



# Wisconsin Long Term Care Advisory Council

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January 9, 2013

Heather Bruemmer,  
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Dear Governor Walker and Secretary Smith:

The Wisconsin Long Term Care Advisory Council to the Department of Health Services respectfully recommends that the upcoming 2013-2015 state budget include the continued reform of the state's long-term care system by expanding statewide the Family Care/IRIS programs.

Family Care/IRIS implementation in 57 of Wisconsin's 72 counties has been successful in eliminating waiting lists, delivering cost-effective services, and reducing the over-utilization of nursing homes, as shown through evaluation by the Legislative Audit Bureau and recent follow-up reports by the Department of Health Services (DHS). Here are some facts regarding the Family Care/IRIS programs:

- Family Care/IRIS are more cost-effective than the legacy programs. In 2010, the average per member per month costs were \$3,188 for Family Care, and \$3,761 for legacy waivers (COP/CIP). If nursing home costs are removed from Family Care costs, the per member per month cost drops to \$2,954.49.
- Family Care/IRIS are sustainable. Family Care participants who enrolled in the first few months since the enrollment cap was lifted cost 23% less than existing enrollees. More than 95% of funding is used to support member services, with low administrative costs.
- Eight of the 15 counties have already agreed to participate in Family Care/IRIS, and have invested considerable time and resources preparing to change programs.
- Family Care/IRIS contributes to higher rates of community participation for individuals with disabilities and frail elders. 72% of individuals enrolled in these programs live in the community, compared with only 38% in 1995.
- Overall consumer satisfaction is high. A statewide Family Care Member Satisfaction Survey found 78% said their care team always listened to their concerns and 73% said they always can get help from their care team.

The continuation of a two-tiered system in Wisconsin is not sustainable. Statewide expansion planning during the next biennium is critical in providing the much-needed supports for *all* people dependent on long-term care so they can live, participate in, and contribute to their communities.

Thank you for considering this recommendation.

Sincerely,

Heather A. Bruemmer, Council Chair