GWaar

Volume 8, No. 42 October 20, 2026
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Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) News

Nice to Know

In the news: Medicare open enrollment and scams



Ingrid Kundinger, fraud and abuse programs manager for the Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol, was recently interviewed by WBAY for a segment covering Medicare Open Enrollment scams.

She reminded viewers to review their coverage for the coming year and to be aware of ongoing scams claiming to have new Medicare cards.

> "Kundinger said her office receives daily calls from Wisconsin residents reporting claims about a new Medicare card.
>
> "Every day still in the state of Wisconsin, people are contacting us via our toll-free helpline to say, 'They just called me and said, my new card is going to be orange, green and yellow instead of red, white and blue,'" Kundinger said. "And that's not, there's not a new Medicare card."

Watch the WBAY segment: https://bit.ly/4yYXvlH

Advocacy

Emily Petersen, Advocacy and Public Policy Director

Need to Know

Develop Your Advocacy Skills!

The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) is hosting three Aging Advocacy 101 trainings this fall. Are you an older adult or family caregiver who wants to learn how to advocate? This is the perfect opportunity for you! These 90-minute, virtual trainings will teach the basics of advocacy, how to share your story, and explore ways to engage with legislators and policymakers. During the training, you will learn skills, practice them with others, and ask questions.

Training dates are:

- Monday, November 16 from 9:00-10:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, December 2 from 5:00-6:30 p.m.
- Saturday, December 5 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. ***CAREGIVER FOCUSED***

You only need to register for one of the training dates. Learn more and find the registration form at: gwaar.org/aging-advocacy-101

Save the date: 2027 Aging Advocacy Day

Tuesday, May 11, 2027
Join WAAN to celebrate the 10th Annual Aging Advocacy Day on Tuesday, May 11, 2027! Statewide advocates will gather in Madison on May 11 to learn key advocacy tools, network with others in their district, and meet with their legislators/legislative staff on aging policy priorities. We will meet at the Best Western Premier Park Hotel in the morning for meeting preparations and lunch before walking over to the State Capitol in the afternoon for our meetings. More details, including registration, coming later this year! Head to gwaar.org/aging-advocacy-day-2027 to learn more.

Get Ready to Vote!

The November General Election is only two weeks away! Are you prepared to vote? Make sure you are registered, know where your polling place is (or request an absentee ballot), and review what's on your ballot at https://myvote.wi.gov. If you've returned your absentee ballot, you can track its progress there, too.
Some important dates to remember:

- October 29—deadline to request an absentee ballot.
- October 30—deadline to register in person at your municipal clerk's office.
- November 3—Election Day! You can register to vote in person at your polling place. Your absentee ballot must be received by 8:00 p.m. on this day.

Do you need a ride to your polling place? The Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition compiled a list of transportation provides around the state who may provide transportation for voting for people with disabilities and older adults: https://disabilityvote.org/2025/rides-to-the-polls/

For more voting resources, visit https://disabilityvote.org/

Nice to Know

Reminder: Last Chance to Join WAAN's Fall Webinar Series!



Join the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) for our last webinar focused on Specialized Transportation! More information, including recordings of our past webinars on home-delivered meals, falls prevention programs, and Aging & Disability Resource Centers available here: https://gwaar.org/get-ready-to-advocate

Specialized Transportation
Tuesday, October 27 | 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
Registration: https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/X9Bp-B5EQmGmknrTdZ6BaA

Federal Medicaid Work Requirements Webinar

Thursday, October 22 | 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.
The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) is hosting a webinar for community partners focusing on the federal Medicaid work requirements. This webinar will focus on exemptions based on medical conditions, the caregiver exemption, and other exemptions to the rule.
If you have questions that you'd like DHS staff to answer during the webinar, you can send them in advance to DHSForwardHealthPartners@dhs.wisconsin.gov.

Registration: https://bit.ly/4B2BELJ

Your Medicaid Experience Needed!

