



Volume 8, No. 23 June 9, 2026
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Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) News

Need to Know

Reminder: Registration deadline June 12 for July 8 ACE meeting

Wednesday, July 8 | 10:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Lee Sherman Dreyfus University Center, Stevens Point

Register now:

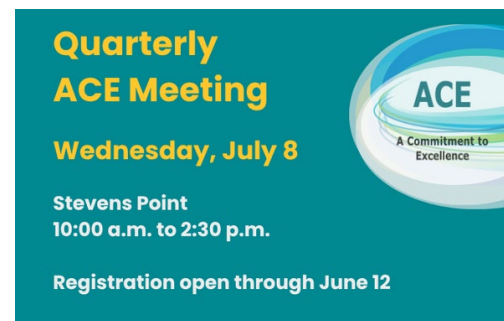
<https://gwaar.wufoo.com/forms/z1o22p721chm7ss/>

Hotel reservations are the responsibility of the registrant.

In addition to GWAAR and bureau updates, we will have a presentation from Megan Takahaski from Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources (BADR) on National Aging Program Information System (NAPIS) reporting and how to utilize different reports as well as how to monitor for federal compliance/completeness. We'll also hear from Jill Renken at the Wisconsin Institute for Health Aging (WIHA) about WIHA health promotion resources and a new program.

In the afternoon we will have breakout sessions with your peers to share your successes and challenges in various aging programs areas.

View the agenda: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009050>



Nice to Know

Use Your Leadership Skills to Support Older People in Wisconsin

GWAAR is looking for thoughtful, civic-minded, energetic individuals to serve on its 10-member board. Board Members play a critical role in guiding and overseeing the agency's actions and initiatives.

Candidates must live outside Dane and Milwaukee Counties and be able to devote time and energy to the GWAAR's governance.

Learn more: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2005629>

Questions? Contact GWAAR Executive Director John Schnabl, john.schnabl@gwaar.org



Advocacy

[Emily Petersen](#), Advocacy and Public Policy Director

Need to Know

Action Alert: FFY2027 Older Americans Act Funding

On Tuesday, June 9, the full House Appropriations Committee will hold a markup on the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education F727 funding bill ([watch live here](#)).

<https://bit.ly/4dWZdef>

The mark-up will include analyzing and making recommendations on funding for the Administration for Community Living, which houses Older Americans Act programs and services. This is a crucial first step in creating the budget for FFY27 OAA programs and services.

Now is the time to advocate for the programs and services that help us all age in place! Share with your legislators the importance of home-delivered meals, social support programs, caregiver support, and more. As the Committee marches forward on finalizing a FY27 funding bill in this area, they want to hear your story to justify increased funding levels!

Please use and customize the action alert to send an email to your representatives this week:

<http://bit.ly/4u2koCq>

Be sure you are reviewing the email text before sending as there are blanks to fill in and opportunities to share your story!



Act 115: Patient Representatives

On June 1, the Department of Health Services (DHS) released the documentation required to effectuate new patient representative procedures for admissions to community-based residential facilities and nursing homes. The patient representative process creates a new legal decision-maker for certain individuals in a hospital setting that are incapacitated and lack a legal decision-maker and/or advanced directive documents. This process is a result of [2026 Wisconsin Act 115](#) (<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/related/acts/115>).

DHS has provided an [overview of the process](#) on their website and a [webinar with instructions on completing the forms](#).

View the process overview: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forms/advdirectives/index.htm>

Watch the webinar: https://youtu.be/wpHX_7lzLoA?si=xK-EU6mIREeEBdhO

If you have questions about the patient representative process, you should consult an attorney. If you have questions about advanced directives or guardianships, visit the [Guardianship Support Center](#) (GSC):

<https://gwaar.org/guardianship-resources>.

View the GSC Patient's Representative Frequently Asked Questions: <https://bit.ly/3RUVtmd>

Nice to Know

In-District Meetings

Legislators are in their districts and eager to hear from constituents about the issues that matter. Now is a great time to schedule an In-District Aging Advocacy event in your region with your state Representatives and Senators. Local hosts are encouraged to schedule these events between now and the end of October 2026. When you schedule your meeting, please reach out to let us know! If you would like information about planning an In-District meeting, view our toolkit here: <https://gwaar.org/advocacy-toolkit>

Reminder: Federal Funding Fallout Webinar

The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities will cover what is happening in the state and the latest in Congress, actions the federal administration is taking, and the impacts HR 1 is having on state budgets, disability services, family caregivers, and the health and home and community-based care systems.

