

CHIPPEWA COUNTY

ADRC (AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER) BOARD

REGULAR MEETING

MAY 13, 2021

WEBEX CONFERENCE CALL

4:45 PM

DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, THIS MEETING IS BEING HELD VIA WEBEX CONFERENCE CALL TO COMPLY WITH THE SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES. IF YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC AND WISH TO SPEAK, PLEASE CALL THE PHONE NUMBER LISTED BELOW AND THE BOARD CHAIR WILL ACKNOWLEDGE YOU DURING THE PUBLIC COMMENT SECTION ON THE AGENDA.

IF YOU NEED TO EITHER MUTE OR UNMUTE YOURSELF DURING THE MEETING, PRESS *6.

MEETING PHONE NUMBER: 1-415-655-0001

MEETING NUMBER (ACCESS CODE): 182 832 4386

MEETING PASSWORD: 7816

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Organization	Title	Status	Arrived
Kari Ives	Chippewa County	District 12 (Chair)	Present	
Larry Marquardt	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	
Patricia German	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	
David Alley	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	
Mary Quinlan	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Absent	
Janet Mayer	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Absent	
Glen Howell	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	

Others Present: Leslie Fijalkiewicz, ADRC Manager; Tim Easker, Human Services Director; Pauline Spiegel, Administrative Assistant; ADRC Staff: Kelly Zimmerman , Kay Hebert, Jessica Gibson, Sandy Winrich, Jordy Miles

3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Larry Marquardt was nominated and approved as vice-chair.

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4:45 PM

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Larry Marquardt, Citizen Rep
SECONDER:	Glen Howell, Citizen Rep
AYES:	Ives, Marquardt, German, Alley, Howell
ABSENT:	Quinlan, Mayer

4. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WISHING TO BE HEARD

There were no members of the public wishing to be heard.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Patricia German, Citizen Rep
SECONDER:	David Alley, Citizen Rep
AYES:	Ives, Marquardt, German, Alley, Howell
ABSENT:	Quinlan, Mayer

1. Approve the agenda
2. Approve the Minutes

ADRC (Aging & Disability Resource Center) Board - Regular Meeting - Mar 11, 2021 4:45 PM

3. Schedule next meeting date - July 8, 2021

6. REPORTS

1. Nutrition Advisory Council Minutes
The May 5, 2021 Nutrition Advisory Council Minutes were reviewed and discussed.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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2. Aging & Disability Resource Center Manager Report
The Aging & Disability Resource Center's Manager's Report was reviewed and discussed. Highlighted items of the report included: Cadott Nutrition Program changes, re-opening of ADRC lobby, starting in-home visits again, Aging Unit survey, replacement for Mary Quinlan on Nutrition Advisory Council, and fiscal information.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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3. Aging & Disability Resource Center Advocacy Report
The advocacy information was reviewed and discussed. ADRC staff Sandy Winrich and Kay Hebert attended the Joint Finance Committee session in April. Elder Benefits Specialist Jordy Miles and ADRC Board Member Patricia German attended the Aging Advocacy Day May 12. ADRC Board Member Larry

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Marquardt attended a recent Town Hall meeting. They all provided an overview of this positive experience.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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4. COVID-19 Relief Grants and Funding

The grants and funding designated for COVID-19 relief and how they have and will be used were reviewed and discussed.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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7. BUSINESS ITEMS

1. 2021 Aging & Disability Resource Center Program Prioritization

The ADRC program priority rankings as determined by the ADRC Board Members were reviewed and approved.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Glen Howell, Citizen Rep
SECONDER:	Patricia German, Citizen Rep
AYES:	Ives, Marquardt, German, Alley, Howell
ABSENT:	Quinlan, Mayer

2. Transportation Co-pay

The transportation program co-pay had been waived through June 2021. The recommendation to reinstate the transportation co-pay of \$3.00 per one way trip as of July 1, 2021 was discussed and approved.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Patricia German, Citizen Rep
SECONDER:	Glen Howell, Citizen Rep
AYES:	Ives, Marquardt, German, Alley, Howell
ABSENT:	Quinlan, Mayer

8. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

9. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

ADRC (Aging & Disability Resource Center) Board

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May 13, 2021

Regular Meeting

Webex Conference Call

4:45 PM

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	David Alley, Citizen Rep
SECONDER:	Glen Howell, Citizen Rep
AYES:	Ives, Marquardt, German, Alley, Howell
ABSENT:	Quinlan, Mayer

