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## **Disability Rights Wisconsin Welcomes News that Plans for Family Care/IRIS Reforms are Withdrawn**

Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW) welcomes the news communicated by Department of Health Services Secretary Kitty Rhoades to the Joint Finance Committee yesterday that the Department is withdrawing its concept plan for Family Care/IRIS 2.0.

DRW has been working to turn back the significant reforms to the programs that serve more than 55,000 people with disabilities and older adults since the proposal to overhaul the long-term care system was announced in Governor Walker's budget in early 2015.

"We are pleased that the voices of people with disabilities and older adults were heard," says Lisa Pugh, Public Policy Director. "Wisconsin's system of long-term services and supports are nationally recognized. People rely on these programs for their quality of life and ability to live and participate in their communities. It is essential that Family Care and IRIS continue to be designed and operate in a way that works for people and provides both what they want and need."

Secretary Rhoades also communicated the Administration's continued goal of developing an integrated, outcome-based care model.

"Disability Rights Wisconsin has worked alongside the Department over the years to increase the freedom and quality of life for people with disabilities. We have worked together to downsize and close segregated institutions, support people with complex needs in the community, and develop high quality systems of support for both children and adults," says Daniel Idzikowski, Executive Director. "We welcome the opportunity to help the Department design a sustainable, high quality, long-term care system that provides better care for participants."

Disability Rights Wisconsin thanks the Department and the Legislature for listening to people with disabilities, advocates and other stakeholders and looks forward to a continued collaboration to improve the quality of life for Wisconsinites with disabilities.

*Disability Rights Wisconsin is the state's designate Protection and Advocacy Agency, charged with protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and keeping individuals free from abuse and neglect.*

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