



Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) News

Nice to Know

Reminder: We're hiring:

All current open positions can be viewed at <https://gwaar.org/jobs> including:

- Advocacy and Public Policy Director
View the full job description: <https://bit.ly/4ueJkr0>
View or share on LinkedIn: <https://bit.ly/4rQySUK>
- Part-time Human Resources and Benefits Liaison
View the full job description: <https://bit.ly/46mcKck>
View or share on LinkedIn: <https://bit.ly/3P4zrff>
- Veteran Self-Directed Program (VSDP) Care Consultant
View the full job description: <https://bit.ly/4shIRCx>
View or share on LinkedIn: <https://bit.ly/48tiHEF>



Reminder: Older Americans Month 2026 Theme: Champion Your Health

Every May, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) leads the nation's observance of Older Americans Month, a time to recognize older adults' contributions and reaffirm our commitment to supporting their health and independence.

The 2026 theme, Champion Your Health, underscores prevention, wellness, and personal responsibility as cornerstones of healthy aging. It encourages taking an active role in managing and advocating for your health, accessing preventive care, and making informed decisions.

This year, the focus is on evidence-based approaches, self-management, caregiver roles, and community partnerships that empower individuals to lead healthy lives.

The 2026 logos, sample article, and activity ideas are available now. Stay tuned for this year's poster, social media graphics, and more. Use the hashtag #OlderAmericansMonth on social media to share your plans and see what others are doing!

Information and updates: <https://acl.gov/oam/older-americans-month>



Abuse in Later Life Grant

Nice to Know

Reminder: Walking Each Other Home: Pursuing Respect, Justice, and Wellbeing for Older Victims Cross-Training for Faith Leaders and Advocates

Tuesday, April 14 | 8:30 a.m. -5:00 p.m.

Walworth County Health & Human Services Building

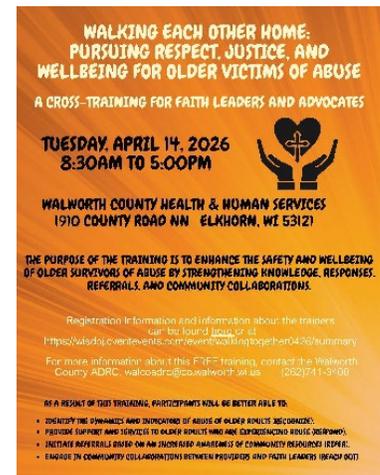
1910 County Road NN | Elkhorn, WI 53121

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

View the flyer: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewfile/id/2008928>

As a result of this training, participants will be better able to:

- Identify the dynamics and indicators of abuse of older adults (Recognize),
- Provide compassionate support and services to individual older adults who are experiencing abuse (Respond),
- Initiate referrals based on an increased awareness of community resources (Refer), and
- Engage in community collaborations between service providers and faith leaders to better respond to the unique needs of older, faith-involved survivors of abuse (Reach Out).



Advocacy

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

Nice to Know

Elder Services Task Force Legislation Update

Last week, the following aging network priority legislation passed out of Senate Committees.

- **Crypto Kiosks - Virtual currency kiosks - SB-975/AB-968** (James, Jesse) - [Senate Committee on Utilities, Technology & Tourism](#) - passage unanimously recommended.

SB-975: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/session/2025/REG/SB975>

AB-968: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab968>

[Senate Committee on Utilities, Technology & Tourism:](#)

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/committees/senate/3016>

- **Grants for Fall Prevention Awareness** - Grants to pilot community emergency medical services, grants for fall prevention awareness and initiatives, and making appropriation - [SB-976/AB-970](#) (James, Jesse). *Funding for this legislation has been separated from the initial bill and is now in SB 996* - [Senate Committee on Transportation & Local Government](#). **Passage** recommended (4-1).

SB-976: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/session/2025/REG/SB976>

AB-970: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab970>

SB 996: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/sb996>

[Senate Committee on Transportation & Local Government](#). **Passage:**

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/committees/senate/2996>

-continued-

- **Economic Support Specialists** - Grants to pilot economic support specialists in ADRCs and making an appropriation - [SB-977/AB-973](#) (James, Jesse) *Funding for this legislation has been separated from the initial bill and is now in SB 997 - Senate Committee on Transportation & Local Government.* Passage recommended (4-1).