CHIPPEWA COUNTY

ADRC (AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER) BOARD

REGULAR MEETING

MARCH 11, 2021

WEBEX CONFERENCE CALL

4:45 PM

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MEETING PHONE NUMBER: 1-415-655-0001

MEETING NUMBER (ACCESS CODE): 182 453 4578

MEETING PASSWORD: 7816

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Organization	Title	Status	Arrived
Kari Ives	Chippewa County	District 12 (Chair)	Present	
Vern Weeks	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	
Patricia German	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	
David Alley	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	
Mary Quinlan	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	
Janet Mayer	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	
Glen Howell	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	

Others Present: Leslie Fijalkiewicz, ADRC Manager; Tim Easker, Human Services Director; Pauline Spiegel, Administrative Assistant; Paul Brenner, Human Services Senior Fiscal Manager; ADRC Staff: Sarah Hedlund, Kay Hebert, Jessica Gibson

Board member Vern Weeks has served two consecutive three-year terms so this is his final meeting. Recognition and appreciation expressed to Weeks for his six years of service and dedication to the Aging & Disability Resource Center Board and citizens of Chippewa County. Larry Marquardt will be the new voting member replacing Weeks.

3. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WISHING TO BE HEARD

There were no members of the public wishing to be heard.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Mar 11, 2021 4:45 PM (Consent Agenda)

ADRC (Aging & Disability Resource Center) Board

Minutes
Regular Meeting

Webex Conference Call

March 11, 2021
4:45 PM

RESULT: APPROVED [6 TO 0]
MOVER: David Alley, Citizen Rep
SECONDER: Patricia German, Citizen Rep
AYES: Ives, Weeks, German, Alley, Mayer, Howell
AWAY: Quinlan

1. Approve the agenda
2. Approve the Minutes

ADRC (Aging & Disability Resource Center) Board - Regular Meeting - Jan 14, 2021 4:45 PM

3. Schedule next meeting date - May 13, 2021

5. REPORTS

1. Nutrition Advisory Council Minutes
The March 3, 2021, Nutrition Advisory Council minutes were reviewed and discussed.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

2. ADRC Manager's Report - Leslie Fijalkiewicz
The Aging & Disability Resource Center's Manager's Report was reviewed and discussed. In addition, Fijalkiewicz shared the Aging Advocacy Day will be May 12 (virtual) and Joint Finance Committee sessions will be April 22 (at UW-Stout) and April 28 (virtual). She also stated the ADRC would be receiving an \$8,049 COVID Vaccination Outreach grant, and the ADRC will be collaborating with Public Health and COVID Incident Command System to address barriers.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

3. ADRC Advocacy Report - Leslie Fijalkiewicz
The advocacy information from Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR - Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network) regarding the 2021-23 Governor's recommended budget items for ADRCs was reviewed and discussed. Fijalkiewicz will send out talking points for board members who wish to advocate with legislators.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

4. 2021 ADRC Program Prioritization Education - Leslie Fijalkiewicz
The ADRC programs/services descriptions and priority ranking form were reviewed and discussed. Board members are asked to rank the programs and return the form. The compiled rankings will be reviewed and approved at the May meeting.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Mar 11, 2021 4:45 PM (Consent Agenda)

ADRC (Aging & Disability Resource Center) Board

Minutes
Regular Meeting

Webex Conference Call

March 11, 2021
4:45 PM

5. ADRC 2022-2024 Three Year Plan - Leslie Fijalkiewicz
Fijalkiewicz provided information on developing an Aging/ADRC three-year plan that adheres to the ten objectives of the Older Americans Act. Discussion on utilizing a survey and how board members can be involved in the process by providing input for questions on the survey, distribute surveys, compile results, create goals, and help collect feedback at public hearings.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

6. ADRC Board 2020 Performance Evaluation Review - Leslie Fijalkiewicz
The ADRC Board 2020 performance evaluation results were reviewed and discussed.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

1. ADRC Portion of 2020 Human Services Annual Report (Review and Approve)
The Aging & Disability Resource Center section of the 2020 Human Services annual performance report was reviewed and approved.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Vern Weeks, Citizen Rep
SECONDER: Glen Howell, Citizen Rep
AYES: Ives, Weeks, German, Alley, Quinlan, Mayer, Howell

7. AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

Dollar amounts for ADRCs through the American Rescue Plan.

8. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Glen Howell, Citizen Rep
SECONDER: Mary Quinlan, Citizen Rep
AYES: Ives, Weeks, German, Alley, Quinlan, Mayer, Howell

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Mar 11, 2021 4:45 PM (Consent Agenda)



STATEMENT OF EXPLANATION NUTRITION ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

6.1

The Nutrition Advisory Council meets every other month to review the Senior Dining/ Meals on Wheels programs, procedures and opportunities for improvements. The minutes from the May 5, 2021, meeting are included.

CHIPPEWA COUNTY
NUTRITION ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 5, 2021
WEBEX CONFERENCE CALL
12:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Organization	Title	Status	Arrived
Angie Walker	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep (Chair)	Present	
Judy Fedie	Chippewa County	Staff (Vice-Chair)	Present	
Mary Quinlan	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	
Betty Hable	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	
Kalina Kline	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Absent	
Judi Gunderman	Chippewa County	Citizen Rep	Present	

Kelly Zimmerman, Program Coordinator

3. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WISHING TO BE HEARD

Judy Fedie announced her retirement from Public Health after 35 years. Judy has served on the Nutrition Advisory Council for many years sharing her skills and wealth of knowledge with the group.

Angie Walker, council Chairperson and Director of the Chippewa Senior Center announced the reopening of the center on June 2. She has been working diligently with Public Health officials to implement safety measures that are appropriate for gatherings.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Judi Gunderman, Citizen Rep
SECONDER:	Mary Quinlan, Citizen Rep
AYES:	Walker, Fedie, Quinlan, Hable, Gunderman
ABSENT:	Kline

1. Approve the agenda

2. Approve the Minutes

Nutrition Advisory Council on Aging - Regular Meeting - Mar 3, 2021 12:00 PM

3. Schedule next meeting date - July 7, 2021 at 12:00pm

5. REPORTS

1. Nutrition Advisory Council Member-Kelly

Nutrition Advisory Council on Aging

Minutes
Regular Meeting

Webex Conference Call

May 5, 2021
12:00 PM

The coordinator informed the council that Kalina Kline had to resign, leaving another spot open. The coordinator encouraged the remaining members to provide contact information for anyone that may be a good fit to serve on the council.

2. Congregate Dining-Kelly

The coordinator informed members that there is still no plan to open congregate dining at this time.

The congregate dining location in Cadott has been closed. Kathy's Diner was sold, so the program needed to find a short-term solution until a long-term solution can be determined. Meals will be coming from Eau Claire County. The Cadott Library will be our pick-up and drop-off location in the meantime.

3. Aging Three Year Plan-Kelly

The coordinator gave a brief update on the aging plan. Survey results will provide feedback from the public on areas to consider for goals.

The coordinator emailed members the link to the brief survey so they can participate and see what questions were asked.

The coordinator also gave a brief description of the purpose of the aging plan.

4. Volunteer Annual Training-Kelly

The final step in the volunteer application and training process is providing annual training opportunities for current volunteers. Coordinator gave a list of things that are required for the training such as, food temps, safety, sanitation, and well-checks.

Coordinator will provide a draft copy to council members to review before finalizing. Ideas of how the training will be distributed will be discussed during the process.

It was suggested that when it is safe for gatherings, a combination of in-person training and volunteer recognition may be appreciated by the volunteers.

6. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

7. **AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION**

8. **ADJOURN**



STATEMENT OF EXPLANATION
AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER MANAGER REPORT

6.2

Aging & Disability Resource Center Manager Leslie Fijalkiewicz, provides a division program and financial report.



Manager's Report to the ADRC Board Leslie Fijalkiewicz



Board Meeting Date: May 13, 2021

1. May is Older Americans Month and ADRC Month

- Governor Evers has declared May as ADRC Month.
- Older Americans Month theme this year is ***"Communities of Strength."***

2. Cadott Nutrition Program Changes

- Kathy's Diner has been sold and new owner is not interested in continuing the contract.
- Short-term solution is obtaining meals from Fall Creek kitchen where we get others meals.
- Long-term solution is not yet known, but it will likely involve the RFP process since we know of two entities that have expressed interest.

3. State guidance on ADRC activities, programs, service delivery

- Consult with local Public Health, Corp Counsel and other local authorities.
- Several staff offices can't accommodate the six-foot distance so we may have to identify specific offices for meeting with customers.
- Lobby would have limited capacity and be free of brochures.
- Face coverings would follow CDC guidelines.

