

# Member Newsletter

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## Member Advisory Committee

# Enjoying Summer in WI

Summer in Wisconsin is a great time to be active and try new things. With many of the COVID-19 restrictions lifted, now is the time to step up your community activities! Chad and Katie from the MCW Member Advisory Committee have a few ideas for you.

### Chad

“I enjoy a variety of outdoor activities. I stumbled upon a national organization called Adaptive Adventures ([www.adaptiveadventures.org](http://www.adaptiveadventures.org)) that provides tons of programs for every age, ability, and dynamic. They have program opportunities in WI like in-home exercise programs, biking, kayaking, fishing on pontoon boats, waterskiing, snowboarding, and rock climbing. You can also take sailing lessons. All the programs I’ve participated in have been very affordable. They were very helpful and accommodating at every step of the way. They also have awesome volunteers! I’ve had the pleasure of meeting many new and interesting people.



If you want to check out other accessible outdoor opportunities in WI, I recommend that you check out the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources’ Open the Outdoors webpage (<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/OpenOutdoors>). You will be pleasantly surprised by all the accessible equipment and programs available in this state.”

### Katie

“In spring of 2020, I had been looking forward to going to my local Senior Center for some new activities and new friends. I signed up and then 2

weeks later COVID shut down everything. But now, 2 ½ years later, I am finally enjoying an art class and a stamping group at my local Senior Center. I have met some very nice people there who are makers, like me. To find a Senior Center in your area, check out the Wisconsin Care Planning Council (<https://www.carewisconsin.org>), then click “Senior Centers” under the navigation dropdown Eldercare Services.

It is time to be active again. Even if you aren’t comfortable with large groups, small-scale activities can be fun. I teach crafts to people with disabilities in small groups or one-on-one.

There are opportunities available for just about every interest, so get out and have some fun!”

## Letter from the CEO

# Different Flowers Make a Bouquet

Diversity and inclusion are important values at My Choice Wisconsin. These values are so important to us, they are included in our Mission Statement and Core Values.

### CORE VALUES

**Service:** We are committed to service excellence through continuous improvement.

**Equity:** We have genuine respect for all people and believe that everyone should be treated fairly.

**Respect:** We value the rights, wishes, and transitions of others. We are accountable and stand behind our commitments.

**Vision:** We aspire to a sustainable future through innovation and commitment to quality.

**Empowerment:** We help our members take ownership of their health and embrace self-advocacy.

MCW is fortunate and proud to have a diverse group of individuals that make up our membership, employee base, and provider community. We

strive to work collaboratively with Advocacy Organizations across the state, Chambers of Commerce representing many populations, and LGBTQ organizations, many of whom celebrated National Pride Month in June with parades and festivals after a two-year hiatus due to COVID restrictions. Our commitment to an inclusive culture helps us tailor our services and supports to each individual based on their needs and preferences.

In short, our goal is to provide effective, equitable, understandable, and respectful quality care and services that are responsive to diverse cultural health beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy, and other communication needs.

As members, you have many options in deciding who provides your long-term care services, your supplemental Medicare services, your prescription medications, and your community supports like care management, transportation, supportive home care and residential services. We value your confidence in My

Choice Wisconsin to meet your healthcare and long-term needs.

We do our very best to match members with care teams who understand their cultural needs and preferences and can provide meaningful support as our members navigate through each phase of life. We want you to be involved in your care. In fact, we want you to be comfortably seated in the driver's seat when it comes to your healthcare decisions and care plans.

Your satisfaction with your care and services is our first priority. We want to hear from you if there are areas you believe need improvement. If you are not completely satisfied with your services, talk with your care manager or nurse today so we can make that right.



Wishing you a safe and healthy summer.

Sincerely,  
**Maria Ledger**  
CEO  
My Choice  
Wisconsin



## MAC – You’re Invited!

What does it mean to you to live your best life? We want to learn what long-term care services assist our members in living their life to the fullest!

