



of Wisconsin Disability Organizations

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**Family Care Waiver Renewal Approved:  
Questions Remain About People Affected by Caps**

The Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations is pleased to see that the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has approved Wisconsin's Family Care waiver renewal request. Disability advocates had been waiting for the approval during the months of back and forth negotiations between CMS and Wisconsin's Department of Health Services (DHS).

"This is good news for consumers with disabilities," says Maureen Ryan, Survival Co-chair and Executive Director of the Wisconsin Coalition of Independent Living Centers. "What is most important is that this long-term care program continue and that people get the services and supports they need without interruption."

The letter also indicates that the recent caps on Family Care programs were a violation of the state's waiver agreement with the federal government and that people affected by the caps may be eligible for reimbursement.

"There are still questions regarding the letter from CMS," says Beth Swedeon, Survival Co-chair and Executive Director of the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities. "If people who were put on a waiting list while the Family Care caps were in place have the right to an appeal, as the letter suggests, they need to know who to contact and how."

*The Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations is a cross-disability coalition of more than 40 state and local organizations and groups. For more than 20 years, Survival has been focused on changing and improving policies and practices that support people with disabilities of all ages to be full participants in community life.*

“Until we get more clarification from either CMS or DHS, people can contact Disability Rights Wisconsin,” says Tom Masseur, Executive Director of Disability Rights Wisconsin. “Anyone with questions about their benefits or rights in these programs can always call.”

Individuals 18-59 years of age who are applying for or are a member of Family Care, Partnership or IRIS can reach a Disability Rights Wisconsin Family Care and IRIS ombudsman at 800-928-8778. An ombudsman is an advocate who will listen to a consumer and help them understand the Family Care process as well as any next steps they can take related to their questions or concerns.

The Board on Aging and Long Term Care advocates for people aged 60 and older who receive funding through Family Care. Consumers can reach a BOALTC Ombudsman Intake Specialist by calling 1 800 815-0015.

Family Care and its related long-term care programs provide essential daily supports, like help with bathing, dressing, meals, getting to work and community participation for eligible elderly and people with disabilities.

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