



FAMILY CARE PROGRAM

Linking the Community with Long-Term Care Solutions

BY GINA GROSKOPF

For over 20 years, I've been involved in some aspect of long-term care for seniors and people with disabilities. There are a variety of programs and organizations that support this community, including a program called Family Care, which operates in many counties throughout the state of Wisconsin, including Dane, Sauk, and Columbia in south central Wisconsin.

At its core, Family Care is a Medicaid-funded program managed by the Department of Health Services (DHS), which offers support services to help people live in their homes and as independently as possible, for as long as possible. These services are specifically tailored to frail elders and adults who have intellectual or physical disabilities. Adult day care centers, community-supported

living, home-delivered meals, and home safety checks are excellent examples of services provided through a Family Care program.

While overseen by DHS, Family Care is administered by organizations often referred to as Managed Care Organizations (MCOs). MCOs develop and manage a comprehensive network of long-

term care providers and provide each Family Care member with a dedicated care team, including a care manager and registered nurse. According to the DHS website, this care team works with the member to build a highly personalized care plan based on a comprehensive assessment of the member's needs, abilities, preferences, and values.

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In Wisconsin counties where Family Care is offered, people have at least two choices for companies to manage their care. To learn about the companies who offer Family Care, individuals or guardians should make an appointment with their local Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). To find a local ADRC office, visit dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc.

The knowledgeable staff at the ADRC will work to understand each person's needs and program eligibility, then present unbiased options from which to choose. Once they make a choice, they will be assigned a care team and begin to develop the care plan mentioned above.

There are many exciting success stories that come from the Family Care program. It's hard to choose just one to illustrate the program's effectiveness, but a scenario we often see at Care Wisconsin is a member spends time in a nursing home, perhaps due to an accident (like a fall) or hospitalization, but they desire to move back into their community. The MCO care team, including the care manager and registered nurse, pull together options for the member. This ranges from returning home to moving to

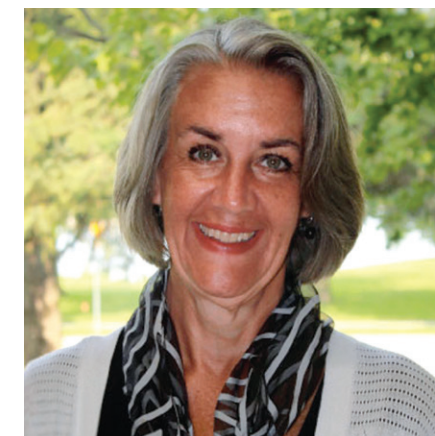
an assisted-living facility. They then help arrange supports to make this placement successful.

A member may need transportation services to get to appointments; require adaptive showering equipment, like a shower bench; or even employment assistance. All of these can be made possible through Family Care. With these supports in place, the hope is that the program's long-term care objectives can be met to keep people living as independently and as healthily as possible.

I encourage you to learn more about Wisconsin's amazing Family Care program by visiting the DHS website, which is the source of truth about the program, and then talk with local ADRC representatives.

Good luck on your journey!

Gina started with Care Wisconsin as a Regional Director for Family Care, leading program implementation efforts across the state before rising through the ranks to her current role as Executive Director of Long-Term Care Services, in which she develops and oversees high-quality, cost-effective long-term care systems. In her free time, Gina enjoys reading, spending time with her family, and trying out different exercise classes.



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The Wisconsin Council of the Blind & Visually Impaired is a private not-for-profit community-based organization. Our Mission is to promote the dignity and empowerment of the people in Wisconsin who are blind and visually impaired by providing services, advocating legislation, and educating the general public.

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