This summer, the MAC will be hosting in-person “LIVING MY BEST LIFE: A CONVERSATION” sessions in Eau Claire, Madison, West Bend, and Milwaukee. We want to learn:

- the kinds of support you need to be safe, healthy, and as independent as possible
- the opportunities and experiences you’ve had that make your life enjoyable and meaningful
- the help or support you need to be able to live your best life, one that is purposeful and meaningful to you and reflects where you are at in your life

If you live in one of these four areas and would like to be a part of this project, you can email [memberadvisorycommittee@mychoicewi.org](mailto:memberadvisorycommittee@mychoicewi.org) or call Mary Clare Carlson at 1-800-963-0035.

### Featured Article

# Eating Well this Summer

When we think of summer, we think of soaking up the sun, biking or walking outdoors, spending the afternoon at the lake. It is also an energizing time to take care of our bodies by resetting our diet. Here are some top tips for a healthy summer.

### **Eat foods of the rainbow**

Colorful fruits and veggies are rich in vitamins and nutrients and there are so many to enjoy this time of year! They make great snacks and can be used in many ways, like adding them to yogurt, blending them into smoothies, and grilling them as a side dish. In season right now are:

- strawberries, blueberries, cherries, peaches, cantaloupe, and watermelon

- zucchini, corn, green beans, asparagus, squash, and bell peppers

### **Lighter meals**

Winter meals are hearty and heavy – stews and casseroles and baked goods. Keep summer meals light and fresh by starting with colorful veggies (like broccoli, zucchini, or a salad), then add in fiber-rich starches (like sweet potato, brown rice, or lentils) and lean proteins (like chicken, fish, or tofu). Try to limit added sugar and processed foods.

### **Stay hydrated, especially when outside**

Water is the #1 choice when it comes to quenching your thirst. Aim to drink 8-12 glasses of water a day, more if you’re

exercising or being active. Carry a water bottle with you when you’re away from home to remind you to drink more.

### **Don’t forget about food safety**

Keeping food outdoors for long periods of time, like during a potluck or picnic, increases the risk of bacterial growth. The FDA says food should not be kept out unrefrigerated for more than two hours. If the temperature outside is above 90° F, that window shrinks to one hour. Keep hot food hot (above 140° F) and cold food cold (below 40° F).

### **References**

[Food and Drug Administration](#)  
[HSS Nutrition](#)

# Seasonal Allergies



**Dr. Eric Quivers**  
Medical Director

Sniffle, sniffle. Sneeze, sneeze. Cough. And itchy, burning eyes! That time of year is around the corner –

seasonal allergies, also known as hay fever. As the weather warms, plants and flowers grow green and blossom. And while it may be beautiful, there is a downside - lots of pollen is released into the air. At times there's so much that everything outside is coated in a layer of it. For allergy sufferers, this can be the worst time of year.

Seasonal allergies are the result of our body's immune system

overreacting to something that is in the environment. Many people suffer from allergies year-round, but they can be worse when triggered by certain types of allergens. Ragweed is the most common trigger and is dominant from August to December, whereas January to April has grass pollen and late April to July has tree pollen. There are an estimated 3 million cases a year!

**Knowing your allergen triggers and understanding how weather and the time of day affects pollen counts can help against allergy attacks:**

- **Tree, grass, and ragweed pollens thrive during cool nights and warm days**
- **Molds grow quickly in heat and high humidity**
- **Pollen levels tend to peak in the morning hours**
- **Rain washes pollen away, but pollen counts can soar after rainfall**
- **On a day with no wind, there are less airborne allergens**
- **When the day is windy and warm, pollen counts surge**
- **Moving to another climate to avoid allergies is usually not successful – allergens are virtually everywhere**

There are some things you can do that do not include medications, like keeping the windows closed to your home and car during allergy season. If you are outdoors a lot during this time of year, change clothes and take a shower when you are back inside. You might consider wearing an N95 or KN95 mask to block the pollen. If you are feeling sick a lot of the time, speak with your provider about treatments. A visit to an allergist might also help.

