GWaar

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Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) News

Nice to Know

GWAAR Board of Directors update

Please join us in welcoming Racquel Bell, the newest member of the GWAAR Board of Directors!

She is an accomplished Compliance Manager and Tribal Program leader with more than 20 years of experience advancing housing stability, elder services, and community-based programs serving Native American communities. Welcome Racquel!

https://gwaar.org/meet-our-board

2027 meeting dates

Board of Directors 2027 meetings

- February 19 - Virtual
- April 16
- June 18
- August 20
- October 15
- December 10

Advisory Council 2027 meetings

- February 12
- May 14
- July 30
- September 17 -In Person at ADRC Stevens Point
- November 12

2027 ACE meetings

- January 13
- April 14, 2027
- July 14 In-person Stevens Point
- October 13

GWAAR closed for Thanksgiving holiday

We will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 26-27 for the Thanksgiving holiday.

We hope you have a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving!



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

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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 two remaining 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:

- 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.

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.



Family Caregiver Support

Bryn Ceman, Caregiver Programs Specialist

Need to Know

Free AARP Webinar: Holiday Caregiving Conversations and the Cost of Care

Thursday, November 19, 2026 | 12:00–1:00 p.m.

November is National Family Caregivers Month. Join AARP for a free webinar about talking with loved ones about changing care needs, planning ahead, and managing the financial challenges of caregiving.

Learn practical tips to help families prepare for caregiving conversations during the holiday season and beyond.

Registration is free and open to all.

Register for the AARP Webinar:

https://bit.ly/4eBqhRA



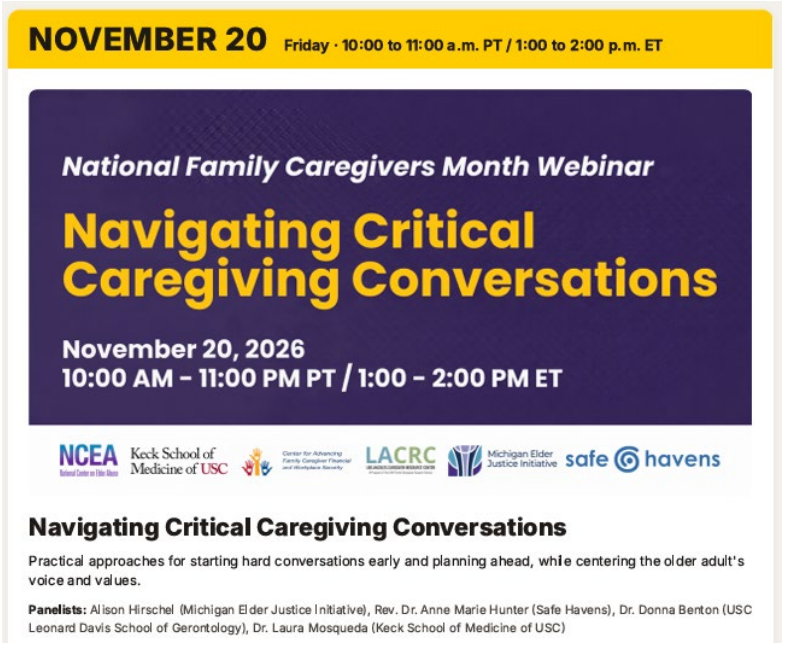
Webinar: Navigating Critical Caregiving Conversations

Friday, November 20, 2026 | 12:00–1:00 p.m.

Caregiving professionals are invited to attend a free webinar focused on helping families navigate difficult conversations about changing care needs.

Hosted by the National Center on Elder Abuse, the Michigan Elder Justice Initiative, Safe Havens, and partner organizations, this session will share practical approaches for starting important conversations early, planning, and keeping older adults' wishes, values, and preferences at the center of decisions.

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



Nice to Know

Reminder: 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

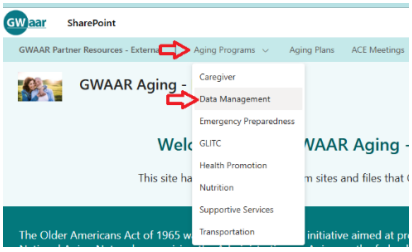
Carrie Kroetz, Data Management and Technology Coordinator

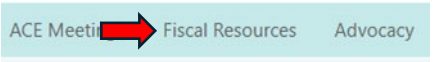
Need to Know

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

Thank you to all Aging Units for submitting your September claim forms on time. This has allowed us to review the forms and provide feedback before combining them for Federal reporting. Each of you will receive an email with the results of the review, including any questions or issues that need to be addressed before the rollup.

Because of the volume of information that needs to be addressed, we are extending the Variance Report deadline to December 11th. Once all adjustments to your agency's data and fiscal information are complete, update the Variance Report with the revised information. Then re-evaluate the variances and revise your responses to ensure they are accurate.

PeerPlace Review and Cleanup

GWAAR staff will continue to reach out to Aging Units regarding any remaining data entry errors. Please address these errors as soon as possible. All data for the 25-26 NAPIS will be exported by November 23rd. No extensions can be granted.

Health Promotion

Evan Ewing, Health Promotion Program Specialist

Nice to Know

WIHA Program Promotional Materials

Did you know that if you become a facilitator for a program administered through the Wisconsin Institute of Healthy Aging (WIHA) you have access to a variety of materials to help you promote your programs? As a program facilitator, you will have access to customizable program flyers, newsletter articles, referral cards, and more. If you are a WIHA program facilitator and have questions about these materials, contact info@wihealthyaging.org.

When you are offering a new health promotion program, it is important to consider accessibility with your promotions. In thinking about your target demographic, how easy would it be for them to find information about your offerings? We want to ensure that potential participants can easily access all the information they would need to know to get signed up for your programs. Here are some general promotion tips:

- Provide a separate page on your agency website that provides users with information about your health promotion program offerings.
- When creating flyers, ensure that you use contrasting colors, program information is easily visible/accessible, use plain language, and provide benefits of the program within the promotional materials.
- Include a general interest form within your agency webpage where users can complete the virtual form to sign up for a class and/or obtain more information from aging unit staff.
- Collaborate with existing partners/community members to assist in promoting your programs.
- Market and promote programs where your target demographic will be likely to see the promotions.

For information on WIHA programs visit: https://wihealthyaging.org/programs/

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.

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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.

Tribal Technical Center

Kassy Heard, TTAC Program Director

Nice to Know

Reminder: 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