Four Medicaid-related boards, committees, and councils are looking for new members. These groups meet regularly to talk about Medicaid policies and services and include people from across the state who can share how Medicaid programs and services are working, what gaps exist, and how they can be fixed. Your advocacy to improve the Medicaid system is needed and valued.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) is seeking applicants focused on Medicaid generally, people focused on the IRIS program, and people focused on the long-term care program. Applications are due November 6. **Learn more and apply at Medicaid: Boards, Committees, and Councils | Wisconsin Department of Health Services: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid/bcc.htm**

Reminder: In-District Events



Legislators are in their districts and eager to hear from constituents about the issues that matter. Now is a great time to schedule an In-District Aging Advocacy event in your region with your state Representatives and Senators. Local hosts are encouraged to schedule these events between now and the end of October 2026. When you schedule your meeting, please reach out to let us know!

Did you know that WAAN can provide reimbursement of up to $300 to support In-District Events? Funds can be used for facility rentals, refreshments, speaker fees, printing costs, and more. To learn more and/or submit a request for reimbursement, review our form here: https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008991

Did you have an in-district event recently? Please share your pictures! We would love to use these in future WAAN presentations and Aging Advocacy Day materials.

Emergency Preparedness

Evan Ewing, Health Promotion Program Specialist

Nice to Know

GWAAR Emergency Preparedness Survey



Our internal GWAAR Emergency Preparedness Workgroup developed an anonymous 10-question survey to get feedback from Aging Units on what types of technical assistance and training you would like on the topic of emergency preparedness.

Your responses will be used to create new materials to assist in preparing your aging unit for emergencies.

Follow the link below to take the survey! Your responses are greatly appreciated.

Survey Link: https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/PvC7B0H6Hh

Family Caregiver Support

Bryn Ceman, Caregiver Programs Specialist

Need to Know

November is National Family Caregivers Month: Outreach Resources Available



November is a wonderful opportunity to recognize family caregivers and remind them about the support available in their communities. For the past several years, the Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance (WFACSA) has developed National Family Caregivers Month marketing toolkits.

This year, the Alliance will not be creating a new toolkit, particularly since several national organizations already offer excellent, ready-to-use materials. Instead, counties and Tribes are encouraged to use and customize the resources that best fit their communities.

Available resources include:

- **GWAAR Family Caregiver Marketing Toolkit**: https://gwaar.org/family-caregiver-marketing-toolkit
  Includes previous WFACSA National Family Caregivers Month toolkits, newsletter articles, sample proclamations, flyers, brochures, and other materials to reuse or adapt.
- **Caregiver Action Network**: https://www.caregiveraction.org/nfc-month/
  Offers National Family Caregivers Month campaign resources and messaging for 2026.
- **WisconsinCaregiver.org**: https://wisconsincaregiver.org/
  Wisconsin-specific information about caregiver support programs, respite, education, support groups, and other resources.
- **Wisconsin's Family Caregiver Support Programs Facebook Page**: https://www.facebook.com/WisconsinCaregiver/
  Shares caregiver education, events, and outreach materials throughout the year. You're welcome to share relevant posts with your community.
- **Wisconsin Family Caregiver Outreach Flyer**: https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009187
  A ready-to-share flyer featuring WisconsinCaregiver.org and QR codes connecting caregivers to statewide resources and the Facebook page. Great for newsletters, resource fairs, community events, and waiting rooms.

There's no expectation that everyone uses the same message or campaign. Choose whichever materials work best for your newsletter, social media, or other local outreach.

View the flyer: https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009197

Looking for a short article for your November newsletter? Feel free to use this one:

November Is National Family Caregivers Month

Every day, family members, friends, and neighbors help loved ones remain safe, healthy, and connected. Whether providing transportation, managing medications, preparing meals, or offering emotional support, family caregivers make an incredible difference. November is a time to recognize their contributions and remind them that they don't have to do it all alone. Wisconsin offers caregiver support programs, respite care, education, and other helpful resources. Visit WisconsinCaregiver.org to explore available services and connect with your local Family Caregiver Support Program.