6/12 English registration: <https://bit.ly/FedFund612>

6/12 Spanish registration: <https://bit.ly/FedFundSpa612>



Elder Abuse Programs

[Donna Rosner](#), Elder Abuse Program Specialist

Nice to Know

Reminder: Common Scams & Frauds Prevention & Awareness Session

Wednesday, June 24 | 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Iowa County Health & Human Services Building 303 W Chapel Street,
Dodgeville, WI 53533

Presented by Jeff Kersten, Outreach Specialist - Division of Trade & Consumer Protection

In partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)

What You'll Learn:

- Details of the most common scams affecting Wisconsin residents
- Warning signs that something may be fraudulent
- How to respond if you or someone you know becomes a victim
- Where and how to report suspected scams
- Free consumer protection factsheets available at the event

For questions or to register call 608-930-9835

View the flyer: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewfile/id/2009054>

**Event will be cancelled if less than 4 people are registered.

The flyer for the "Common Scams & Frauds Prevention & Awareness Session". It has a purple header with the title in white. Below the title, it says "In partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)". The "Event Details" section includes: "Wednesday, June 24th, 2026 10:00am-Noon", "Iowa County Health & Human Services Building 303 W Chapel Street, Dodgeville, WI 53533", and "Presented by Jeff Kersten Outreach Specialist - Division of Trade & Consumer Protection". A "What You'll Learn" section lists: "Details of the most common scams affecting Wisconsin residents", "Warning signs that something may be fraudulent", "How to respond if you or someone you know becomes a victim", "Where and how to report suspected scams", and "Free consumer protection factsheets available at the event". At the bottom, it says "For questions or to register call (608) 930-9835" and "**Event will be cancelled if less than 4 people are registered." Logos for ADPC and World Elder Abuse Awareness Day are at the bottom.

Reminder: World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD): June 15

June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD). Check out the [WEAAD page](#) for resources and to post your event at both the State and National level! WEAAD National Resources and State Events: <https://bit.ly/4wqNxlY>

View the WEAAD Share Kit: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009037>



Emergency Preparedness

[Jean Lynch](#), Program Specialist Manager

Nice to Know

Get #SummerReady

Extreme heat is expected to become more frequent and intense in the future. #SummerReady aims to raise awareness of the impacts of extreme heat and the simple steps to stay prepared. There are also tips for **Firework Safety**, **Water Safety** and **Grilling Safety**.

View tips from Ready.gov: <https://www.ready.gov/summer-ready>

Firework awareness resources from US Fire Administration include handouts in English and Spanish about outdoor fire safety, including fireworks, grills and campfires:

<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outdoor-fires/index.html>

National Lightning Safety Awareness Week: June 21 - 27, 2026

This page provides an overview of how to prepare for a thunderstorm, and tips to stay safe during and after the storm. View the resources from Ready.gov: <https://www.ready.gov/thunderstorms-lightning>



Family Caregiver Support

[Bryn Ceman](#), Caregiver Programs Specialist

Nice to Know

New Podcast Series: The Care Economy

Looking for a new caregiver resource? Check out The Care Economy: Practical Approaches to Family Caregiving and Financial Well-Being, hosted by Maureen Feldman.

 Topics include:

- Family caregiving & financial stability
- Workplace support for caregivers
- Legal planning
- Policy solutions
- Real-life caregiving experiences


We encourage caregivers, professionals, employers, advocates, and community partners to listen and share!

 Listen here: <https://gero.usc.edu/centers/cg-security/podcast/>

 Additional caregiver resources: <https://wisconsin caregiver.org/>



 **Reminder: Webinar Opportunity: Dementia-Specific Respite Care in Action**

 Wednesday, June 10 | 12:00 p.m.

Join this NADRC webinar highlighting innovative dementia-specific respite care programs funded through the Center for Dementia Respite Innovation (CDRI).