4. Mind Over Matter

- Three session workshop series that focuses on prevention of bowel and bladder incontinence in women.
- Chippewa County residents have been able to participate in neighboring county workshops.
- We will now be able to offer these workshops virtually right now and later in-person.

5. Aunt Bertha

- Resource database that Mayo providers will be using to refer patients.
- The database is intended to include free or reduced cost programs and services.
- ADRC information needs to be updated so this has been a project.

6. Aging Unit Plan Survey

- Goal is to reach 300 surveys returned.
- June will be spent identifying primary areas of concern and drafting goals.
- Plan draft due to GWAAR in July but will bring to July board meeting before submitting.

7. Facebook

- Carla, Breanna, Kelly, and I will be the administrators of our Facebook page.
- A link will be sent to all of you when we are set up so you can perhaps "Like" our page and share it with your friends.

8. Nutrition Advisory Council

- With Mary Quinlan's term expiring on this board, we will need a board member to serve on the Nutrition Advisory Council. Any volunteers?

**Fiscal Report to ADRC Board
April 2021
33 % of year**

Program/Grants	Budgeted Amount	Expenses	Revenue	Remaining Grant	% Budget Expended
ADRC Grants	\$ 818,344	\$ 233,693	\$233,693	584,651	29%
Nutrition Program (grants & donations)	452,636	93,716	74,275	378,361	16%
<i>COVID carry over Funding</i>	19,441	<i>(included above)</i>	19,441	0	100%
Transportation (85.21 grant, levy, donations)	226,475	48,725	226,475	177,750	22%
Other Grants	221,719	57,888	57,888	163,831	26%
Dementia Care Specialist	107,456	29,529	29,529	77,927	27%
TOTALS	\$1,846,071	\$463,551	\$641,301	\$1,382,520	25%

STATE of WISCONSIN



OFFICE of the GOVERNOR

Proclamation

WHEREAS; like all Wisconsinites, aging and older adults and folks with disabilities desire and deserve to live with dignity, security, and maximum independence and quality of life; and

WHEREAS; the growth of our aging population, coupled with the rising cost of health and long-term care, only underscores the importance of making efficient and effective use of both private and public resources; and

WHEREAS; in 1998, Wisconsin became the first state to develop Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), and provided the model for a nationwide initiative that began in 2003; and

WHEREAS; ADRCs are welcoming and accessible places where aging and older adults, folks with disabilities, and their families can be connected to reliable information, unbiased advice about their options, and simplified access to appropriate resources, supports, and services; and

WHEREAS; this month, the state of Wisconsin commends the important work of ADRCs across our state to help Wisconsinites make more informed choices, conserve their personal resources, maintain self-sufficiency, and delay or prevent the need for public resources and potentially expensive long-term care;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,
do hereby proclaim May 2021 as

AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE
CENTER MONTH

throughout the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance
to all our state's residents.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have
hereunto set my hand and caused the
Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin
to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in
the City of Madison this 21st day of
April 2021.

Tony Evers

TONY EVERS
GOVERNOR

By the Governor:

Douglas La Follette

DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE
Secretary of State



STATEMENT OF EXPLANATION AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER ADVOCACY REPORT

6.3

The ADRC is required to advocate on behalf of and empower our consumers to be their own advocates. Per the state contract for ADRCs, the governing board role includes: "Be an advocate for older adults and adults with physical or intellectual/developmental disabilities in the ADRC service area." This report identifies issues that relate to our consumers. The report is not all inclusive but will address federal, state, and local concerns.

Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS) Program— Fact Sheet: Chippewa County

Core Member Organizations

- Aging and Disability Professionals Association of Wisconsin (ADPAW)
- Alzheimer's Association Wisconsin Chapter
- Wisconsin Adult Day Services Association (WADSA)
- Wisconsin Association of Area Agencies on Aging (W4A)
- Wisconsin Association of Benefit Specialists (WABS)
- Wisconsin Association of Nutrition Directors (WAND)
- Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers (WASC)
- Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA)
- Wisconsin Senior Corps Association (WISCA)
- Wisconsin Tribal Aging Unit Association

The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network is a collaborative group of individuals and associations working with and for Wisconsin's older adults to shape public policy to improve their quality of life.

April 2020

Provides legal advocacy services to older adults (age 60+) across Wisconsin.

