



Member Newsletter

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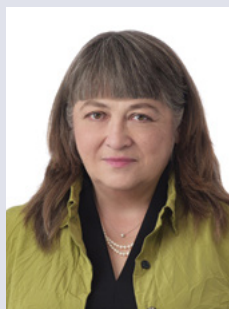
Featured Article: Letter from Our Plan President

Dear Valued Member,

From our start 23 years ago, our goal has always been to always provide quality care to the members we serve. My Choice Wisconsin (MCW) is pleased to share some news with you! On September 1st, 2023, MCW joined the Molina Healthcare family of companies. This will give you a wider choice of services and a larger network of providers. MCW offers Family Care, Family Care Partnership, SSI Managed Care, Medicare Dual Advantage, and BadgerCare Plus in 68 counties in Wisconsin. MCW and Molina both have strong histories and we are very excited to begin this new chapter together.

As a part of the Molina Healthcare family, MCW will continue to focus on members first. We do not plan to make any changes to your care team, providers, or caregivers. We will strive to continue providing the best care and services possible for you. We will continue to build positive relationships with our providers and community partners. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Olivia Schmidt, MCW Member Experience Supervisor at (414) 837-8571.

We appreciate your trust in My Choice Wisconsin, and we look forward to continuing to serve you.



Sincerely,

**Maria Ledger,
Plan President**



Flu Season is Here - Get Your Shot!

By the MCW Clinical Care Division

As the leaves change colors this fall, it's important to remember that we are at the start of flu season. Here are some tips to help you and your loved ones stay healthy and flu-free this season:

- **Don't get close to people who are sick.**
- **Stay home when you are sick.**
- **Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. Using tissues is best. If you don't have a tissue close by, using the inside of your elbow instead of your hand.**
- **Wash your hands often. If you don't have soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Make sure to wash your hands before and after touching these areas on your face.**
- **Get your annual flu vaccine!**

Everyone six months and older should get the flu vaccine every season. The flu shot can help reduce flu illnesses, visits to your doctor's office, missed work or school due to the flu, and make flu related symptoms less severe. Flu vaccines can be given as a shot or through a nasal spray. **It's safest to be vaccinated by the end of October.** However, as long as the flu viruses are present it's never too late!

Flu vaccines are offered in most doctors' offices and clinics. Flu vaccine is available in many other locations including health departments, pharmacies, urgent care clinics, and health centers. Vaccines may also be offered at your school or workplace. Visit www.vaccinefinder.org or contact your My Choice Wisconsin Care Team to find a flu vaccination clinic near you.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/general/strong-defense-against-flu.pdf>

Member Advisory Committee (MAC)

You Can Now Listen to the Member Newsletter on Our Website!

The Member Advisory Committee (MAC) is excited to share that audio versions of the member newsletter will now be available on our website www.mychoicewi.org. The Spring 2023 Member Newsletter is already up on our News page! This will be helpful for lots of individuals: those who are blind, visually impaired, or dyslexic. It can also be useful for people who have cognitive or physical conditions that make it difficult for them to read.

The MAC has been working on this idea for a while. We teamed up with three MCW staff members to make it happen: Jenny P., Care Management Education Specialist; Alexandra R., Marketing Specialist; and Mary Clare C., Self-Advocacy Specialist. The MAC is grateful to them for their efforts!

As always, the MAC works with MCW to improve accessible communication for members. We want to offer communication that is direct, easy to



understand, and available in multiple formats. This way, all members have equal access.

This is part of MCW's continued commitment to the "National CLAS Standards." CLAS stands for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate

Services. Culture refers to all the ways of life of a group of people gets passed down from generation to generation. This includes their music, arts, beliefs, etc. Linguistics is how those people use language to communicate. This can be through speech, writing, and gestures. The National CLAS Standards has 15 action steps. Their goal is to improve the quality and equality of services provided to all individuals. MCW respects that each of our members is unique with their own health and long-term care needs.

MCW Medicare Dual Advantage Members:

More Money to Spend on OTC Items!

An exciting benefit update is coming in 2024 for Medicare Dual Advantage members! Starting January 1, 2024, the over-the-counter monthly allowance is increasing from \$100 to \$155! Any unused allowance will still roll over into the next month! (Just make sure to use it by the end of the year, 12/31/2024.)

