

## OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Name of Governmental Body: IRIS Advisory Committee (IAC)			Attending: Andy Thain, Fil Clissa, Gabriella Leachmon, James Valona, Julie Strenn, Lynnea White, Ramsey Lee, Rosie Bartel, Sue Urban, Tom Gierke, Kathy Meisner, Martha Chambers, Jill Walter
Date: 3/25/2025	Time Started: 9:30 AM	Time Ended: 2:00 pm	
Location: Zoom			Presiding Officer: Alicia Boehme, DHS, Director of Quality and Oversight Christian Moran, DHS, Director of Programs and Policy

**Minutes**

**Members absent:** Melanie Cairns, Jason Glozier

**DHS Staff present:** Lisa Galvan, Rebecca Frank

**Presenters:** Victoria Obatusin, RaeAnn Fahey, Laura Grulke-Rueter, Jennifer Ruid, Chris Ma

9:30 AM

### Meeting Call to Order

*Alicia Boehme – Director, Bureau of Quality and Oversight*

*Christian Moran – Director, Bureau of Programs and Policy*

- Meeting overview
- Approval of minutes

### Committee feedback/discussion

- None

9:45 AM

### Department Updates (BPP/BQO/BRS)

*Alicia Boehme – Director, Bureau of Quality and Oversight*

*Christian Moran – Director, Bureau of Programs and Policy*

Overview on activity around federal funding for Medicaid. While the Wisconsin Department of Health Services runs our state's Medicaid programs, we do not have a role in the federal budget process. We do not have any information about what services or programs could be affected or cut in a new federal budget. To find out about what is being proposed for Medicaid in the federal budget or to provide feedback, you can reach out to your elected representatives who work in Washington, DC.

On Feb 20, the IRIS Provider Agreement, also known as the IRIS Provider Contract, was sent to IAC members. Comments and suggestions are due on May 2, 2025, either emailed back or email [Rebecca.Frank@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Frank@dhs.wisconsin.gov) to schedule a virtual meeting to discuss.

- InControl sent a report with suggestions; should they be submitted independent of the report? No, Wisconsin Medicaid Director Bill Hanna and the IRIS team have these suggestions, and they are already under consideration.

The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) runs the 811 Program which provides rental assistance for people who meet eligibility for a Wisconsin Medicaid long-term care program and who fall under the determined financial threshold. There are currently nine properties with over 100 units collectively. The program will be expanding with additional units to be added in Milwaukee this year and additional parts of Wisconsin next year.

- This operates separately from local programs, but collaboration can be considered.
- Members request additional conversations about housing access in rural areas, wait times, and accessible housing planning discussions that include input from people with disabilities. A member

shares that her participant-hired worker hours were reduced after accessibility modifications were made to her home.

Update from Kathy Meisner – Disability Service Provider Network has received a grant to develop a training program for participants interested in hiring their own workers.

Julie will be leaving the IAC as she is transitioning to a new employer and so she will be leaving the IAC.

**Committee feedback/discussion**

- None

10:15 AM

**LTC Provider Management**

*RaeAnn Fahey - Program Participation Oversight Manager, Bureau of Quality*

*Laura Grulke-Rueter – Communications Specialist*

- Covered materials which were sent ahead of the meeting.

**Committee feedback/discussion**

- Members express concern about remaining confusion from other recent changes and asked that the LTC Provider Management update be rolled out in a tiered approach. DHS: This has been considered and dismissed as likely to cause additional confusion. Providers and vendors have been informed about this change starting in Sept. 2024. Providers need to be enrolled by January 1, 2026. Providers can check their enrollment on ForwardHealth or by contacting the call center.
- A provider on the IAC clarifies that the enrollment is for provider agencies not for individual direct hires and that the provider agencies have been actively working on this with numerous communication lines.
- It is stated that the service titles in WISITS do not match up, but the codes do.