Chippewa County Residents Served (with 1 EBS)	Oct 2017- Sept 2018	Oct 2018- Sept 2019
Total unduplicated clients (age 60+) receiving EBS services	848	629
Total EBS staff hours spent assisting clients on legal/benefits issues	940	500
Majority of the EBS clients served were between the ages of	70-79	70-79
Federal & State funds EBS staff assisted clients in securing	\$1,431,778	\$1,302,980

Top three topics addressed were:

1. **Health Insurance Benefits** (e.g., Medicare and Medicaid health and drug plan enrollment, coverage and billing issues and appeals)
2. **Community Services & Supports** (providing information about local resources; e.g., low-income housing, low-cost transportation, local energy/heating assistance)
3. **Income Benefits** (e.g., Social Security and SSI initial applications, eligibility issues, and overpayments)

Examples how Chippewa County older adults have been helped through the EBS Program

- Provided HUD Housing Regulation information to client to help advocate and gain reasonable accommodations in their apartment.
- Assisted client in locating their pension check. Client received a reimbursement for checks that were previously issued and they did not receive.
- Helped client continue coverage through the Medicaid Purchase Plan after brainstorming and calling local businesses so client could meet program requirements.
- Assisted with appealing Social Security overpayment and successfully reduced overpayment by \$28,000.
- Connected client with a program to reduce drug costs. Client is now able to afford and fill their asthma/chronic obstructive pulmonary drug prescription.
- Assisted client in reviewing Medicare options and enrolling in plan after they lost Medicaid eligibility.
- Connected client who was at risk of homelessness with local resource who helped them secure housing.
- Helped client on limited income reduce hospital debt by applying for financial assistance program through the hospital.
- Provided education to client when their employer and group health plan told client they had to enroll in Medicare. Client now plans to stay with the group health insurance until retirement.

Referrals to the

Aging & Disability Resource Center of Chippewa County

EBS Program: (715) 726-7777 adrc@co.chippewa.wi.us 711 N Bridge St #118, Chippewa Falls, WI 54601

Packet Pg. 16

Wisconsin's Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS) Program

The Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS) Program provides a wide range of important legal advocacy services to adults (age 60 and older) across Wisconsin. The program was created by the legislature in the 1970s to fulfill mandates of the Older Americans Act (OAA) of 1965 that legal assistance be accessible to older people, regardless of income.¹ EBSs provide benefit counseling and assistance with appeals in the areas of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, FoodShare, housing, consumer debt, and other health insurance coverage issues.

Unpublished data gathered by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) reveals that the number of unduplicated clients served through the EBS Program during Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019 was 37,391, a 36% increase from the year 2010 when that number was 27,433. During that period, Medicare-related group outreach and education events conducted by EBSs reached an estimated 69,274 Wisconsin residents.² Additionally, unpublished data from DHS for FFY 2019 revealed that **the average annual monetary impact of one full-time EBS to clients and the community** through public benefit program eligibility, overpayment resolution, medical insurance appeals, and other positive outcomes **was \$2,283,104**, for a combined statewide total of \$189,497,620.³

Wisconsin's 65 and older population is projected to increase from 780,000 residents in 2010 to over 1.5 million by 2040, with a 30-year increase of about 100%, making their share of the populace rise from 13.7% in 2010 to 23.7% in 2040.⁴ In the year 2040, it is anticipated that at least 33% of the total population of 18 Wisconsin counties will be ages 65 and older.⁵

The increase is expected to be higher in areas with moderate to high rates of poverty, per DHS⁶, where traditionally individuals have limited access to legal services. It is also expected to be higher amongst the "oldest old" segment of the State's older population, those ages 90 and above, a group more likely to require access to public benefit programs including long term care Medicaid.⁷

The population of older adults is projected to continue to grow for the foreseeable future. "The number of older adult residents is forecast to exceed the number of children at some point during the latter half of the 2020s."⁸ Many older adults are faced annually with choosing a prescription drug plan and/or health insurance or applying for needed services and assistance; increasingly, these processes are completed only online and are complex to navigate.

There are currently 92 full-time and 5 part-time EBS in the state covering Wisconsin's 72 counties and the 11 federally recognized tribes. These EBS are the health care coordination and public benefits experts in the state; they know Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid better than most private attorneys. Due to the fact that EBS do not charge fees for their legal services, they are able to take on cases that a private attorney could not. For example, it would not be prudent to hire a private attorney to get a \$500 security deposit back from a landlord or appeal an \$800 medical insurance claim denial. The attorney's fees alone would likely cost more than the value returned to the client. Also, Wisconsin has a shortage of attorneys, especially in the rural and northern parts of the state. We often hear of clients who have to travel more than an hour away to meet with an attorney. Those attorneys have a limited scope of practice and also only cover limited geographical areas. This substantially limits access to legal services in rural areas and increases the need for EBS services-- legal services which are available to everyone over 60 regardless of income and provided locally, at the county level.