Updated Resource: Practical Ideas for Using NFCSP & AFCSP Funds

Looking for new ways to support family caregivers and make the most of your program funding?

GWAAR has updated its *Practical Ideas for Using NFCSP & AFCSP Funds* guide to help county and Tribal Caregiver Coordinators explore creative, meaningful, and allowable uses of caregiver funds.

From caregiver education and conferences to respite, assistive technology, wellness activities, outreach, and supplemental services, this resource offers practical ideas to help meet caregivers' needs while keeping program compliance in mind.

With 2027 AFCSP budget planning underway, now is a great time to explore new opportunities and make the most of available funding!

View the Updated Caregiver Spending Ideas Guide: https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2002999 .

Questions or ideas you'd like to discuss? Contact Bryn Ceman at bryn.ceman@gwaar.org.

📢 **Reminder: 2027 AFCSP Budgets Due November 27!**

🗓️ Deadline: Friday, November 27th, 2026

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) is requesting 2027 Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Support Program (AFCSP) budgets from participating agencies.

📝 Budget Submission: Agencies should use their 2027 AFCSP allocation when preparing their budgets and submit the completed budget through the 2027 AFCSP Budget Report link here: https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/8963386/2027-AFCSP-Budget-Report .

⚠️ **Important:** The online form must be completed in one sitting and cannot be saved for later. DHS recommends reviewing and preparing responses before beginning the submission.

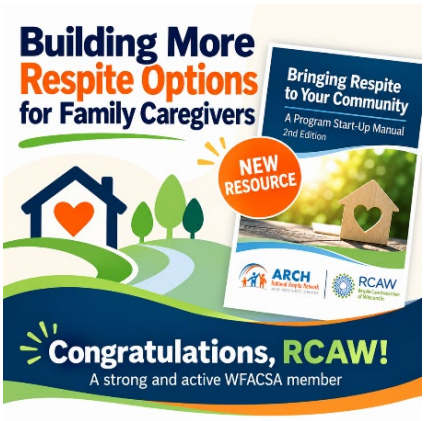
📩 Questions or Updates?

- Budget questions or allocation requests: Contact Lynn Gall at lynn.gall@wisconsin.gov
- New AFCSP coordinator or contact information changes: Notify Lynn Gall or Bryn Ceman at Bryn.Ceman@gwaar.org

Thank you for submitting your 2027 AFCSP budget by November 27th!

Nice to Know

Wisconsin Partnership Helps Create National Respite Resource



👏 Congratulations to the Respite Care Association of Wisconsin (RCAW) on partnering with the ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center to develop Bringing Respite to Your Community: A Program Start-Up Manual, 2nd Edition.

📘 This FREE resource provides practical guidance for organizations interested in starting or expanding respite services, including program planning, funding, staffing, policies, operations, and evaluation.

🌎 Available in English and Spanish, the updated manual also addresses innovative respite models, self-directed respite, and respite workforce challenges.

💚 A great example of Wisconsin expertise making a national impact! Congratulations, RCAW!

🔗 ***Access the free resource through ARCH:*** https://bit.ly/4hYQVWE

Reminder: Wisconsin is leading the way in caregiver support!

UW–Madison has launched the Badger Caregiving Clinic, the nation's first clinic of its kind, offering free education, individualized support, and resources for unpaid family and friend caregivers. ❤️‍🩹

We're grateful to Dr. Beth Fields, an active WFACSA member, for her leadership in advancing this innovative approach to recognizing and supporting family caregivers.

