



The Wisconsin Long-Term Care Coalition **Keep Our Care at Home**

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Long Term Care Stakeholders Celebrate Family Care and IRIS Expansion to Rock County

Long-term care stakeholders are celebrating today as Rock County residents officially gain access to Wisconsin's nationally-recognized long-term care programs Family Care and IRIS.

"Expansion of Family Care and IRIS means the wait will soon be over for the 300 Rock County residents who are currently on a 10-year long waiting list to receive services," said Wisconsin Long Term Care Coalition Co-Chair Lynn Breedlove.

Family Care and IRIS focus on prevention and community-based supports that keep people in their homes and communities and out of costly institutional care. Since 2007, Family Care/IRIS have expanded from 5 to now 65 counties and support 60,000 Wisconsin residents who are elderly or have disabilities.

In addition to ending the waiting list for services, Family Care/IRIS save Wisconsin taxpayers approximately \$400 million per year compared to the legacy waiver/Fee-for-Service Medicaid program. Rock County currently operates a legacy waiver program that is being replaced by Family Care/IRIS. In addition, past analysis done by the Department of Health Services (DHS) shows that spending on long-term care as a share of the overall state Medicaid budget decreased by 10% between 2002 and 2011.

Citing the cost-effectiveness of the programs, the Rock County Board voted unanimously in July 2014 to begin the transition to Family Care/IRIS, and in January 2016 the Legislature unanimously approved legislation authorizing the expansion.

"Wisconsin's proven long-term care system eliminates waiting lists for services, allows Wisconsin's older adults and people with disabilities to remain in their own homes or the community, and saves taxpayers money," said Tom Frazier co-chair of the Wisconsin Long-term Care Coalition.

"Wisconsin should continue to build on this successful model."

A 2013 report by DHS endorsed statewide expansion as "the cost-effective solution to ensure that Wisconsin's elderly and residents with severe disabilities receive needed care and quality supports." At the time, DHS estimated that statewide Family Care/IRIS expansion would save the state \$34.7 million over 10 years.

The Wisconsin Long Term Care Coalition continues to advocate for expansion of Family Care/IRIS to the 1,500 individuals waiting for services in the seven remaining legacy waiver counties.

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