References

1. OAA of 1965 <https://legcounsel.house.gov/Comps/Older%20Americans%20Act%20Of%201965.pdf>
2. Unpublished data from DHS pulled from SAMS database on March 12, 2020
3. Unpublished data from DHS pulled from SAMS database on March 12, 2020
4. State of Wisconsin Aging Plan for Older People, <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aging/aging-plan-2019-2021.pdf>
5. Population Demographics, <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/dementia/demographics.htm>
6. Population Demographics, <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/dementia/demographics.htm>
7. Wisconsin's Future Population, https://doa.wi.gov/DIR/FinalProjs2040_Publication.pdf
8. Wisconsin's Future Population, https://doa.wi.gov/DIR/FinalProjs2040_Publication.pdf

Core Member Organizations

- Aging and Disability Professionals Association of Wisconsin (ADPAW)
- Alzheimer's Association SE Wisconsin Chapter
- Wisconsin Adult Day Services Association (WADSA)
- Wisconsin Association of Area Agencies on Aging (W4A)
- Wisconsin Association of Benefit Specialists (WABS)
- Wisconsin Association of Nutrition Directors (WAND)
- Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers (WASC)
- Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA)
- Wisconsin Senior Corps Association (WISCA)
- Wisconsin Tribal Aging Unit Association

The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network is a collaborative group of individuals and associations working with and for Wisconsin's older adults to shape public policy to improve their quality of life.

WAAN State Issue Brief
February 2021

Elder Benefit Specialist Program Funding Support:

Ensure Access to Legal Advocacy Services for Wisconsin's Fastest Growing Population.

WAAN's Position: Revise [Wis. Stat. 46.81](#) to increase state funding for the Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS) program from \$2,298,400 to \$4,596,800 to account for the significant increase in the population served by the program, increasing demand for EBS services, and increasing complexities associated with access to essential benefit programs.

There has been an estimated 63% growth in Wisconsin's age 60 and older population from 2000¹ to 2020.² Despite significant population growth, increasing demand for EBS services, and increasing complexities associated with access to essential benefit programs, **the EBS program has not seen an increase in state funding in 24 years.**

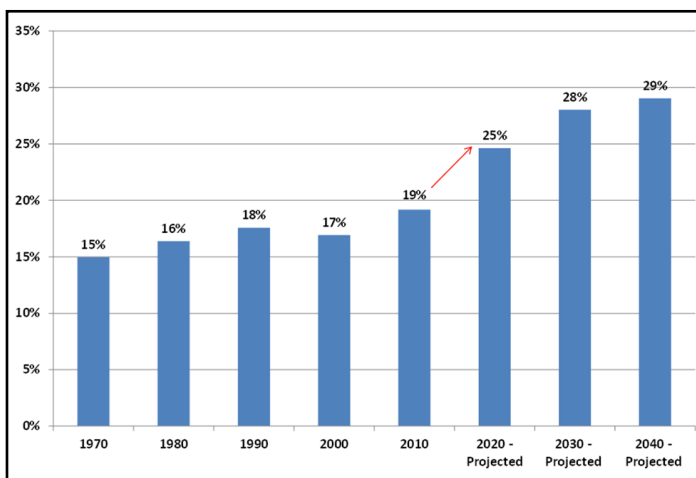
The EBS Program provides a wide range of important legal advocacy services to adults age 60 and older across Wisconsin. The program was created by the legislature in the 1970s to fulfill mandates of the Older Americans Act (OAA) of 1965 that legal

assistance be accessible to older people, regardless of income.³ EBSs provide benefit counseling and assistance with appeals in the areas of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, FoodShare, housing, consumer debt, and other health insurance coverage issues.⁴

Program reports for the EBS program reveal the number of unduplicated clients served through the EBS Program during program year 2020 was 36,387, a 33% increase from the year 2010 when that number was 27,433. According to the most recent available data, outreach and community education by EBSs reached an estimated 40,722 older adults and media outreach and education activities reached an estimated 3.8 million people.

