

## Care Team **Shout Out**

“My disabled wife has been a client since she suffered a very serious stroke in 2018. The help we received from Jake and Jessica helped tremendously to make things easier for us to successfully transition through the most challenging time period of our lives. [They] made all the difference and we would like your organization to know how fantastic they both were at their jobs. We feel very fortunate to have the caring and capable assistance of people who can assist us in navigating the challenging road ahead for us...”

– Sean C. and Karen M.

Do you have a care manager who’s helped you through a hard time? Is there someone on your care team who goes above and beyond to make sure you’re safe and healthy? We want to hear from you! Email us a brief description of why your My Choice Wisconsin care staff deserves to be recognized to [shoutout@mychoicewi.org](mailto:shoutout@mychoicewi.org). Submitted quotes could be included in our Care Team Shout Out section!



### Member Spotlight

## Meet Patrick

MCW member, Patrick, loves all things fitness. From surfing and snorkeling, to hiking and rock climbing, to his favorites basketball and swimming, Patrick is no stranger to trying new activities. He has always enjoyed being active because it gives him the opportunity to meet people, have fun, and stay healthy.

Patrick likes working out with others too. He plays team sports in the Special Olympics and every week, he and his dad Brian go to Taekwondo class

together. He’s proud of his hard work there: “I earned my third degree blackbelt and I won two gold medals competing in forms and sparring in AAU national Taekwondo competition.” Way to go Patrick!

Patrick encourages others to be empowered to do sports and be yourself. “Start by getting involved with activities with family and groups like Special Olympics. Everybody can be active, it’s good for your health!”



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### Follow us:



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## Upcoming Events

Visit [www.mychoicewi.org/about/events/](http://www.mychoicewi.org/about/events/) for details.



**May 13, 9:00 am - 3:30 pm**  
WI Employment First Conference – Virtual

**May 15, 10:00 am**  
Best Buddies Friendship Walk – Virtual & at Froedtert Hospital, Wauwatosa

**June 2**  
Madison Metropolitan School District Transition Fair – James Madison Memorial High School, Madison

**June 8**  
Ozaukee Co. Senior Conference – “Drive-Up” at Grafton Senior Center, Grafton



# Member Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 2 | SPRING 2021

### Letter from the CEO

Dear Member,

It has certainly been a cold, lonely winter, but at long last, here comes the sun. While we continue to encourage the “Three Ws – Wash Your Hands. Wear a Mask. Watch Your Distance.”, with three vaccines being offered, Wisconsinites are moving ever closer to getting our lives back to normal!

We are very happy that as every week passes, more and more My Choice Wisconsin members receive a COVID vaccine and we’re confident that by the end of May, 60% of our members will have been vaccinated.

MCW knows life has been disrupted by the pandemic and you may need a hand in getting your routine back. You can get the help you need from your care team, whether it is finding out where to get the nearest vaccine or making sure your care plan once again supports the activities that you want to do in the community, such as visiting with family and friends, working, or volunteering. Know that your care team will involve you and your family in the decision-making process around your care plan. Even when life takes an unexpected turn, you



should be involved every step of the way.

Recently we heard from a family member whose loved one (a MCW member) needed to move. We were happy to learn about how the care team kept the family involved and supported throughout the move. They wrote to tell us:

“Our sister was notified that her current home was closing and that she needed to relocate to another facility. Amy (her Care Manager) was our rock through this process. She listened to us and understood our desire to find the best possible place where our sister’s needs would be met. She kept in touch with updates... She was patient and explained processes to us... She was kind, caring, and compassionate. [Amy] understood that this would be a huge change for our sister and empathized with our concerns. She was positive and always

reassuring us, making us feel that we were a team, and would find a suitable facility for our sister, which ultimately happened!”

Amy and all the other My Choice Wisconsin Care Managers and Nurses are here to fully support all our members, members who live in facilities as well as those who have chosen to self-direct their supports and services. If you would like to learn more about Self-Directed Supports – choosing your own worker, selecting their wages within budget limits, and creating their schedule – talk to your care team!

As always, thank you for trusting us with your services. It is our honor and privilege to be your partner in care.



Sincerely,  
Maria Ledger

## Dr. Q.'s Corner

# A Healthy Spring Reboot



Dr. Eric Quivers  
Medical Director

Any winter can be hard on our physical and mental health. This one was particularly difficult with a record stretch of below-

freezing temperatures and inches and inches snow. Due to the pandemic, it was riskier to be with friends and family, so we were more isolated. This dreary season took a toll on our mindset – some of us may have had depression or mood changes. Thankfully, spring is here and our new year's resolutions are proof of our good intentions!

As the days become longer and temperatures heat up,



we're looking for ways to bounce back to normal. Check out some healthy suggestions from the CDC – they can help

prevent chronic diseases! Be sure to check with your doctor to make sure activities are safe for you.

## Be safe and enjoy the warmer weather!

- Move more and sit less – 2 and a half hours of combined activity each week
- Eat a healthy diet – fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products
- Rethink your drink – reach for water and limit alcohol
- Get enough sleep – 7 hours a night is ideal
- Stop smoking – to reduce your risk for lung disease and cancer
- Dental health – brush your teeth at least twice a day
- Get your checkups – don't neglect your health during the pandemic
- Know your family history
- Practice sun safety – SPF 15 or higher

More healthy ideas can be found at: [www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease](http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease).