[SB-977: https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/session/2025/REG/SB977](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/session/2025/REG/SB977)
[AB-973 https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab973](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab973)
[SB 997: https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/sb997](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/sb997)

The Senate’s last session day is expected to be Tues., March 17. If this legislation is placed on the agenda and is passed, the bills will move on to Governor Evers by April 2. Make sure your State Senator knows your support for these bills.

To find out who your state Senator is enter your home address in the “Who Are My Legislators?” box found on this page - <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/>.

Save the Date Reminder: WAAN 2026 Aging Advocacy Day of Action

Wednesday, May 6 | 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Mark your calendars, on **Wed., May 6, 2026, from 1-2 p.m.**, the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (**WAAN**) will host a “**Day of Action**” including a virtual training followed by an online campaign. We will use this day to celebrate Older Americans Month and lift priority aging network issues for the next budget and legislative session. Our day of action will be complemented by local, in-district meetings held by WAAN core members throughout the state. Local meeting hosts are encouraged to schedule in-district meetings between late March and the end of October 2026.



Sponsorship information for these events is now available at: <https://gwaar.org/waan-day-of-action-2026>. Additional information regarding the Day of Action will be posted soon.

Federal Funding Fallout2025: Updates and Q&A

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.

3/20 English Registration: <https://bit.ly/FedFundsEng320>

3/20 Spanish Registration: <https://bit.ly/FedFundSpa320>

View updates and resources: <https://wi-bpdd.org/index.php/federal-funding-updates/>



Family Caregiver Support

[Bryn Ceman](#), Caregiver Programs Specialist

Need to Know

March Caregiver Coordinator Statewide Meeting Materials Now Available

Thank you to everyone who attended the March 11 Wisconsin Caregiver Coordinator Statewide Meeting. The recording, presentation slides, meeting notes, and Q&A are now available on both the GWAAR website and the GWAAR SharePoint site for your reference.

<https://gwaar.org/wisconsin-caregiver-support-community-monthly-calls>

Materials posted include:

-  Caregiver Grant Programs Overview, Best Practices & FAQs
-  Respite Care Association of Wisconsin (RCAW) Caregiver Grants Overview
-  Meeting Notes & Q&A from the March Statewide Meeting

Wisconsin's
FamilyCaregiver
Support Programs

 Upcoming Meeting Reminder - Our next Caregiver Coordinator Statewide Meeting will be held:

 Wednesday, May 13, 2026 |  10:00 – 11:30 a.m. CT (extended by 30 minutes)

This meeting will include a focus on Relative Caregivers (Kinship, Grandfamilies, Older Relative Caregivers, and RAPP). We will also hear from the Respite Care Association of Wisconsin and hold additional time for discussion about current best practices, enrollment forms, and more.

We encourage all caregiver coordinators and partners to review the materials and join us for the May discussion.

Nice to Know

Webinar Opportunity: Innovative Practices to Support Family Caregivers

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

Join ACL's National Caregiver Support Collaborative (NCSC) for an engaging webinar highlighting innovative approaches to supporting family caregivers across the Aging Network.



**National Caregiver
Support Collaborative**

This session will feature a conversation with the Pima Council on Aging (Arizona's Area Agency on Aging), showcasing creative strategies that help organizations strengthen caregiver supports, even when resources are limited.

Participants will learn practical, actionable ideas that aging, kinship, and tribal network organizations can use to enhance caregiver support initiatives in their communities.

 Date: March 24, 2026 |  Time: 1:00 PM (Central Time) |  Location: Virtual Webinar

 Register here: <https://bit.ly/3P630gH>

 Don't miss this opportunity to learn from innovative programs and strengthen support for the caregivers we serve!

📌 Caregiver Education Opportunity to Share with Families

Thursday, March 26 | 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Registration required by March 24

Professionals who support caregivers may wish to share this upcoming session with the families they serve.

⚖️ Ombudsman 101: What Every Caregiver Should Know will help caregivers understand the role of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and how it supports residents and families in long-term care settings.

👤 Presented by Lisa Tranel, Regional Ombudsman, Wisconsin Board on Aging & Long-Term Care.