Additionally, EBS program reports for 2020 reveal **the average annual monetary impact of one full-time EBS to clients and the community** through public benefit program eligibility, overpayment resolution, medical insurance appeals, and other positive outcomes **was \$1,831,085**, for a combined statewide total of \$177,885,443.





Wisconsin, Ages 60 and Older as Share of Total Population⁸

For 2020, it was projected that one in four Wisconsin residents were age 60 and older.⁵ At the time of the last EBS funding increase in 1997, the population of adults age 60 and older in Wisconsin was 907,552, or 16.9% of the total population. In 2020, this number was projected to increase to 1,478,825, or nearly 25% of the state's total population. Moving forward, in Wisconsin between the years "2015 and 2040, the population ages 65 and older will grow by 640,000 people, an increase of 72%." The increase is expected to be higher in areas with moderate to high rates of poverty, per the Wisconsin Department of Health Services⁶, where traditionally individuals have limited access to legal services. It is also expected to

be higher amongst the "oldest old" segment of the State's elderly population, those ages 90 and above, a group who is more likely to require access to public benefit programs including long term care Medicaid.⁷

State funding allocations for the EBS Program were last increased over 20 years ago. The older adult population is rising, but EBS services continue to face budget cuts. While compensation rates vary across the state, if averaged, the amount established even in 1997 was only enough to support an average of one half-time EBS position in each county or tribe, or merely \$34,456.94 per aging unit. Current funding levels require counties and tribes to find other sources of supplemental funding to operate the program. A recent inquiry of EBSs in Wisconsin found that with current budget shortfalls many EBSs have had to reduce outreach and one-on-one counseling, implement waitlists for services, and take other undesirable steps to manage workloads with the funds available, all of which can lead to poorer outcomes for consumers. In some instances, lack of funding caused a reduction in hourly wages for EBS and or no or minimal benefits, which in turn results in higher employee turnover.

The population of older adults is projected to continue to grow for the foreseeable future. Many older adults are faced annually with choosing a prescription drug plan and/or health insurance provider or applying for needed services and assistance; increasingly these processes are completed only online and are complex to navigate. Now is the time to increase funding to support EBS services to ensure older adults have access to needed legal advocacy services. This investment benefits Wisconsin's older adults and the communities they live in.

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Core Member Organizations

- Aging and Disability Professionals Association of Wisconsin (ADPAW)
- Alzheimer's Association Wisconsin Chapter
- Wisconsin Adult Day Services Association (WADSA)
- Wisconsin Association of Area Agencies on Aging (W4A)
- Wisconsin Association of Benefit Specialists (WABS)
- Wisconsin Association of Nutrition Directors (WAND)
- Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers (WASC)
- Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA)
- Wisconsin Senior Corps Association (WISCA)
- Wisconsin Tribal Aging Unit Association

The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network is a collaborative group of individuals and associations working with and for Wisconsin's older adults to shape public policy to improve their quality of life.

WAAN State Issue Brief
April 2021

Reliable, Accessible and Affordable High-Speed Internet Access:

The key to remaining independent, informed, engaged, and connected.

WAAN's Position: Provide reliable, accessible, affordable high-speed internet access to older adults and their families no matter where they live to ensure critical connectivity for older adults to meet health, education, social, and economic needs.

Connectivity Gap

The coronavirus pandemic has exposed a hidden crisis for the nation's older adults: a lack of connectivity. Nationwide nearly 22 million, or roughly 42% of American seniors, do not have broadband access at home, 15% less than the 18-64 age group.¹ In Wisconsin, research indicates 70% of the over 65 population with computers have access to some form of internet service, 20% less than the 18-64 age group.² In reality the percentage of people of all ages in the gap — with no access to internet service — is probably larger, as unreliable and expensive service also limit access.

Impact of the Gap

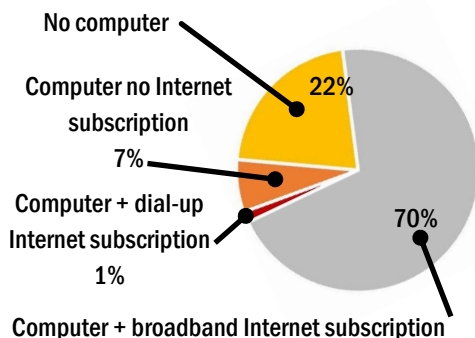
Older adults are one of the largest demographics without access to broadband service, and this has wide-ranging and significant implications for individuals, families, and communities. Research has found some disturbing correlations between the lack of broadband access and the current public health and social injustice crises.

