GWaar

Volume 8, No. 45 November 10, 2026
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Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) News

Nice to Know

Reminder: Accepting Applications for GWAAR's Board of Directors



GWAAR is looking for thoughtful, civic-minded, energetic individuals to serve on its 11-member board. Candidates must live outside Dane and Milwaukee Counties and be able to devote time and energy to GWAAR's governance, including:

- Serve at least one 3-year term on the board.
- Attend approximately 6 board meetings a year in Stevens Point, with virtual attendance possible.

Learn more: **GWAAR Board of Directors Application:** https://bit.ly/480NDNh

Questions? Contact GWAAR Executive Director John Schnabl: john.schanbl@gwaar.org

Reminder: Accepting Applications for GWAAR Advisory Council

We are also looking for thoughtful, civic-minded, energetic individuals to join the GWAAR 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 or someone you know 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

Emily Petersen, Advocacy and Public Policy Director

Need to Know

Action Alert: Contact Your Federal Representatives about the Older Americans Act



This week, Congress is back in session and needs to address Federal Fiscal Year 2027 funding before the December 11 deadline. In a final package, they could also include a reauthorization of the Older Americans Act. Your advocacy is needed to ask Wisconsin's legislators to:

- Increase funding for Older Americans Act programs and services
- Reauthorize the bipartisan Older Americans Act
- Delay implementation of a controversial Office of Management and Budget federal grantmaking rule

Use our action alert to email or call your representatives: https://bit.ly/3UJKrC4

Make sure you review the template to update any customizable fields!

With limited time for Congress to act before December 11, it is important to reach out as soon as possible and ask that they take action on these important items. If there is no agreed upon solution by December 11, there could be a government shutdown, resulting in delayed federal funding. Your advocacy is crucial!

Reminder: 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

Nice to Know

Reminder: Training Opportunity: Reframe Aging

Wednesday, December 2, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

From the moment we are born, we are aging. During our lifespan, we will also experience disability, whether that be aging with a disability or aging into disability. The Wisconsin movement to reframe aging and disability affects all of us as we strive to tell a more accurate, whole, and healthy story of aging and disability.

National Center to Reframe Aging
LED BY THE GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA
ReframingAging.org

REFRAMING AGING+DISABILITY WISCONSIN

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Working with the National Center to Reframe Aging (NCRA), we are bringing proven communication strategies to Wisconsin. These tools support our goal of eliminating ageism and ableism and creating a healthier Wisconsin where we all can thrive as we age and experience disability!

Register now for this free, virtual introductory training that will introduce evidence-based communication strategies to reframe aging: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_tGp41ecNQLKMOqjwJh_p_g#/registration

Reminder: 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.



Emergency Preparedness

Evan Ewing, Health Promotion Program Specialist

Nice to Know

Home Safety Reminder for Your Clients

We set our clocks back on November 1st, but it is also a great time of year to test all the smoke alarms in your home. The American Red Cross recommends testing smoke alarms once a month and replacing alarms that are 10 years old or older.

Some additional home safety tips include:



- Put together a fire escape plan for your household. Make sure everyone knows two ways to escape from every room in your home and where to meet outside.
- Don't leave fires or candles burning, or heating appliances plugged in, while you're asleep, in another room or away from home.
- Have your chimney cleaned and checked once a year and use a metal or glass fireplace screen to help keep embers contained.

Visit the American Red Cross website for more tips and information on keeping your home safe during the winter months: https://rdcrss.org/4kHYOkK

Family Caregiver Support

Bryn Ceman, Caregiver Programs Specialist

Need to Know

Reminder: Wisconsin Caregiver Coordinators – Wisconsin Caregiver Coordinator Statewide Meeting

TOMORROW: Wednesday, November 11 | 10:00–11:00 a.m.

Your Work Is Making a Difference! Join us as we look back at Wisconsin's 2025 Family Caregiver Support Program results and celebrate the impact of your work across the state!

The agenda can be found here: https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009200

- 2025 Caregiver Program Highlights – Statewide PeerPlace data, caregiver needs, services provided, and customer satisfaction results.
- In Their Own Words – Hear what Wisconsin family caregivers are saying about the support they've received, including some wonderful recognition of local staff!
- Looking Ahead to 2027 – Updates from the Efficiency and Forms Workgroup and upcoming program improvements.

We hope you'll join us for an informative and encouraging hour celebrating the difference you make for Wisconsin families!

Nice to Know

National Family Caregivers Month 2026: Free Outreach & Marketing Toolkit

Care Connects Us.

November is National Family Caregivers Month, an opportunity to recognize the more than 63 million Americans who provide care for family members, friends, and loved ones.

To help organizations celebrate and raise awareness, the National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) has developed a free 2026 National Family Caregivers Month Partner Toolkit.