Learn how organizations across the country are:




- ✓ Expanding access to person-centered respite care
- ✓ Building sustainable respite models
- ✓ Supporting both caregivers and people living with dementia
- ✓ Partnering with students, volunteers, and community organizations

This webinar may be especially valuable for:

- Caregiver Coordinators
- Dementia Care Specialists
- ADRC & Aging Network Staff
- Respite Providers & Community Partners

 **Register here:** <https://bit.ly/4o6hGtp>

 **Reminder: Conference Opportunity for Caregivers of those with Dementia & Caregiver Support Professionals**

 Wednesday, August 12 |  8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. |  First Baptist Church, Medford, WI


The ADRC of Taylor County is hosting the: ****Bringing Hope & Light to the Dementia Journey Conference****


This free conference is designed to support caregivers, professionals, and individuals living with dementia through education, resources, and connection. The day will include:

- ✓ Keynote speakers
- ✓ Breakout sessions
- ✓ Resource & exhibitor booths
- ✓ Networking opportunities
- ✓ Lunch provided
- ✓ On-site respite available for caregivers

This event may be especially valuable for:

- Caregiver Coordinators
- Dementia Care Specialists
- ADRC Specialists
- Aging Network Professionals
- Healthcare & Community Partners

 Registration is free, but required by July 31, 2026.

 **IMPORTANT:** Caregivers needing on-site respite services must complete respite paperwork by July 1, 2026, to allow time for staffing and intake coordination.

 **Register here:** <https://form.jotform.com/261195163050147>

View the flyer: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009057>

Fiscal Resources and Data Management

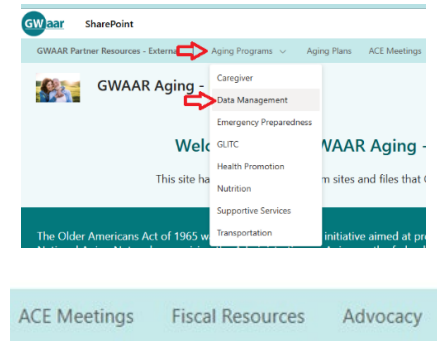
[Carrie Kroetz](#), Data Management and Technology Coordinator

Need to Know

All webinars are recorded and posted on the GWAAR Partners Resources site and accessed by registered users.

<https://gwaar.sharepoint.com/sites/PartnerResources> | Aging Programs | [Data Management](#)

<https://gwaar.sharepoint.com/sites/PartnerResources> | [Fiscal Resources](#)



Guardianship Support Center

[Polly Shoemaker](#), WI Guardianship Support Center Attorney

Nice to Know

Patient's Representative Frequently Asked Questions

Questions about the new Patient's Representative law, which officially began on June 1? Check out the Guardianship Support Center's [Frequently Asked Questions](#)! Find out more about how it works, when it can be used, and what the limits are. Because this document is so new, it will likely continue to be updated over coming months. Both the GSC website and the document will list out the date of the most recent update so you can be sure you're working from the most up-to-date version available.



View the FAQ: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2009009>

In addition, the GSC has been updating and revising older documents, including:

- **[Authority to Consent to Facility Admission/Placement:](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2004426)**
- **[Dealing with Surrogate Decision-Makers:](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2004427)**
- **[Decision-makers and DNRs:](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2004905)**
- **[Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Coverage: What Guardians and Agents Need to Know:](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2004428)**

Staff updates

GWAAR will be saying goodbye to GSC Attorney **Polly Shoemaker** on June 12. She will be joining an elder law firm in Madison where she plans to continue to work with adult guardianship and advocacy for older adults.

New GSC Attorney **Cherry Beth Hill** joined us on June 8! Cherry attended Mitchell Hamline School of Law and most recently worked for the National Conference of Bar Examiners, where, among other things, her responsibilities included responding to time-sensitive questions from bar exam candidates and providing large- and small-group trainings. Welcome Cherry!

Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol

[Ingrid A. Kunding](#), Senior Medicare Patrol Program Director

Nice to Know

Reminder: WI Senior Medicare Patrol Newsletter - Summer 2026

This issue of the SMP Scoop features recognition of the 5th annual Medicare Fraud Prevention Week, June 1-5, which empowers beneficiaries, caregivers, and communities to prevent, detect, and report Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse.

This issue also highlights expanding outreach efforts in tribal communities, the health benefits of gardening for older adults, a new crypto kiosk law in Wisconsin to stop criminals in their tracks, why gut health matters, a re-cap of the annual Volunteer Retreat, and so much more!