🔗 ***Learn more about the Badger Caregiving Clinic:*** https://bit.ly/47asOOu

Fiscal Resources and Data Management

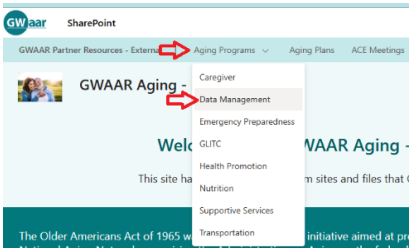
Carrie Kroetz, Data Management and Technology Coordinator

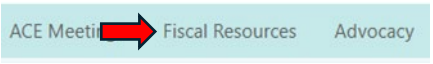
Need to Know

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





Fiscal Updates

- The September Claim form has been posted, along with the August Copy/Paste document. This is the final claim to accurately report fiscal expenses as they pertain to expenses reported in 2026 to complete the Federal Fiscal Year NAPIS report. The September claim is due November 5th, 2026.
- The Variance Report has been posted. It is recommended to use information through August to gain a preview over the next month of possible variances which could assist you to gain insight when using September data. The Variance Report will be due November 20th, 2026.
- The 2027 Preliminary Budget has been posted. All contracted providers are required to complete both the preliminary and final budget (when posted in the Spring). The due date for submission of the preliminary budget is November 5th, 2026.

PeerPlace Review and Cleanup

GWAAR will be posting another round of data entry errors weekly to address as the year end is approaching fast. This will include IIIB, IIIC and IID reviews as before.

"Let's Talk Data" End-of-Year Webinar Series

Thursdays, October 22 & 29 | 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.

We will be hosting a weekly webinar on Thursdays from October 1 to October 29 from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. to help answer questions for end of year reporting. Aging staff is always welcome to schedule time with Carrie Kroetz using her Booking App link. As a reminder, all client/service data for October 2025 through September 2026 must be accurately entered by October 31, 2026.

This week's call will primarily focus on the NFCSP IIIE Caregiver program. We will also briefly cover how to use August's information to preview your Variance Report and some additional updates regarding other data errors we are discovering.

GWAAR Partner Resources EXT SharePoint site

We've recently had an issue with guest user access to our site due to a Microsoft update. We believe we have corrected the issue but if you continue to experience access issues, please email sharepointadmins@gwaar.org.

Additionally, as of October 1 any user account that has not accessed our SharePoint site within the past 6 months will be disabled and have to re-register for access if needed. This will be a regular review to disable unused accounts.

Health Promotion

Evan Ewing, Health Promotion Program Specialist

Nice to Know

Reminder: WIHA 2027 Facilitator Training Schedule Released

The Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging released their 2027 facilitator training schedule. In 2027, they will be offering more in-person training options and trainings for the Healthy Living with Diabetes and Healthy Living with Chronic Pain programs. This is a great time to look through the training schedule and start planning your 2027 program offerings.

View the 2027 schedule: https://bit.ly/3VChrfC

Reminder: Building Partnerships: Partnership Action Guide resource

Building partnerships can be a great way to make your evidence-based health promotion programs more sustainable with limited resources. Within a given community, there are many potential partners to collaborate with on offering evidence-based health promotion programs. US Aging has put together a four-part Partnership Action Guide that can be helpful as you work to build partnerships within your community. The guide focuses on reducing homelessness, however can be applied to many different program areas, including health promotion.

View the guide: https://usaging.org/housing-partnership-action-guide

Medicare Outreach and Assistance

Stephanie Haas, Medicare Outreach Coordinator

Nice to Know

Reminder: New Shareable Video: Applying for Medicare with the Social Security Administration at SSA.gov

A new video was created to walk beneficiaries through the process of applying for Medicare online through the Social Security Administration at SSA.gov.

The video provides a step-by-step look at the Medicare application process and can be a helpful resource for beneficiaries who are ready to enroll in Medicare.

View the video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g74oM-S8HXw



Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol

Ingrid A. Kundinger, *Senior Medicare Patrol Program Director*

Nice to Know

Reminder: October Scam Spotlight focuses on Medicare Open Enrollment

The October Scam Spotlight focuses on Medicare's Open Enrollment Period, which runs from October 15 - December 7 each year. The spotlight provides some red flags to watch for and ways Medicare beneficiaries can protect themselves during this time of year.

Read the October 2026 Scam Spotlight: https://bit.ly/4jHadkf

Medicare open enrollment and scams in the news

In case you missed it on page 1, watch the WBAY segment here: https://bit.ly/4yYXvlH

