

Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities: Statement on Governor-elect Evers nomination of Andrea Palm for DHS Secretary

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The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) looks forward to working with nominee Palm and the Department of Health Services to continue to improve Wisconsin's Medicaid programs serving people with disabilities.

"Half of Wisconsin's residents living with disabilities use one of nearly 20 different Medicaid programs. Programs like Family Care and IRIS provide supports and services—such as personal care, therapies, transportation, and job coaching—that go beyond acute and primary care to keep people with disabilities and older adults in their homes, living and working independently, and out of costly facilities like nursing homes," said Beth Swedeen, BPDD Executive Director.

Equally important are the home and community-based workforce that provide supports and services for people with disabilities in Family Care and IRIS. In Wisconsin a shortage of professional direct care workers has created a crisis for people with disabilities, older adults, and their families. "BPDD looks forward to working with Governor Elect Evers administration and the legislature on innovative solutions that increase recruitment and retention of quality workers," said Swedeen.

DHS implementation of the legislatively directed improvements to the Medicaid

Assistance Purchase Plan (MAPP) program and Medicaid medically needy rate will greatly benefit people with disabilities and are desperately needed. BPDD looks forward to continuing engagement in this process.

Implementation of the new BadgerCare waiver requirements and potential BadgerCare expansion will also impact people with disabilities. Many people with disabilities—including people with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities who do not qualify for long-term care, people with a primary diagnosis of mental health, people with intermittent or chronic health conditions, and people waiting for a disability determination from SSDI—are in Wisconsin's BadgerCare program.

“BPDD looks forward to working with the new DHS Secretary to increase community integration, enhance community living, and support integrated employment,” Swedeen said.