



The Wisconsin Long-Term Care Coalition
Keep Our Care at Home

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**Long Term Care Stakeholders Pleased to see Governor Walker Building on Wisconsin's
Nationally Recognized Long Term Care System**

The Wisconsin Long Term Care Coalition is encouraged to see that Governor Walker's budget maintains the state's nationally recognized adult long-term care system which supports 60,000 people with disabilities and older adults. Family Care, IRIS, Partnership and Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) have proven track records of supporting people with disabilities and older adults in home and community-based settings and saving taxpayer dollars.

Advocates also applaud Governor Walker's proposed \$40 million investment to end the children's long-term care waiting list for the 2,200 children with disabilities currently in need of supports. The Governor and legislature previously took action to end waiting lists in the adult long-term care system by expanding Family Care and IRIS statewide.

"Governor Walker's proposal will make Wisconsin one of the first states in the nation to end long-term care waiting lists for both children and adults," said Wisconsin Long Term Care Coalition Co-Chair Lynn Breedlove. "This historic achievement is the culmination of decades-worth of advocacy by long-term care stakeholders to ensure that no one is denied the long-term care they need."

Governor Walker's budget takes an important first step in addressing the community-based direct care workforce crisis by increasing the personal care reimbursement rate by 2% per year. The direct care workforce crisis is leaving people across the state without the supports necessary to live safely in the community and has put many personal care provider agencies out of business. The personal care rate has only increased by \$0.24 in the past 14 years and Governor Walker's budget request marks the first increase to the rate since 2008. Personal care agencies report that the cost of doing business is 15% to 20% above the current reimbursement rate of \$16.08 per hour.

"We are happy to see Governor Walker building on Wisconsin's successful and cost-effective long-term care system and taking steps to address the direct care workforce crisis," said Tom Frazier Co-Chair of the Wisconsin Long Term Care Coalition. "We hope the Legislature will consider reinvesting more of the current Medicaid surplus into a larger increase for the personal care program, which is critical to supporting people with disabilities and older adults in the community."

Wisconsin's Medicaid budget ended the current budget cycle with a \$312 million surplus and the Department of Health Services estimates that the cost-to-continue for current programs is the lowest it has been since Governor Walker took office. Long-term care stakeholders look forward to working with the Legislature to continue building upon Wisconsin's nationally recognized Medicaid long-term care system.

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