You can use these funds to buy over-the-counter items. You may place an order by phone, mail, or online through our OTC Catalog. This way, products are sent right to your door. Or you can use your retail card at participating stores. Call the number in your OTC Catalog to find a store close to your home.

Use your plan benefits and save your own money on vitamins, cold and allergy medicines, toothpaste, incontinence pads, and first aid products. To learn more about the OTC benefit, find details on our website at: www.mychoicewi.org/medicare-dual-advantage/understanding-my-benefits/

Renew Your Medicaid to Keep Your Benefits

My Choice Wisconsin offers programs for individuals that qualify for Medicaid. During the COVID-19 emergency, temporary rules went into place. One of those allowed members to keep coverage without renewing their Medicaid eligibility. Now that the public health emergency has ended, the regular renewal process is back in place.

How do I know my renewal date?

All members have a health care renewal date between June 2023 and May 2024.

- In March 2023, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) sent you a notice through the mail with your renewal date.
- It was added to your ACCESS account online too. Log in at access.wi.gov. (If you don't have an ACCESS account, you can create one.) Look for the "Benefits Renewal Overview."
- You may also use the MyACCESS smartphone app by logging in with the same user ID and password you use for access.wi.gov. (Or you can also create an account via the app.) From the menu, tap "Check your benefits." Tap the name of your program, then look for "Your next renewal is due" and the date.

If your renewal is soon, the WI Department of Health Services encourages getting it done by their suggested "just right" date. By submitting your renewal by this date, you will avoid a gap in your coverage. Just Right dates can be found on their website at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forwardhealth/renewalstatus.htm.

Your renewal packet will be mailed to you a month before your renewal date. You may complete it:

- Online on your ACCESS account
- By filling out the paper packet and mailing it back
- Or by setting up an appointment in person or on the phone with your local agency

Learn more on our website:

www.mychoicewi.org/medicaidrenewals

How Do I Replace My ForwardHealth or Medicare Card?

Lost your ForwardHealth card or Medicare card? Getting a new one is easy. Contact the right office to request one be mailed to your door!

- Forward Health (Medicaid): Go to your ACCESS account at www.access.wisconsin.gov or call ForwardHealth Member Services at 800-362-3002.
- Medicare: 1-800-Medicare

Self-Directed Supports and the Importance of Staying in Budget for Family Care and Partnership Members

By the MCW Community Support Team

With self-directed supports, you get to make decisions about the help you need. You're in charge! This can include things like hiring a personal caregiver or choosing activities that help you live your best life. Using self-directed support, you will have a certain amount of money to spend within a set budget. Your budget is set based on your individual needs. It's important to understand how to manage your budget wisely. Your care team is here to help you!

Staying within your budget means making choices. You need to think about what's most important to you. For example, when hiring a caregiver, you have to consider their hourly pay. Do you want to leave room in the budget to provide future raises? Or do you want to use all your budgeted money right now to pay the highest wage possible?

Planning ahead and making careful decisions will help you make the most of your budget. Think of your budget as a road map. It guides you on your journey to get the things you need and want. If you veer off the road and spend too much too soon, you might miss out on things later. By overspending, you might not have enough for things that are really important, like medical needs or meaningful experiences.

Remember, it's okay to ask for help. If you're not sure how to manage your budget, talk to your care team. They will provide you with your SDS budget summary letter that lists your personal service

needs and budget. Your care team can offer advice and guidance to make sure you're making the best choices.

Self-directed supports give you the power to make decisions about your own life. Staying within your budget is crucial because it helps you make the most of the money you have for your needs and desires. Managing your budget requires thoughtfulness and responsibility. By staying on budget, you're paving the way for a brighter and more fulfilling future.



Performance Improvement Projects (PIPs) to Serve You Better

Each year MCW has projects to better the lives of our members and the care they receive. These projects are approved by the Department of Health Services. They're also reviewed by a third-party external quality organization. Results are reported to the State of Wisconsin. There are both clinical (medical) PIPs and non-clinical PIPs.

Family Care and Partnership

This year's clinical project focuses on lowering the blood pressure of members in these programs. They must have both high blood pressure (hypertension) and diabetes. When they occur together, symptoms and health risks can be worse. This project helps members by increasing understanding and member self-management. They're taught about benefits of medication for lowering blood pressure.

