

For Immediate Release

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Wisconsin First State in US to Offer Free Online Courses for Family Caregivers
Trualta Partnership Helps Caregivers Learn New Skills to Support Themselves and Loved Ones

MADISON, Wis., Nov. 17, 2020 -- The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) and the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) today announced a partnership with Trualta, a new free online educational tool for family caregivers across the state. Trualta helps caregivers learn about health issues, care techniques, and managing care for loved ones during flu season and the COVID-19 pandemic.

"As winter months approach and cases of COVID-19 continue to rise in Wisconsin, family caregivers face increased isolation and may need extra help caring for friends and family members with serious health conditions. This program provides caregivers with the opportunity to learn new skills in the comfort of their own homes," said DHS Secretary-designee Andrea Palm.

Sponsored by DHS, GWAAR, and the Dane County Area Agency on Aging, this partnership with Trualta can help individuals needing care live at home longer. Family caregivers can visit WisconsinCaregiver.org and click on the "Trualta" banner on the main page to sign up for access to Trualta's library of online resources. The modules teach caregivers how to safely provide hands-on care, connect families with reliable support agencies, and offer information and video training from experienced professionals in a quick and easy format. For low-vision users or for caregivers who prefer audio instructions, Trualta also offers a "read to me" function.

"Caregiving is 24 hours a day, seven days a week, so making time for in-person training and education can be difficult, even during normal times," said Jane Mahoney, Caregiver Support Specialist, Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources. "Our partnership with Trualta provides an alternative for education and training that people can access whenever it works for them."

In Wisconsin, family caregiving is expanding rapidly. By 2040, the 65+ population will grow by 640,000 – an increase of 72% – according to The Governor's Task Force on Caregiving Report released last month. The tasks caregivers are expected to perform have become more medically complicated, making preparation and access to reliable training increasingly important.

"Our goal is to equip family caregivers earlier so that they are better prepared. Most people find themselves responsible for the care of another person with little warning. In the midst of a global pandemic, we realize that caregivers need easy access to innovative resources that complement the training, emotional support and respite services provided by Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) and health care providers," said Lynn Gall, Family Caregiver Support Programs Manager, Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

Anyone caring for an older adult can benefit from Trualta's support, whether they are seeking personal care training, safety and fall prevention tips, help caring for a person with dementia, caregiver wellness ideas, or other support.

"We are proud to partner with the state of Wisconsin to help family caregivers feel confident and keep loved ones at home longer, particularly when the health care system is overburdened with COVID-19," said Jonathan Davis, Founder and CEO, Trualta. "Family caregivers provide 80% or more of care for loved ones, and we anticipate that will continue to rise during these challenging times."

"Dane County caregivers, like those across the state, are busy, and often their time is not their own. Web-based training with experts is especially critical during COVID-19, when many in-person opportunities are not available," said Angela M. Velasquez, Aging Program Specialist, Area Agency on Aging of Dane County.

To Register: Visit [WisconsinCaregiver.org](https://www.wisconsinCaregiver.org) and click on the "Trualta" banner on the main page.

About Trualta

Trualta (www.trualta.com) supports families managing care for loved ones at home via an online learning platform. In partnership with innovative healthcare payers, providers, government and social service organizations, Trualta provides better care at lower cost. Each partner organization is equipped with a customized learning portal through which healthcare professionals deliver on-demand, personalized skills-based training to help caregivers keep their loved ones at home for longer.

Currently available in Canada and across 17 US states, Trualta's evidence base is proving that trained, confident family caregivers can improve health outcomes and reduce costs.

About the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.

The Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. (GWAAR) (<https://gwaar.org/>) is a nonprofit agency committed to supporting the successful delivery of aging programs and services in 70 counties and 11 tribes in Wisconsin. GWAAR provides aging lead agencies in our service area with training, technical assistance, and advocacy to ensure the availability and quality of programs and services to meet the changing needs of older people in Wisconsin.

About the Wisconsin Department of Health Services

The Department of Health Services (DHS) (<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/>) is one of the largest and most diverse state agencies in Wisconsin, with an annual budget of roughly \$11.5 billion and more than 6,100 employees. DHS is committed to protecting and promoting the health and safety of the people of Wisconsin and making sure everyone can live their best life. DHS oversees Medicaid and other health and social service programs. The Department ensures that the care provided to Wisconsin residents is high quality and delivered in accordance with state and federal law, and works to continue Wisconsin's long tradition of strong health outcomes and innovation. DHS works with local counties, health care providers, community partners, and others to provide alcohol and other drug abuse prevention, mental health, public health, implementation of long-term care, disability determination, regulation of state nursing homes, and numerous other programs that aid and protect the citizens of our state. DHS also oversees seven 24/7 institutions: three centers for the developmentally disabled; a facility for mentally ill inmates; two psychiatric hospitals; and a facility for treating sexually violent persons.