## Farmers Markets and SNAP Benefits – Farmers Markets Opening Soon!

By Carmen Baldwin, DTR

The time is near – farmers markets are almost here!! What happens when you visit your local market? You can buy fresh fruits, vegetables, and other foods which support farmers near you. You can talk to the person who grew the food. You may even save money! Senior farmers market vouchers are available and some markets also have senior shopping hours.



Be sure to visit the information table – they may have recipes or free giveaways. Some places have special matching programs that offer dollars or tokens that will match what you spend. You can even use your Food Share card at certain markets; make sure to ask if it's accepted prior to filling your shopping bag.

Your Aging and Disability Resource Center, Chamber

of Commerce, or Business Association can help you find a local farmers market and where to get senior farmers market vouchers. If you have internet access, you can visit [www.wifarmersmarkets.org](http://www.wifarmersmarkets.org) and click on "Find A Farmers Market" to search online. Many websites have great information, recipes, and ideas for preparing your produce. To learn more about the senior vouchers, visit [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wic/fmnp/senior.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wic/fmnp/senior.htm)

You can always ask your My Choice Wisconsin team to help you connect to these benefits too!

## Featured Article

# Food Allergy Action Month

By Katie Maccoux, RDN, CD

May is Food Allergy Action Month. It's a great time to learn about this issue that affects 32 million Americans. The immune system is our body's way of keeping us healthy. It finds bacteria, viruses, and other bad microorganisms before they make us sick. The immune system is also working when someone has a food allergy. The body sees a certain food as a threat and reacts. Reactions can include hives (raised itchy bumps), lip swelling, and having a hard time breathing. Some people also have lowered blood pressure, stomach pain, vomiting, or diarrhea. A severe, life-threatening anaphylactic reaction will have symptoms like wheezing, lightheadedness, and fast heart rate usually

happen within minutes of eating a food but they may not show up until hours later. People with a severe allergy carry an Epinephrine shot such as an EpiPen or Auvi-Q to reverse symptoms.

People can be allergic to any food, but most allergies come from this group of eight: milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, soy, wheat, fish, and shellfish. These foods are known as "The Big 8." Companies must clearly list if their food product has any of these ingredients. This helps customers find the information quickly on food packages.

Many people have found one or more foods that make them feel sick after eating. We feel bad, but the immune system is not activated. These are known

as food intolerances (not an allergy). The best and safest way for a doctor to diagnose a food allergy is an "oral food challenge" In a medical facility where patients eat the food they might be allergic to with an allergist there (a doctor who specializes in food allergies) so they are ready to treat an allergic reaction if it happens.

Food allergies can start at any age. A person might eat a food for many years before their immune system starts reacting to it. People can also outgrow an allergy, but it is important to work with an allergist to safely find if this has happened.

Source: Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE)

<https://www.foodallergy.org/>

## Quality Update

# Performance Improvement Project Awarded 100% Score

At My Choice Wisconsin, we're always looking for better ways to provide safe, effective care and services to our members. A "Performance Improvement Project" (PIP) is an action plan that we create to help our organization achieve a specific goal. Over the last year, we have been working on a PIP for creating consistent member records and are excited to share the Department of Health Services gave us a 100% score!

Having accurate and reliable member documents means our members get appropriate services to keep them healthy and safe and our care teams get a deeper understanding of

member needs and can more easily identify and address possible risks.

The goal of this PIP was to increase consistent member record documentation through training and by providing tools and resources for care teams. MCW care team staff in 7 counties tested out new materials, received detailed training, and used the resources provided. The newly updated member records were checked for consistency and we found an improvement!

The Department of Health Services hires an independent agency called MetaStar

to review PIP projects to make sure they meet quality standards and grade the projects on things like how data was collected, the strategies used for improvement, the evaluation of results, and whether or not "real" improvement was made. MetaStar found that ALL quality standards were met. Well done team!

The MCW Quality Management Department plans to keep improving member records as the project continues in 2021 to increase consistency and accuracy across the organization for all members.

## Member Advisory Committee

# This is Our Shot - Get Yours!

You are eligible now to get the vaccine and so are your paid and unpaid caregivers, including your family members who support you! The Member Advisory Committee (MAC) wants to encourage all our members to get their COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible if their doctor has determined that it is a safe choice for them.

Ask someone you trust to help you set up your vaccine appointment. WI has a new vaccine call center if you have questions (1-844-684-1064). It's free and your MCW care manager can help schedule a ride if you need transportation to your appointment.

## Here are some words of encouragement from a few of the members of the MAC who have been vaccinated:



"The vaccine helps us build immunity. Just because the vaccine is new doesn't mean it is any less safe. It's important for as many people to get vaccinated as possible to help end the pandemic."

– Chad D.

"It did not hurt. I was just a little tired and crabby the next day. It's easy! Get your vaccine!"

– Savanna H.

"Getting the COVID-19 vaccine allows me to interact outside of my home knowing that I am protected. This gives me freedom and the independence to live my life safely."

– Duazong H., MAC Chairperson

