

November LTC Advisory Committee

2019-20 Governor's Task Force on Caregiving

Workforce Proposals

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Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources

Wisconsin Department of Health Services



Task Force Overview

- Governor Evers Executive Order #11 (2/2019)
- Six Task Force charges focused on family caregiving and the direct care workforce
- Task Force Recommendations
 - Five recommendations for family caregiving
 - Eleven for the direct care workforce
 - Report: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/gtfc/gtfc-report.pdf

Five Family Caregiving/Unpaid Workforce Proposals

1. Tailored Care Assessment and Referral (T-Care)
2. Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
Reinvestment and Caregiver Support Programming
3. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Amendments
4. Caregiver Tax Credit (“WI Credit for Caring Act”)
5. The Care Act (caregivers of people being discharged from the hospital)



Eleven Direct Care/Paid Workforce Proposals

1. Rates Bands
2. Nursing Home and Personal Care Payment Reform
3. Medical Loss Ratio for Family Care Management Care Organizations
4. Direct Care Worker Fund
5. Medicaid Expansion
6. Earnings Disregard for Direct Care Workers

Eleven Direct Care/Paid Workforce Proposals

7. Statewide Direct Support Professional Training
8. Recognition and Recruitment of Direct Care Workers (includes WisCaregiver careers as the launching pad)
9. Background Check Policies
10. Medicaid Provider Regulatory Oversight
11. Home Care Provider Registry Pilot



Status of GTFC Proposals

- **Thirteen** of the 16 GTFC proposals were included in the Governor's version of the 21-23 State of Wisconsin Budget
- The Final 21-23 WI Budget included funding for only **one** of the proposals: nursing home, homecare and personal care payment reform
- The Final 23-25 WI Budget included continued funding for **one** of the proposals: nursing home and personal care payment reform



Status of GTFC Proposals

- American Rescue Plan Act HCBS Workforce Efforts:
 - Statewide professional credentialing and continuing education program/WisCaregiver Careers
 - Tiered career ladder for personal care and supportive home care
 - HCBS Innovation Grants (40% were workforce related)
 - National Core Indicators: State of the Workforce Survey
 - Rate reform initiative that included rate increases for HCBS providers and development of a minimum fee schedule



GTFC Proposals that “Didn’t Make the Cut (aka the final report)”

Direct Care Worker Employee Benefits:

- Enhanced rates for MCO/IRIS providers who offer credible health insurance
- Group purchasing of benefit packages to increase availability of health insurance and other benefits to direct care workers

GTFC Proposals that “Didn’t Make the Cut (aka the final report)”

Regulation and Compliance:

- Change statute to allow hiring at 16 years of age vs. 18 years.

Rate Increases:

- Develop payment/rate standards for nursing homes and MCOs based on actual costs of care.



GTFC Proposals that “Didn’t Make the Cut (aka the final report)”

Untapped Workers:

- Create dedicated units within job centers that focus on recruiting untapped workers such as high school students, retirees or people with disabilities.
- Encourage WI congressional delegation to support immigration policy reform

GTFC Proposals that “Didn’t Make the Cut (aka the final report)”

Training:

- Count work experience for CNA certification (in lieu of certain training requirements)
- Create grants for DWD to fund training for community-based personal care workers.

Discussion



Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Protecting and promoting the health
and safety of the people of Wisconsin.



Social Connection and Livable Communities

Helen Sampson, Public Policy Strategist
Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources



Definitions

Social connection is the degree to which you have the number, quality, and variety of relationships that you want. It is when you feel like you belong and have the support and care that you need.

Livable communities are the built environments that foster social connectedness, which are safe and secure and offer choice in where to live and how to get around, serving all residents of the community.



Social Connection Matters

For individuals:

- Poor social relationships can increase the risk of heart disease by 29% and risk of stroke by 32%.
- The health impact of social isolation is comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.
- Among older adults, chronic loneliness and social isolation can increase the risk of developing dementia by approximately 50%.



Social Connection Matters (2)

For communities:

- In communities where people know one another and are connected to community institutions—like service organizations, religious groups, or community-based organizations—they prepare for, respond to, and recover more quickly from natural hazards than those with lower levels of social connection.



Social Connection Matters (3)

For communities:

- Higher levels of connection within communities are also associated with less violence. Even one level of increase in social connectedness was associated with a 21% reduction in murders and a 20% reduction in motor vehicle thefts.