📅 Thursday, March 26 | 🕒 1:30 – 3:00 PM | 📍 Hybrid option: In-person (Monroe, WI) or virtual

This session is especially helpful for caregivers supporting someone living in, or considering, long-term care or memory care.

📞 Contact Bonnie Beam-Stratz

608-426-4295 | bbeam@gchsd.org

💡 Local option: Karen Tennyson will also be attending. If you are interested in watching together at the ADRC office, don't hesitate to contact her directly.

Please consider sharing this opportunity with caregivers in your networks.

Learn more/view flyer: <https://bit.ly/3Pl6mq8>

ADRC
Aging and Disability Resource Center
Green County, Wisconsin

Caregiver Education Series

Ombudsman 101: What Every Caregiver Should Know

Building Knowledge, Strength, and Compassion in Caregiving.

Join us for the first session in our 2026 Caregiver Education Series!

Our guest speaker, Lisa Tranel, Regional Ombudsman with the Wisconsin Board on Aging and Long-Term Care, will share valuable information and resources for caregivers.

Federal law requires each state to have a Long Term Care Ombudsman Program to resolve concerns and advocate for the rights of individuals living in residential facilities and their families, with the goal of enhancing quality of life and care. The Ombudsman is a key resource when residents or families are told a discharge may occur and feel they have no options.

**Thursday, March 26th
1:30pm - 3:00pm**

Green County Human Services Building
(Lower Level) Multipurpose Rooms 2 & 3
N3152 State Road 81, Monroe, WI 53566

**Hybrid Offering: In-Person or Virtual
Registration is required by March 24th.**

**To register or ask questions,
please contact Bonnie at:**
**608-426-4295 or
bbeam@gchsd.org**

Upcoming Events & Resources for Relative Caregivers

Across Wisconsin, many older adults step into caregiving roles for grandchildren and other relatives. Below are a few upcoming resources and events you may wish to share with kinship and relative caregivers in your communities.

🌈 Webinar: Two Spirit – Past and Present

📅 March 19, 2026 | 🕒 12:00–1:30 p.m. | FREE

Learn about the history and meaning of Two Spirit identities in Indigenous communities.

Register: <https://bit.ly/4sjDgMq>

💛 Hybrid Course: You Are Not Alone – Hope & Healing for Relative Caregivers

📅 April 9, 2026 | 🕒 12:00–1:30 p.m. | FREE

A supportive session focused on connection, resilience, and healing for kinship caregivers.

Register: <https://bit.ly/3PhppYk>



Call for Abstracts: 4th Biennial Conference on Caregiving Research

The University of Utah Family Caregiving Collaborative is accepting abstract and symposia submissions for the 4th Biennial Conference on Caregiving Research: Reaching New Heights—Elevating Caregiving Research, Policy, and Practice.



COLLEGE OF NURSING

-  Submission Window: March 1–31, 2026
-  Formats: Poster, Podium, and Symposia
-  Decision Notification: May 2026

Topics may include caregiving research, workforce/education, practice, and policy across the lifespan.

 Learn more or submit: <https://nursing.utah.edu/caregivingconference>

Late-breaking poster abstracts will also be accepted June 1–15, 2026.

Fiscal Resources and Data Management

Carrie Kroetz, Data Management and Technology Coordinator

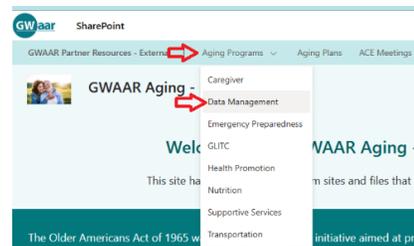
Need to Know

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](#)

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



GWAAR Year End Re-Obligation Requests

All Year End Re-obligation of funds will be finalized by Friday, March 20th – please expect an email to confirm your request by then to accept the additional funds.

2026 Budget

The 2026 budget is posted in the Fiscal Resources library. The 2026 Budget, along with the online transfer and waiver requests, is due March 31st, 2026.