For more information, visit the American College of Allergy, Asthma, & Immunology at this website: <https://acaai.org/allergies/allergic-conditions/seasonal-allergies/>



## Quality Update

# We Want Member Input on Our Quality Plan!

The goal of the annual Quality Management Work Plan is to make sure My Choice Wisconsin members receive the best care and services possible and that our practices follow the contract agreements for the programs we offer. We do this by monitoring quality and making improvements throughout the year. The My Choice Wisconsin Quality Plan lists the areas that need focused effort and improvement, builds on past achievements, and addresses gaps in performance. It cannot include all aspects of member care. The My Choice Wisconsin 2021 Quality Plan had 8 goals, which have carried forward into 2022:

- 1. Care Team staff respond to and report situations that endanger the health and safety of any member.**
- 2. Members receive high quality care management, support and services.**
- 3. Vulnerable high-risk members receive appropriate monitoring and support.**
- 4. Care Team staff provide support for preventative care as recommended.**
- 5. Members receive high quality care to promote the best possible health outcomes.**
- 6. Members are satisfied with My Choice Wisconsin and the services they receive.**
- 7. Members receive high quality care from contracted providers.**
- 8. Care Teams receive training and evaluation to deliver high quality care management.**

My Choice Wisconsin aims for excellence across all quality measures related to our members' care, health, and safety, even if not included in the Quality Plan.

If you would like to provide feedback on My Choice Wisconsin's Quality Plan, please email [Quality.Program@mychoicefamilycare.org](mailto:Quality.Program@mychoicefamilycare.org) or contact our Self-Advocacy Specialist, Mary Clare Carlson, at 1-800-963-0035, [maryclare.carlson@mychoicewi.org](mailto:maryclare.carlson@mychoicewi.org).

## Care Team **Shout Out**

"My current and previous Family Care teams have made such a positive difference in my life. A few years back my health changed requiring me to move into an assisted living facility, and my care manager Toni J. was there every step of the way to help me through that big transition. She was so kind and caring through it all and even found a place where I could keep my cat Marble and fish Neptune, because I couldn't imagine living without them.

Then last year I was able to move back to my hometown area, to be closer to my dear friends and family. Now, instead of only getting to see my sister once or twice a year, I get to see her once or twice a month! This would not have been possible without my new care team Karen H. and Laurie S., who found me the beautiful place that I live in, with my cat and fish. I can't tell you how grateful I am for Karen and Laurie, who are kind, thoughtful, and genuinely make me feel special. Honestly, between my care teams and everyone else that I worked with at My Choice Wisconsin, I have NEVER felt like a number. I feel very blessed."

*Becky F., Family Care Member*

# Medicare Dual Advantage – MORE for 2022

By Lisa Morse-Heinz  
Medicare Advisor

The My Choice Wisconsin Medicare Dual Advantage plan provides even more in 2022! As of January 2022, Medicare Dual Advantage has new benefits!

## More Benefits

- \$2,500 annual dental benefit includes dentures! This means less dental out-of-pocket expenses for members!
- Meals following a hospital or nursing facility discharge – 1-2 meals/day for 28 days to help members heal with nutritious meals.
- Home and bath safety items and modifications (such as grab bars) of up to \$300 a year so members can live safely at home.

Other helpful benefits include an over-the-counter benefit

of up to \$100 a month with rollover, additional coverage for eyeglasses up to \$150 a year, an emergency response button, and dental coverage that makes it easy for you to see any dentist!

## More Stars

Every year, Medicare evaluates plans based on a 5-star rating system. For the 2022 plan year, Medicare Dual Advantage\* received the highest rating: 5 out of 5 stars!

## More Counties

We offer Medicare Dual Advantage in even more counties in 2022. This plan is available in 38 counties, now including: Door, Florence, Manitowoc, Marinette, Milwaukee, Racine, and Sheboygan.

## More Providers

Aurora Health System is now

a provider for Medicare Dual Advantage. We also partnered with DentaQuest so members have an established network of providers but still have flexibility to see any out of network dentist after authorization.

## More Savings

Medicare Dual Advantage is available to those who live in our service area with Medicare and Medicaid. The monthly premium is \$0!