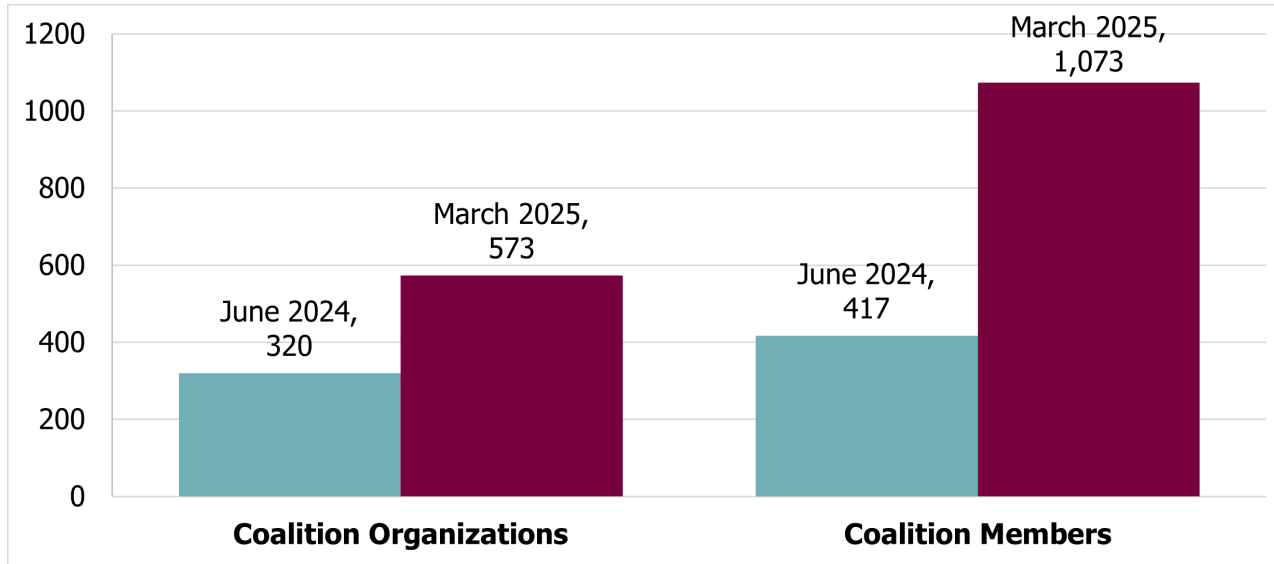
DHS Experience

- Wisconsin Coalition for Social Connection: This coalition was established in 2020, to raise awareness, create a research-driven knowledge base to support interventions, share methods for identifying loneliness, connect people with local resources, and advocate for public policy solutions.
 - 2023 State Health Improvement Plan: Social connectedness and belonging are identified as one of the state's health priorities for the next five years.
-



DHS Experience: ARPA Grants

- The Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources, within the Division of Public Health, coordinated 37 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grants throughout 42 counties in Wisconsin to enhance social connection and livable communities.
- Grants ranged from \$10,413 to the cap of \$100,000.
- Grants were implemented during a 10-month grant cycle.



Twenty-three coalitions were established across Wisconsin, and 96% are continuing after the grant period.

Connection by the numbers

One of the grant requirements was to create a local coalition that will sustain community efforts toward greater social connection.