You are welcome (and encouraged) to share this newsletter with anyone you think might find the information useful – whether it be consumers, Medicare beneficiaries, neighbors, family and friends, those who work with older adults, etc.

Please feel free to contact the Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol if you have any questions. We can be reached at our toll-free helpline, (888) 818-2611 or by email, smp-wi@gwaar.org.

If you are hosting an upcoming community event or looking for a presentation for your group, please reach out, we would love to share our information and resources with you!

Read the Summer Scoop: <https://bit.ly/4vjDFzk>

June Scam Spotlight focuses on Unnecessary Tests and Services

Medicare pays for services that are medically necessary to diagnose or treat a medical condition. When providers order unnecessary tests, services or equipment, it can be Medicare fraud.

Read the June Scam Spotlight: <https://bit.ly/4xklk7t>

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Scoop is prepared by the GWAAR SMP Team to help Medicare beneficiaries and their advocates prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, abuse, and errors.

Please feel free to share this publication with others who may benefit from its contents.

TO CONTACT WI SMP
Call: (888) 818-2611
E-mail: smp-wi@gwaar.org
Website: www.smpwi.org
Facebook: @WisconsinSeniorMedicarePatrol
To subscribe, please send us an e-mail.

June 1-5, 2026, marks the 5th annual Medicare Fraud Prevention Week, a nationwide effort led by the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) to empower beneficiaries, caregivers, and communities to prevent, detect, and report Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse.

While this week brings national attention to the issue, Medicare fraud is not limited to a single moment in time. Scammers are constantly adapting their tactics, which makes it more important than ever for beneficiaries, caregivers, and communities to stay informed and alert all year long.

That's where the idea of "together" comes in. Preventing Medicare fraud isn't just the job of one person or one organization, it takes all of us working together. Whether it's protecting your own information or helping a neighbor recognize a scam, every action makes a difference.

How You Can Be Part of the Solution:
Protect your personal information. Your Medicare number is valuable – guard it like you would a credit card. Don't share it with unsolicited callers or unknown individuals.
Detect problems early. Carefully review your Medicare Summary Notices (MSNs) or Explanation of Benefits (EOBs) for charges or services you don't recognize.

Continued on page 2

The Wisconsin SMP program is supported in part by grant number 90MPP0123-01-00, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official administrative policy.

Medicare pays for services that are medically necessary to diagnose or treat a medical condition. When providers order excessive or unnecessary tests, services, or equipment, it can be Medicare fraud.

Examples of Unnecessary Services May Include:

- Ordering tests that are not needed
- Frequent visits without medical reason
- Providing equipment the patient did not need
- Unnecessary procedures or treatments
- Billing for therapy or home health visits that are not needed

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES OF THIS FORM OF MEDICARE FRAUD

UNNECESSARY GENETIC TESTING Beneficiaries are offered "free" genetic or cancer screening tests that are not medically necessary. Medicare is billed thousands of dollars for tests they did not need.	EXCESSIVE DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT (DME) Suppliers send equipment or supplies you did not ask for or need—such as braces or canes—and bill Medicare every month.	UNNECESSARY HOME HEALTH OR THERAPY Providers may continue therapy or home health visits longer than needed and bill Medicare even when not medically justified.	FREQUENT DIAGNOSTIC TESTING Clinics may order expensive tests—such as nerve tests, ultrasounds, or cardiac coverage—without a clear medical need.
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WARNING SIGNS
Be cautious if:

- You are offered "free" tests or equipment
- A provider pressures you into services you do not understand
- You receive supplies you did not order
- Your Medicare Summary Notice lists services you don't recognize
- You are told Medicare "covers everything" without explanation
- A provider asks you to sign blank forms or paperwork

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

- Review your Medicare Summary Notices (MSNs) regularly.
- Ask questions about tests, treatments, or equipment.
- Talk with your primary doctor before agreeing to unfamiliar services.
- Keep records of appointments and equipment received.
- Report suspicious billing or services.

If something doesn't seem right, trust your instincts and speak up.
Asking questions can help stop fraud and protect your health and Medicare benefits.

To report suspected Medicare Fraud, Errors, or Abuse contact Wisconsin SMP: 800-818-2611 or Email address: smp-wi@gwaar.org

This project was supported in part by grant number 90MPP0123-01-00, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201.