2026 Webinars and In-Person Trainings

Regional Trainings (in-person)

GWAAR will be hosting four (4) Fiscal and PeerPlace Aging regional training sessions. Each session will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Non-refundable cost to attend is \$25 per person, with morning snack, lunch and beverages included. Please complete the following registration indicating which session you will be attending. Attendance is limited to 40 participants per location. Each participant must register separately. Registrations are due 14 days prior to the session. *Virtual attendance and recording will not be available.* (This training will not cover EBS, DCS or ADRC specific information.) **A confirmation email will be sent to you within 10 business days, along with an invoice for payment.** Payment will be required for no-shows or cancellations within 14 days of the training date.

Data Training Dates and Locations:

Adventure Awaits – Navigating the Sea of Data - [Registration](https://forms.office.com/r/14GH1zPXHM): <https://forms.office.com/r/14GH1zPXHM>

If you would like to assist with topics for our data training, please complete this [form](https://forms.office.com/r/4Tnlx5qvw):

<https://forms.office.com/r/4Tnlx5qvw>

| Meeting Date | Location | Address |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Wednesday, April 22, 2026 | Holiday Inn - Hayward | 15586 Co Rd B, Hayward, WI 54843 |
| Tuesday, May 12, 2026 | Tomah - Cranberry Country Lodge | 319 Wittig Rd, Tomah, WI 54660 |
| Tuesday, May 19, 2026 | Antigo - NorthStar Lanes | 400 Prosser Place, Antigo, WI 54409 |
| Wednesday, May 27, 2026 | Beaver Dam - Moraine Park Technical College | 700 Gould Street, Beaver Dam, WI 53916 |

Fiscal Training Dates, Locations and Registrations:

Secrets Revealed – Unlocking the Fiscal Mystery - [Registration](https://forms.office.com/r/24xZ0hNB7S): <https://forms.office.com/r/24xZ0hNB7S>

If you would like to assist with topics for our fiscal training, please complete this [form](https://forms.office.com/r/B7VedNMCSs):

<https://forms.office.com/r/B7VedNMCSs>

| Meeting Date | Location | Address |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Thursday, April 23, 2026 | Holiday Inn - Hayward | 15586 Co Rd B, Hayward, WI 54843 |
| Wednesday, May 13, 2026 | Tomah - Cranberry Country Lodge | 319 Wittig Rd, Tomah, WI 54660 |
| Wednesday, May 20, 2026 | Antigo - NorthStar Lanes | 400 Prosser Place, Antigo, WI 54409 |
| Thursday, May 28, 2026 | Beaver Dam - Moraine Park Technical College | 700 Gould Street, Beaver Dam, WI 53916 |

Tribal Fiscal and Data Focus Topics Training – SAVE the DATE! Thursday, May 21, 2026 – please contact GLITC for more information.

Health Promotion

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

Nice to Know

Falls Prevention Summit Advancing Resilience: A Virtual Falls Prevention Summit Register Today!

Tuesday, April 21 (Day 1) &

Thursday, April 23 (Day 2)

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Register and See the Agenda here -

<https://fallsfreewi.org/summit/>

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

AGENDA

**Advancing Resilience:
A Virtual Falls Prevention Summit**

Falls Free Wisconsin

TUESDAY DAY 1: TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2026

| | |
|----------|---|
| 9:00 AM | WELCOME |
| 9:10 AM | KEYNOTE: FALLS RESILIENCY Erin Eleu, ACSM-CPT, AGENTS of Movement |
| 10:05 AM | PANEL: BINGOCIZE IN WISCONSIN Cassie Sanders & Nichole Gaudette, Richard County Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Schuyler Metoxen & Patricia Harms, Oneida Aging & Disability Services Lori J. Fure, ADRC of the Lakeshore Angie Sullivan, CHES, Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) |
| 10:40 AM | BREAK |
| 10:50 AM | PRESENTATION: NUTRITION & FALLS Pam VanKampen, RDN, CD & Kristi Cooley, RDN, CD, GWAAR |
| 11:30 AM | BREAK |
| 11:40 AM | PRESENTATION: 4Ms FRAMEWORK OF AN AGE-FRIENDLY HEALTH SYSTEM Jasmine Townsley, DO UW-Health - Geriatric Medicine Fellowship |
| 12:15 PM | WRAP UP: STATE AND LOCAL RESOURCES Suzanne Morley, CHES, Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging |

Intended audience: Falls/injury prevention professionals, aging network, healthcare/EMS, students in aging-related fields, etc.