Coalitions Matter

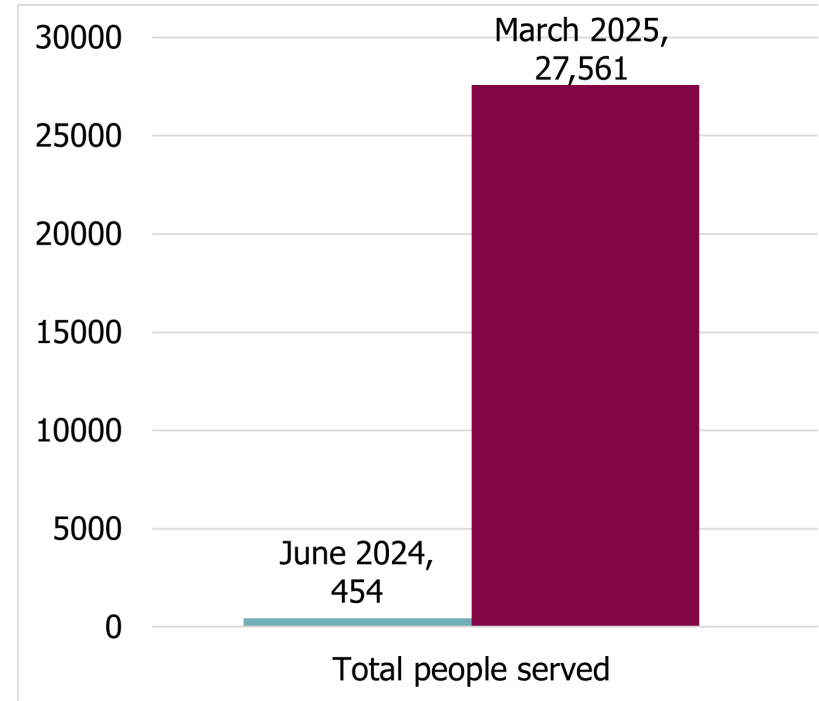


“Ultimately, the coalition’s legacy is one of unity, action, and momentum, and enduring network of mission-aligned partners working together to reduce isolation, celebrate inclusion, and build stronger, more connected communities.” — Opportunity Development Centers, Inc.



Connection by the numbers (2)

- Implement a project, strategy or intervention that enhances social connection or livable communities
- Of the 35 projects that were launched in this grant period, 18 will continue and 17 will partially continue. All of the projects will continue to some degree.





Sharing Connection

The Men's Shed, Juneau County

A community-based space where men gather to learn, work on projects, share skills, and socialize in a safe environment





Sharing More Connection

The Repair Café, Bayfield County

A free, community-based setting where people bring broken household items to be fixed with the help of older adult volunteer experts.





Abundance of Connection

A summary report listing all the grantees, coalitions, and projects is located on the Department of Health Services [American Rescue Plan Act: Social Connection](#) webpage.

Accessibility assessments • Men's Shed •
Community conversations • Podcasts • Games •
Education • Volunteering • Repair Cafe • Transportation •
Visiting • Community dinners • Film screening •
Gatherings • Art • Wisdom sharing • On and on and on...



Lessons Learned

- Passion for the work and the willingness to walk the talk
- "If you choose not to find joy in the snow, you will have less joy in your life but still the same amount of snow."
- Transportation



More Lessons Learned

- Social connection can be significantly improved with a relatively small amount of funding and time.
- Local coalitions supported by a statewide network ensure ongoing resources and sustainability.
- There is no one way to build social connection. Communities that offer consistent opportunities for connection and have a sense of ownership appear to be the most successful.

LTCAC Workforce Homework Assignment

Kevin Coughlin

DMS Policy Initiatives Advisor-Executive

November 11, 2025



Purpose

- Investigate the Secretary's Short-Term Goals for the Workforce Charge and bring findings to the LTCAC.
- Homework LTCAC members: Chris Witt, Stacy Ellingen, Kevin Coughlin



Charge-Policy & Funding Advocacy

- The Long Term Care Advisory Council (LTCAC) will support the Governor's 2025–27 biennial budget, which includes critical funding for all direct care workforce initiatives.
 - Complete. Several of the Governor's workforce initiatives were included in the budget.



Charge-Policy & Funding Advocacy

- Align all workforce activities with budget priorities to ensure long-term support and measurable impact.
 - Determine which of the Governor's workforce initiatives were funded for DHS, DWD and DPI. See Tables.



Governor's DHS Workforce Recommendations that made it into the budget:

#	Agency	Topic	Gov. request	Amount requested AF-2 years	Budget approved (yes, no, partial)	Amount funded
21	DHS	Personal Care Services	X	\$43.8M AF	Partial	\$19M AF
38	DHS	Health Care Provider Training Grants	X	\$5M	Partial	\$1.3M in Allied Health Professional. \$300K decrease in Advanced Practice Clinician.
41	DHS	Grants to Independent Living Centers	X	\$105K GPR (annual)	Yes+	\$305,400 annually GPR
48	DHS	Health Care Provider Innovation Grants	X	\$7.5M GPR	No	\$0
53	DHS	Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Support Program	X	\$1M	No	\$0
56	DHS	WisCaregiver Careers	X	\$8.7M AF	partial	\$2M AF