The toolkit includes ready-to-use resources to support your outreach efforts:

- Social media graphics and sample posts
- Key messages, caregiving statistics, and calls to action
- Caregiver storytelling prompts
- Sample newsletter content and letters to the editor



Aging units, ADRCs, caregiver coordinators, and community partners are encouraged to use these materials throughout November to recognize family caregivers, share their experiences, and connect them with meaningful support.

Help make family caregivers seen, heard, and valued, not just in November, but all year long.

Download the FREE 2026 National Family Caregivers Month Partner Toolkit: https://bit.ly/4ArGHo3

Fiscal Resources and Data Management

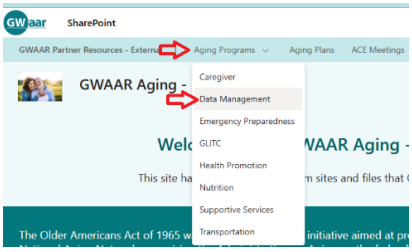
Carrie Kroetz, Data Management and Technology Coordinator

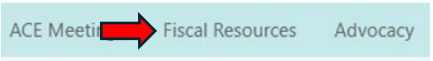
Need to Know

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 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.

PeerPlace Review and Cleanup

GWAAR staff will be reaching out to address any final data entry errors that need to be addressed as soon as possible. All data for the 25-26 NAPIS will be exported by November 23rd.

Health Promotion

Evan Ewing, Health Promotion Program Specialist

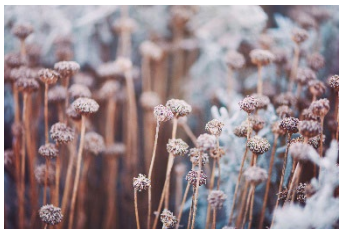
Need to Know

Reminder: Quarterly Health Promotion Webinar-Save the Date: December 10

Thursday, December 10 | 10:00-11:00 a.m., optional networking 11:00-11:30 a.m.

Our next Quarterly Health Promotion Webinar will take place on Thursday, December 10 from 10:00-11:00 a.m. This webinar will feature GWAAR updates, updates/information from the Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA), and the main portion of the webinar will feature valuable case sharing from three aging units which include Barron County, Portage County, and Brown County.

View the agenda: https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009207



Nice to Know

Virtual StrongBodies Series: Online Health Promotion Opportunity (Title IIID–Eligible Programming)

Support the health and independence of older adults in your community through an evidence-based, virtual strength training program offered by UW–Madison Extension.

Virtual StrongBodies is a proven strength-training and wellness program designed for older adults and delivered conveniently online via Zoom. This option allows Aging Units and ADRCs to reserve spots for county residents while meeting Title IIID health promotion requirements.

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Program details:

- Program: UW–Madison Extension Virtual StrongBodies
- Format: Online via Zoom
- Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:00 a.m.
- Dates: January 5 - March 25, 2027

Length: 12 weeks

- Cost: $50 per participant
- Eligibility: Spots may be reserved by AUs/ADRCs for county residents

How it works:

- Reserve participant spots using the online request form: https://bit.ly/3XLKknr
  After your request is received, UW–Madison Extension will provide:
  - An invoice for payment
  - A promotional flyer for the upcoming virtual series (editable to include your local contact information)
  - A link to the online registration page so you can enroll local residents

Reporting support:

Participant demographic information will be shared with you after the registration deadline for each series to support Peer Place reporting.

Learn more about StrongBodies: https://health.extension.wisc.edu/strongbodies/

Guardianship Support Center

Cherry Hill, WI Guardianship Support Center Attorney

Nice to Know

Reminder: Latest issue of The Guardian available

Read the fall issue of The Guardian:
https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009206

The newsletter has links to upcoming events and articles, including an interesting update about litigation involving the timing of an annual protective placement review.

The Guardian is a quarterly newsletter published by the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources' (GWAAR) Wisconsin Guardianship Support Center (GSC). GSC provides information and assistance on issues related to guardianship, protective placement, advance directives, and more.



Nutrition

Kristi Cooley, Nutrition Program Specialist
Jean Lynch, Program Specialist Manager
Pam VanKampen, Nutrition Program & Senior Center Specialist

Nice to Know

Food Safety Reminder: Proper Use of Cleaners and Sanitizers

Recent nutrition program site visits raised questions about the use of different cleaning and sanitizing products. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) provided clarification to help programs ensure products are being used correctly.

Key reminders for nutrition programs:

- Follow manufacturer instructions: All cleaning and sanitizing products must be used according to their labels, including proper application and contact times.
- Ready-to-use sanitizers: Products such as PURELL Food Surface Sanitizer are premixed by the manufacturer and do not require concentration testing with test strips.
- Cleaners vs. sanitizers: Products labeled for use around food-contact surfaces, such as CloroxPro EcoClean All-Purpose Cleaner, are not necessarily approved for cleaning or sanitizing food-contact surfaces. An appropriate cleaner and approved sanitizer are needed.
- Mixed sanitizers: Products such as Steramine Sanitizing Tablets are commonly used for food-contact surfaces. Follow manufacturer instructions for mixing and verifying proper concentration using the appropriate test strips.

