Community During the Holidays" (Dec. 3, 2025), highlighting how community supports, family caregivers, and local services help older adults remain safely at home, especially during a season when isolation and caregiver stress can increase.

📺 **Watch the recording and read testimonies:** <https://bit.ly/49dnHi2>



# Fiscal Resources and Data Management

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

## Need to Know

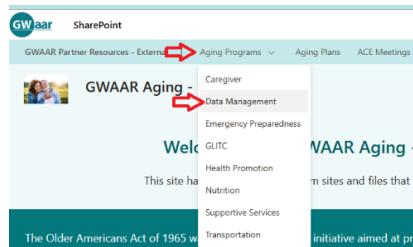
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### \*\*Reminders\*\*

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](#)

<https://gwaar.sharepoint.com/sites/PartnerResources> | [Fiscal Resources](#)



### \*\*End of Federal Year Reporting\*\*

As we are wrapping up the End of Year Reporting for the NAPIS report, GWAAR asks that data users do not enter new, modify existing or delete existing data in PeerPlace prior to October 1, 2025 – unless instructed otherwise by GWAAR Data staff. This information has been vetted and is almost ready for submission.

If you have questions, please reach out to [Carrie Kroetz](#).

### \*\*FFY Variance Report\*\*

We held the Variance Report Refresher webinar on Friday, December 12, 2025, and the recording is posted in the Fiscal library. If you have not yet submitted the Variance Report please do so by end of day Tuesday, December 23. Thank you all for your hard work on this.

After the new year, GWAAR Fiscal and Data will be hosting a webinar to provide information regarding the GWAAR NAPIS process and to ask Aging Units for feedback regarding what more we could do during the year to help facilitate this annual project.

### \*\*Remaining Transfers\*\*

During a recent discussion with BADR (Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources), we have been told that they will be releasing the remaining transfer allocations to GWAAR. This process can take a couple of weeks to work through the State's contract process. Once received and signed by GWAAR, amended contracts will be sent out and the updated allocations will be included in the Final Claim form. GWAAR Fiscal Staff will follow up with Aging Units regarding End-of-Calendar-Year reporting.

### \*\*2026 Draft Budget\*\*

Due to upcoming changes taking effect in 2026 we have yet to post the 2026 Draft Budget. Once we have solidified the changes, we will update the form and inform Aging Directors and Fiscal staff of the posting. GWAAR Fiscal will also hold a webinar to inform Aging Unit staff of these changes and a review of instructions to complete the budget, waiver, and transfer requests. In the meantime, we have received the estimated allocations and have posted them in the Fiscal Resources library under Budget.

## Health Promotion

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Angie Sullivan, Health Promotion Program Specialist

### Nice to Know

#### Free webinar: Inside Hoarding: What It Is, What It Isn't, and How to Help

Wednesday, February 11, 2026 / 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

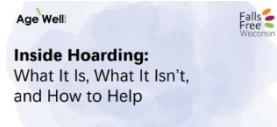
Presenter: Carla Alejo, Catholic Charities

Hoarding is often misunderstood and judged. In reality, it is a complex issue. This webinar will explain common myths about hoarding and help clarify the differences between hoarding behaviors related to autism and those connected to other mental health conditions.

Carla will also share kind and practical ways to improve safety, respect personal choice, and support a better quality of life for people experiencing hoarding challenges.

**Registration:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/FLb00FLrQvetb-B0jjADTw>

**Where to find it on the WIHA website:** <https://wihealthyaging.org/2025/12/08/webinar-february-11-2026/>



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Carla will also share kind and practical ways to improve safety, respect personal choice, and support a better quality of life for people experiencing hoarding challenges.

[Register Here](#)

February 11, 2026  
1-2pm CST  
FREE WEBINAR



wiha  
Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging

## Nutrition

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Kristi Cooley, Nutrition Program Specialist

Jean Lynch, Program Specialist Manager

Pam VanKampen, Nutrition Program & Senior Center Specialist

### Nice to Know

#### Reminder: Save the Date! GWAAR Nutrition Team Service Area Virtual Call

Thursday, February 5 / 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Please mark your calendar for the GWAAR Nutrition Team Service Area Virtual Call.

A detailed agenda will be shared closer to the meeting, but we encourage you to plan to attend for important updates and discussion. The meeting will also be recorded for those unable to join live.

**The GWAAR Nutrition Team, Jean, Kristi, and Pam**

**Microsoft Teams live meeting link:** <https://bit.ly/3L5nuEv>

Meeting ID: 253 444 690 524 1 | Passcode: 55eV6SX6

Dial in by phone [+1 608-338-1382,,726289041#](tel:+16083381382,726289041#)