The non-clinical project looks at reducing caregiver strain for caregivers of FC and FCP members. Caregivers are at higher risk for depression, health concerns, and burnout than the general population. When a caregiver feels stressed,

the quality of care they provide can be affected. We're using the assessment of caregiver stress levels more. We are also providing education about resources that can help prevent or reduce caregiver strain.

We are hard at work planning our next performance improvement projects. We would love to hear from Family Care and Partnership members about what project topics are important and interesting for YOU! To send in ideas please send an email to the Long-Term Care Quality Program at Quality.Program@mychoicewi.org at Quality.Program@mychoicewi.org.

Medicaid SSI

The clinical project this year focuses on mental health follow up appointments. This is specific for members who have had an inpatient stay with a mental health or self-harm

diagnosis. We're looking at if members are attending their follow up appointments that are made within 30 days of hospital discharge. By encouraging members to attend these appointments, we hope to prevent inpatient readmissions.

In Dane county, MCW has partnered with Nurse Disrupted. Nurse Disrupted is a telehealth organization. They use technology to connect providers with those struggling with mental health. We are in the second half of the pilot, which is a 3-month program set up at The Beacon in Madison.

Readmissions can be costly. Over two thirds of our reviewed diagnosis types had an average readmission cost which was at least 10% more than their initial admission. During the first 3 months of this pilot, an estimated \$3,403 was saved by avoiding readmission.

Tele-Behavioral Health PIP
Through September 6



40
Behavioral Health
Visits

13
Weeks

1.7
Estimated Avoided
Unnecessary ED Visits

\$3,403
Estimated Savings from
Avoided ED Visits

116%
ROI

\$13,501
Forecasted Savings for 1 Year
(Estimated Savings from Avoided ED Visits)



For more information about member tools, handouts, and resources developed as part of the current projects contact your MCW care team.

MCW cares about YOU!

Source: <https://hfs.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/hfs/sitecollectiondocuments/howtoreduceavoidablereadmissionsandthecostofcareemergencydepartmentoptimization.pdf>

Member Spotlight



Meet Vernon

Not many people can say they know a “centenarian,” someone who’s lived over 100 years. Maybe you saw him on TV on the Veterans feature during a Brewers game in August? We’d like to introduce Vernon, an MCW member that celebrated

his 102nd birthday this summer. He’s lived through the Great Depression and World War II, saw man land on the moon and the Civil Rights Act be passed. He witnessed the invention of television, the internet, and cell phones. He’s seen a lot!

Vernon served as an Army Medic in the 1940s during the war and then worked at the Milwaukee County Hospital. He later started a business he was passionate about - a repair shop. He mainly focused on trucks, including his favorite: the Ford. It’s still the family business; his son runs it in downtown Milwaukee!

So what is Vernon’s secret to 102? He’s always led his best life making smart decisions - no drinking, smoking, or staying out all night. His My Choice Wisconsin Care Manager Diane has helped him navigate his health for the last seven years.

Does he have a piece of advice for someone who’s been around a century? “Always do the right thing. If you treat others how you want to be treated, good things will come to you.” Great advice Vernon!

MCW Earns “Excellent” Quality Scores for Two Long Term Care Programs

We are excited to share some exciting results! Our score for the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Annual Quality Review for the Family Care and Partnership long term care programs was 5 out of 5 stars / “Excellent!” Out of 117 scoring elements, 115 were met. This means we met 98.3% of items reviewed! About 500

member and 100 provider files were reviewed. MetaStar* praised MCW for continuity of care and talking with members about their rights.

We could not have gotten such great results without the hard work of our wonderful care management teams and leaders. This was a group effort

- a big thank you and congrats to our My Choice Wisconsin care team family!

*MetaStar is an External Quality Review Organization hired by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to audit MCOs on Family Care and Family Care Partnership contract compliance.



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Community Connections for Family Care and Partnership Members



What does it mean for you to be connected to your community? How does being connected to your community make you feel? What does being connected to your community look like for you? There is no right or wrong answer to these questions. How one engages in their

community can look different from person to person. Simply put, “community connection” is a sense of belonging to a place and community. Those things will look different for everyone.

In the last few months of 2023, Family Care and Partnership

care team staff are completing training on this topic. They’re learning how to best apply members’ choices for a member-centered approach. They’re also learning how to make sure community connections are being reviewed when talking with members and guardians.

We encourage members to think about what connecting to your community may look like for you. Share with your care team! My Choice Wisconsin wants to help make your goals a reality!