Resource: Wisconsin Food Code – ATCP 75: https://bit.ly/4f1EZkN , particularly Chapters 4 and 7, outlines requirements for cleaning, sanitizing, and chemical use in food establishments.

Questions? Contact your GWAAR Nutrition Program Specialist for additional guidance.

Reminder: Virtual Stepping Up Your Nutrition Class

Wednesday, December 2 | 12:00 - 2:30 p.m. | via Zoom

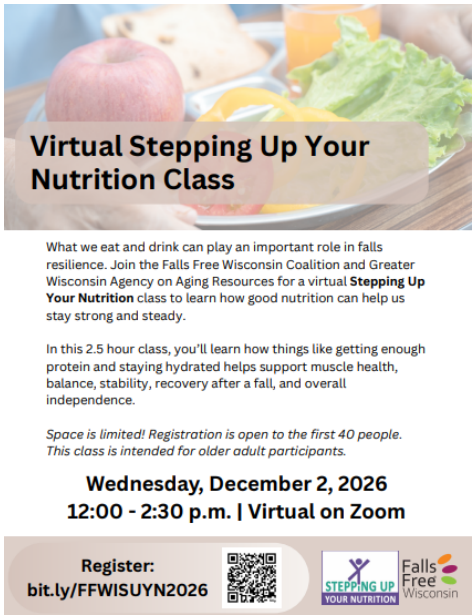
What we eat and drink can play an important role in falls resilience. Join the Falls Free Wisconsin Coalition and Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources for a virtual Stepping Up Your Nutrition class to learn how good nutrition can help us stay strong and steady.

In this 2.5 hour class, participants will learn how things like getting enough protein and staying hydrated helps support muscle health, balance, stability, recovery after a fall, and overall independence.

Space is limited! Registration is open to the first 40 people. This class is intended for older adult participants.

Register: https://bit.ly/FFWISUYN2026

View the flyer: https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009213



Reminder: 2027 Nutrition Education Monthly Handouts Available from GWAAR Nutrition Team

2027 is rapidly approaching and we know your newsletter deadlines are a couple months out. We revised the handout format for 2027 based on your feedback from the Summer Nutrition Director Meetings.

They are now 1 page to easily fit on the back of your menu, in your newsletter, etc. They include a simple recipe and tie to WHY certain foods and colors are on our plate and how they can positively influence health. We have 5 for next year posted so far and will be adding more before the end of the year. We have them in Portrait right now but will try and get them in landscape for those of you that prefer that format. You can download them at this link (Registered SharePoint users) **2027 Monthly Nutrition Ed Handouts**: https://bit.ly/48yuRMI

Emergency Preparedness Shelf Stable Meal Options and More…

We have updated the list of **emergency shelf stable meal options** in SharePoint (https://bit.ly/4ip0jl2). Please note this is informational and not all-inclusive. In order to count emergency meals as OAA meals, they have to meet the meal pattern or the nutrient analysis and be offered on a voluntary contribution basis. You will have to check with the vendors and your local dietitian to be sure the meals meet these requirements. We also have several handouts for participants, sample policies, training materials, participant handouts and more. Registered SharePoint users can check it out at **Emergency Preparedness**: https://bit.ly/4iUHeZA

Tribal Technical Center

Kassy Heard, TTAC Program Director

Nice to Know

Check out November's edition of In the Loop!

Highlights include a recap of our Tribal Cooks Training, a Save the Date for the next Tribal APS Round Table, and information about Native American Heritage Month.

This monthly newsletter is produced by the Tribal Technical Assistance Center. If you would like to submit an item for the newsletter, please send submissions to Carri Chapman at cchapman@glitc.org by the 15th of every month. Miigwech!:



Read the November issue of In the Loop: https://conta.cc/48J0zqH

Reminder: November is Native American Heritage Month

Looking for a way to help celebrate and recognize Native American Heritage Month in November? Check out the below resources including an activity sheet and placemat for your dining sites!

Ways to Celebrate Native American Heritage Month: https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009136

Wisconsin Tribal Food Map Placemat: https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewfile/id/2009137

The Indigenous Food Pyramid Activity Sheet: https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009138

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Recipe: Bison and Sweet Potato Shepherd's Pie:
https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewfile/id/2009139

Recipe: Squash and Wild Rice:
https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009140

Recipe: Three Sisters Harvest Soup:
https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009141



Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol

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

Nice to Know

November Scam Spotlight: Medicare.gov accounts

The November Scam Spotlight focuses on the benefits of creating a Medicare.gov account. Because Medicare Summary Notices are only being sent out every 6 months, we encourage Medicare beneficiaries to consider creating a Medicare.gov account. This spotlight includes instructions on how to get started and provides a link to a "how to" video for more assistance.

Read the November 2026 Scam Spotlight:
https://bit.ly/4zaobiM

