



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

The People Have Spoken: It's Time to Remove Drastic Changes to Family Care, IRIS and ADRCs from the State Budget

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Now that the public input process on the proposed state budget has concluded, the Wisconsin Long-term Care Coalition calls on the Joint Finance Committee to remove the overhaul of Wisconsin's long-term care system from the state budget. Hundreds of concerned citizens spoke out publically and more than 278 local and statewide organizations signed on to a resolution asking the legislature to put an immediate stop to proposed changes that would overhaul Family Care, IRIS and Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs).

Over 50,000 Wisconsinites rely on long-term care programs to live independently and in the setting of their choice. Throughout the public hearing process, Joint Finance Committee members heard from an overwhelming number of these consumers who are afraid their needed supports will be reduced, parents who worry for their children's future in an unknown system and the Wisconsin businesses that will be forced to close their doors due to these proposals.

"Wisconsin's current long-term care system was the outgrowth of four years of intensive planning involving consumers and families, aging and disability advocates, counties, providers, and state officials," said Lynn Breedlove, former Executive Director of Disability Rights Wisconsin. "Not only were these major policy proposals included in the state budget without warning and without stakeholder input, but stakeholders are now being told that their questions cannot be answered because the plan to implement these changes doesn't exist yet."

The proposed budget would eliminate the self-directed IRIS program; radically change Family Care and replace all 8 existing regional, homegrown managed care organizations (MCOs) with statewide for-profit health insurance companies (using a no-bid process); and give authority to the Department of Health Services (DHS) to eliminate county-run Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) by contracting out many of their functions to private, for-profit entities.

"The current system of Family Care, IRIS and ADRCs has slowed long-term care spending while maintaining high quality care, and the only projected savings in the proposed budget are due to expansion of the current model," said Wisconsin Long-term Care Coalition member Tom Frazier. "The proposed overhaul of our long-term care system is short-sighted, contains many unanswered questions, and could cause unnecessary suffering for frail elders and people with disabilities—it should not be included in the state budget."

The Wisconsin Long-term Care Coalition, which includes aging and disability advocates, managed care organizations, small businesses, Aging & Disability Resource Centers, county government and long-term care providers, asks the legislature to take the proposed changes to Wisconsin's long-term care system out of the budget, and make our current programs available in every Wisconsin county using the existing Family Care, IRIS and ADRC models.