Governor's DWD and DPI Workforce Recommendations that made it into the budget:

#	Agency	Topic	Gov. request	Amount requested AF-2 years	Budget approved (yes, no, partial)	Amount funded
	DPI	Transition Readiness Transition Grant	X	1.5 M GPR each year 26/27	Partial	500,000 GPR each year 26/27
	DWD	WI Fast Forward Green jobs	X	2M GPR in FY 26	Yes	2M GPR
	DPI	WI Fast Forward Annual Incentive Teacher Apprentice	X	1M GPR Each year	Yes	1M GPR Each year
	DWD	WI Fast Forward Support Health care Industry Training	X	500,000 Each year	Partial	250,000 Each year
	DPI	Youth Apprenticeships Not to	X	3,689,200 in FY26 7M in FY27	Partial	2,536,000 in FY 26 3,466,000 in FY27



Charge-Policy & Funding Advocacy

- Align all workforce activities with budget priorities to ensure long-term support and measurable impact.
 - LTCAC could consider requesting DMS WisCaregiver Careers to collaborate with the LTCAC when developing new initiatives or when the LTCAC identifies areas to improve or expand.



Charge-Recruitment & Career Awareness

- Expand and build upon the WisCaregiver Careers High School, Tech College and University initiative, making it a statewide model for early-career engagement.
 - LTCAC could consider requesting DMS do a detailed briefing at an upcoming LTCAC meeting on how WisCaregiver Career is currently engaging with High Schools, Tech Colleges and Universities for early-career engagement.



Charge-Recruitment & Career Awareness

- Engage underrepresented populations, including refugees and immigrants, through community outreach and awareness campaigns.
 - LTCAC could consider inviting DCF, Bureau of Refugee Programs to present at an upcoming LTCAC meeting to talk about the Bureau of Refugee Programs, refugee, resettlement program agencies. LTCAC could discuss ways of collaborating with DCF.



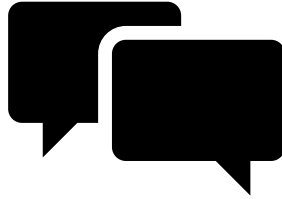
Charge-Recruitment & Career Awareness

- Engage underrepresented populations, including refugees and immigrants, through community outreach and awareness campaigns.
 - LTCAC could consider having DMS invite Homes for Independent Living (HIL) to do a briefing on – PERM Process-MyPath-2025 (grant recipient from HCBS APRA Innovative Grants Program)



Council Discussion

- Homework and next steps



Reframing Aging and Disability in Wisconsin

With the advent of evidence-based framing strategies through the [National Center to Reframe Aging \(NCRA\)](#) and their research partner, the [Frameworks Institute](#), industry leaders and advocates see an opportunity to make a meaningful impact that advances age and disability-inclusive policies and practices.

Reframing matters because...

✓ **We are all aging.**

Positive attitudes about aging can extend lifespan and quality of life by an average of 7.5 years, [according to research from Yale School of Public Health](#)

✓ **We are committed to promoting the well-being of older adults and people with disabilities.**

Eliminating ageism would significantly benefit the psychological health of older adults according to a [2022 study](#).

✓ **We can prioritize and invest in our health.**

A [2018 study](#) estimated that ageism in the United States costs \$63 billion annually in healthcare

✓ **We believe that change is possible.**



Through the leadership of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network, we are taking steps to advance effective communication strategies about aging. Part of our activities include presentations from NCRA. The following free webinars will introduce the key concepts of reframing and provide proven communications strategies that will reduce the negative health and policy impacts of ageism and ableism.

General introductory sessions:

- Tuesday, October 28, 2025 from 1 – 2 pm
https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_iNw7Tvm0Qky11NbDJI6v7Q
- Wednesday, February 11, 2026 from 9 – 10 am
https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_TFO4fZzFSIO81sEKHjRaeQ

Introductory session tailored for health care professionals:

- Thursday, January 15, 2026 from 12 – 1 pm
https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_FzVArKUXSISUw0LZUn0HHw

Current NCRA training is sponsored by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources.

Please direct any questions to Helen Sampson, helen.sampson@dhs.wisconsin.gov

For future trainings and resources, sign up for the Champions List to stay informed:

<https://wiha.wufoo.com/forms/w152jg3f0s6pwd6/>