

# Wisconsin Dept. of Health Services: Announces the organizations to provide family care and IRIS services in Dane County

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Contact:

Jennifer Miller/Elizabeth Goodsitt  
(608) 266-1683

Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Secretary Linda Seemeyer today announced the managed care organizations selected to serve Family Care members and the IRIS (Include, Respect, I Self Direct) consultant agencies that intend to serve participants in the IRIS program in Dane County. This expansion will end the wait list for more than 450 people in Dane County with long-term care needs, including some who will have access to needed long-term care services for the first time.

Eligible individuals interested in Family Care will be able to choose from Care Wisconsin and My Choice Family Care, upon certification. Advocates4U, Connections, First Person Care Consultants, and TMG intend to support those choosing IRIS.

“This is a major step in expanding Family Care and IRIS statewide, so Wisconsin’s most vulnerable citizens will have access to long-term care programs,” said Secretary Seemeyer. “These programs emphasize person-centered care and self-determination, and they are key to helping people live independently, with their best quality of life.”

The Family Care and IRIS programs provide long-term care services to frail elders, and adults with intellectual and physical disabilities, fostering independence and improving quality of life, while recognizing the need for support and the desire to self-direct long-term care services.

Along with the Family Care and IRIS programs, individuals in Dane County will continue to have the option to enroll in the Family Care Partnership (Partnership) program. This program provides all the benefits of Family Care while also providing acute and primary services. Care Wisconsin and iCare will continue to be choices for the Partnership program in Dane County.

The transition to Family Care, Partnership, and IRIS in Dane County will begin in the first quarter of 2018. During the months leading up to the implementation, DHS will work with the aging and disability resource center (ADRC) and county staff to transition more than 2,200 individuals currently served by Medicaid legacy waivers.

The transition will include September group meetings with Dane County participants to provide an overview of the Family Care, Partnership, and IRIS programs and answer questions related to the transition. Beginning in October, each person will receive one-on-one counseling with the ADRC to help them decide which program will be best for them and then choose a managed care organization for Family Care or Partnership, or an IRIS consultant agency. The managed care organizations and IRIS consultant agencies will also meet with providers to build their service networks.

Governor Scott Walker's current budget proposal includes the statewide Family Care and IRIS expansion for frail elders and adults with disabilities, and also expands access to care and ends wait lists for children with developmental disabilities, physical disabilities or severe emotional disturbances.

By ending wait lists for both children and adults in need of long-term care services, Wisconsin maintains a long-standing reputation as a leader in long-term care. As of 2014, at least 582,000 people in other states across the country were on wait lists for long-term care services.