[FallsFreeWI.org/summit](https://fallsfreewi.org/summit)

Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol

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

Nice to Know

Reminder: Spring issue of The Scoop available

The Spring issue of the SMP newsletter, The Scoop is now available. This issue of the SMP Scoop features recognition of the Senior Nutrition program and Older Americans Month, a welcome to our new Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council team members, national prescription drug take back day information, understanding vaccines covered by Medicare, Justice Served: \$172 million fraud and money laundering scheme, a celebration of volunteers for National Volunteer Appreciation week, and so much more!

Read the Spring issue of The Scoop: <https://bit.ly/409VONT>

The SMP SCOOP
PROTECT DETECT REPORT SPRING 2026

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Scoop is prepared by the GWAAR SMP Team to help Medicare beneficiaries and their advocates prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, abuse, and errors.

Please feel free to share this publication with others who may benefit from its contents.

TO CONTACT WI SMP
Call: (888) 818-2611
E-mail: smp-wi@gwaar.org
Website: www.smpwi.org
Facebook: [@WisconsinSeniorMedicarePatrol](https://www.facebook.com/WisconsinSeniorMedicarePatrol)
To subscribe, please send us an e-mail.

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

May Is Older Americans Month

Written by Susan Krolow, SMP Volunteer Coordinator

Each May, we recognize **Older Americans Month**, a time to celebrate the contributions, strength, and resilience of older adults in our communities. Established in 1963, this observance reminds us of the vital role older adults play in shaping families, neighborhoods, and organizations.

Older adults bring a lifetime of experience, wisdom, and perspective. They serve as volunteers, mentors, caregivers, and advocates – sharing their time and talents in ways that strengthen our communities and enrich the lives of others.

Older Americans Month is also a reminder of the importance of connection and engagement at every stage of life. Staying involved and connected supports well-being and helps build strong, vibrant communities for all generations.

This May, we invite you to take a moment to celebrate the older adults in your life – thank a volunteer, listen to a story, or simply reach out. Aging is not about slowing down; it's about continuing to make a difference.

The Wisconsin SMP program is supported, in part, by grant number 90MPPG0102-01-02, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Covered individuals, groups, other government contractors are encouraged to report, keep their findings and conclusions, names of witnesses or sponsors do not, therefore, necessarily represent Office Administration for Community Living policy.

Reminder: March Scam Spotlight

The March Scam Spotlight focuses on Nursing Home Fraud. Unfortunately, nursing home fraud does happen, and it can affect both the quality-of-care residents receive and the security of their Medicare benefits.

Read the March Scam Spotlight: <https://bit.ly/4sgllIE>

Wisconsin SMP

March 2026

SCAM SPOTLIGHT

Nursing Home Fraud

Choosing a nursing home or skilled nursing facility is often based on trust—trust that residents will receive appropriate care and that Medicare will be billed correctly. Unfortunately, nursing home fraud does happen, and it can affect both the quality of care residents receive and the security of their Medicare benefits. Medicare doesn't generally pay for long-term nursing home care. However, Medicare Part A covers medically necessary, short-term care in a skilled nursing facility (SNF) within a nursing home under certain conditions. If you have questions if a nursing home stay is covered contact Medicare, 800-MEDICARE or go to Medicare.gov.

Common Types of Nursing Home Fraud

Medicare beneficiaries should be aware of these common schemes:

- **Billing for services not provided** Medicare is charged for therapy sessions, medical visits, or treatments that never occurred.
- **Upcoding** The facility bills Medicare for more expensive services or higher levels of care than the resident actually received.
- **Unnecessary therapy** Residents may be given excessive physical, occupational, or speech therapy solely to increase Medicare payments.
- **Double billing** Medicare is billed even though another insurer (such as Medicaid or private insurance) already paid.

Nursing home fraud doesn't just waste Medicare dollars—it can directly harm residents. Fraudulent practices may lead to unnecessary treatments, delayed recovery, emotional distress, or neglect. It can also result in beneficiaries being wrongly billed or denied needed services later. If you see or experience fraud, report it.

Report any suspected fraud or suspicious activity to the Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol. Call 888-818-2611 to report fraudulent activity.

For more information, visit www.smpwi.org.

This project was supported, in part, by grant number 90MPPG0102, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201