10:45 AM **Break**

11:00 AM

**National Core Indicator (NCI) State of the Workforce (SoTW) Survey results**

*Victoria Obatusin - Policy & Implementation Specialist*

- Covered materials which were sent ahead of the meeting.

**Committee feedback/discussion**

- There is discussion about the fiscal cliff and the threat of losing public benefits disincentivizing working additional hours. A provider confirms that direct care workers have declined to take on additional hours or clients.
- Members express that there needs to be data collection, specifically following-up with former providers about if they have left the industry or transitioning to a different direct care position.

11:30 AM

**Ombuds Update**

*Alicia Boehme - Director, Bureau of Quality and Oversight*

*Christian Moran - Director, Bureau of Programs and Policy*

**Committee feedback/discussion**

- A member asks that the reports have a breakdown of the number of contacts for each type of concern.

11:35 AM

**Department Updates cont.**

- New department policy hires are introduced.
- Corrective action cannot be added into the scorecards, but information is provided to the ADRCs and on the website. Corrective action plan updates are not posted.
- Vendors are receiving DHS support for updates and training via webinars, notices, outreach, etc.

11:45 AM

**Public Comment**

Public comment will be limited to three (3) minutes per person. If you require additional time for an accommodation, please notify the committee prior to making your comment. *Please do not disclose any HIPAA-protected information in your comments (family member names, medical conditions, etc.).* Your microphone will be muted after three (3) minutes. If you would like to offer a comment during this period, please raise your hand with the icon on the bottom of your screen or by dialing \*9 from your phone.

Commenter 1:

Caller's daughter is now being denied services that she utilized for many years because they are categorized as classes instead of day services. The classes help her to reach her goals and keep her integrated in the community.

- Alicia clarifies that the provider enrollment changes have not taken place yet and will not switch to it until Jan. 2026. The concerns are real but not related to the upcoming enrollment changes which are federally required. Caller can email [Rebecca.Frank@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Frank@dhs.wisconsin.gov) for additional support.

**Committee feedback/discussion**

- None

11:55 AM     **Lunch**

12:30 PM

**Disability Advocacy Day**

*Committee members Fil Clissa and Jason Glozier*

- Covered materials which were sent ahead of the meeting.

**Committee feedback/discussion**

- The hearings will be aired on Wisconsin Eye and comments can be sent. They are also advocating for a virtual hearing.

1:00 PM

**Policy Updates**

Background Check

*Jennifer Ruid, Program & Policy Analyst Adv, Bureau of Programs and Policy*

- Follow-up from last meeting's content.

**Committee feedback/discussion**

- Has the DHS considered how information will be disseminated to participants because in the past there have been inconsistencies? Is there a way to provide additional staffing to answer questions and prevent confusion and delays? DHS: This is being discussed including what plain language can be shared to make reports understandable.
- What should participants do if a background check result is incorrect? DHS: Reach out to the FEA for assistance.
- Will updates be made to the work instructions that FEAs use to refer to barrable offences be updated? DHS: Instead of updating the work instructions, the new information is being added into the policy directly and once it is published the work instructions will be taken offline and replaced with a link to the policy section.

Individual Service Plan (ISP)

*Chris Ma - IRIS Policy Analyst-Advanced, Bureau of Programs and Policy*

- Follow-up last meeting.

- This part of the overall policy team effort to consolidate the policy manual and the work instructions into one publication so that information is all in one place.
- New topics include choice of setting, HCBS settings, essential service provider agreement, and the emergency backup plan
  - Previously each ICA had their own emergency backup plan. This makes the plan universal.

**Committee feedback/discussion**

- What is semi-automated in this context? DHS: Most, though not all, information fields will be filled in automatically.

1:45 PM

**Committee Business**

*Alicia Boehme – Director, Bureau of Quality and Oversight*

*Christian Moran – Director, Bureau of Programs and Policy*

**Committee feedback/discussion**

- None

2:00 PM      **Adjourn**

Prepared by: Rebecca Frank on 3/31/2025.

These minutes were approved by the governmental body on: 5/20/2025