Learn if the program is right for you by calling 1-800-963-0035 and ask to speak with a Medicare Advisor. You can also request a call on our website: [www.mychoicewi.org/speak-with-a-medicare-advisor/](http://www.mychoicewi.org/speak-with-a-medicare-advisor/)

[\\*https://www.cms.gov/files/document/2022-star-ratings-fact-sheet1082021.pdf](https://www.cms.gov/files/document/2022-star-ratings-fact-sheet1082021.pdf)

## Important Changes for WI Medicaid Eligibility

My Choice Wisconsin offers programs for individuals that qualify for Medicaid. During the COVID-19 emergency, Medicaid had special rules so more people could get and keep Medicaid benefits. One of those changes has allowed you to keep your coverage without renewing your Medicaid eligibility.

When the COVID-19 emergency ends, you will need to provide details about your current

situation. That time is not yet here though – more information will be sent to you in the future.

**How to be prepared:** **Make sure your contact info is correct.** Log in at [www.access.wi.gov](http://www.access.wi.gov) or contact your local agency to update your contact information today. You can also manage your benefits on the go with the “MyACCESS” mobile app.

**Check your mail.** The WI

Department of Health Services will mail you a letter about your Medicaid coverage. This letter will let you know if you need to complete a renewal form. My Choice Wisconsin will also send you information to keep you informed.

If you get one, **complete your renewal form.** Fill out the form and return it right away to help avoid a gap in your Medicaid coverage.

# Quality – Member Satisfaction Survey

## YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

Your satisfaction with the support and services you receive from My Choice Wisconsin is one of our top goals and your feedback helps us to understand how we can deliver. You are the center of the care planning process - from enrollment, to care plan development, to working alongside your care team - and we want My Choice Wisconsin members to be highly satisfied every step along the way. Our care teams will check in to make sure:

- We are there for you when you need us.
- We meet with you as often as you need.
- You are involved with making decisions about your care plan.
- Your care plan includes things that are important to you.
- The services you receive meet your needs.
- We work with you to adjust your care plan if your needs change.

No matter which program you are in, you can tell us how you feel. Member surveys give members and/or their legal decision makers a chance to express how well My Choice Wisconsin helps with meeting your needs and reaching your goals. Your survey answers are so important in making your program the best it can be!

## Surveys by Program

### Family Care & Partnership

- Member Satisfaction Survey - mailed July-September from WI Department of Health Services.
- Surveys are sent to randomly selected Family Care members
- Surveys are sent to all Partnership members

### Partnership & Medicare Dual Advantage

- Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Survey - mailed February-May from Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) - mailed April-July from Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

### Medicaid SSI

- SSI Member Satisfaction Survey - mailed in October from My Choice Wisconsin

### BadgerCare Plus

- Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Survey - mailed February-May from Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

For more information or questions about the surveys, please call your care manager. Make sure your voice is heard - participate in the survey! We care about YOU!



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800-963-0035 TTY: 711

**Member Spotlight**

# Meet Jeff

Having lived on his family's farm for his whole life, Jeff enjoys nature and the outdoors. After a life-changing car accident as a young adult, a separate living space was built for him on the property. This allowed him to get the care he needs, but also offered Jeff independence to enjoy his favorite hobbies. About 15 years ago, he discovered another passion - photography. Sandhill cranes, deer, and a pair of Canadian geese that come around each year are often featured in his work.

"Before the accident, I was a motorhead. My dad had an autobody shop out of our home.



Go carts, dirt bikes, cars... I did it all growing up." As a quadriplegic, he finds ways to get outside and explore. When he wrecked his wheelchair on the hunting trails 6 years ago, he and his friends built an off-road model. He road tripped to Grand Rapids, MI to buy a handicap-accessible hunting vehicle he

found on Ebay. After making some modifications, like better LED lights, the "dune buggy" reaches 12 MPH and Jeff put 220 miles on it last year alone. People often do a double take at whatever Jeff is driving, "After 30 years, I don't care. It gets me out and about, let's me visit neighbors." Safe travels Jeff!