In Wisconsin, an average of 87.3% of COVID deaths have been individuals over the age of 65, 7.3% higher than the national average.³ Research estimates 40% of those who died had no in-home internet service — they were offline. They lacked access to resources needed such as health information, telehealth service, communication, social support, and financial assistance.

Disparities

For older adults already challenged by low income, lack of education, poor health, racism, ageism, housing, and/or social and physical isolation,

Household Computer Connectivity: Wisconsinites 65 and Over



“If you want to be a full participant in our economy and society, you need to be online.”⁴

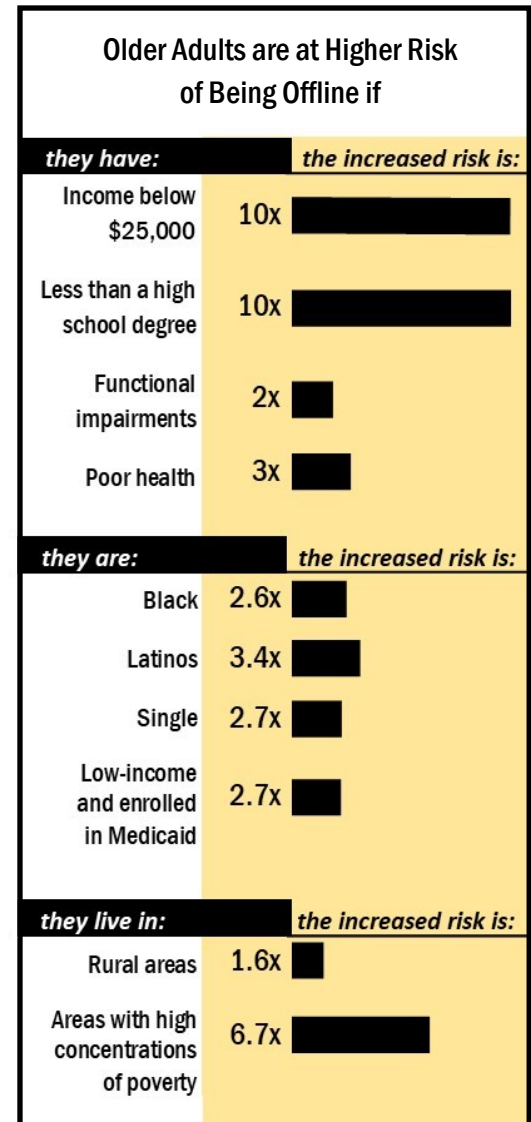
FCC Chairman Ajit Pai,
January 12, 2021

technology barriers further reduce longevity and quality of life. As indicated in the chart on the right, many factors increase the risk older adults will be offline. In addition, loved ones and caregivers find it difficult to effectively support offline seniors.

Getting older adults online has never been more urgent. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the nation’s systems for social support, communications, and health care, highlighting how home-based internet and digital skills are an essential lifeline for older adults during public health emergencies and everyday life.

What is needed to close the connectivity gap?

- Communities, municipalities and non-profit groups must work together with broadband providers and government agencies to ensure that services are extended into homes and residential care facilities.
- Provide adequate funding to address the lack of broadband access for all citizens, including older adults. Funding is needed to build an infrastructure for providing affordable, reliable internet service across the state and to provide the devices needed to use the service when available.
- Increase funding to expand the Lifeline telephone assistance program and provide additional support for broadband service to help overcome the cost barriers to broadband adoption.
- Educational materials and outreach efforts are needed to help older adults better understand the value of being connected. These efforts must address both low-cost and market-rate options to reach a diverse audience of offline seniors.
- Training programs are needed to assist older adults in learning how to use various technology devices and software so older adults can effectively utilize internet services. They will be able to access needed services, obtain essential resources, and maintain essential connections with family members and friends, services providers, and their communities.



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STATEMENT OF EXPLANATION COVID-19 RELIEF GRANTS AND FUNDING

6.4

Background: The ADRC has been awarded a grant and will be receiving additional funding to enhance service delivery as we continue to work through the pandemic

ADRC Additional Funding In 2021

Three sources of additional funds have or will be awarded.

1. Grant received to provide outreach and address barriers related to vaccination of our ADRC customers. The purpose is to make sure everyone who wants the vaccine can get it. Grant amount is for \$9,825 and must be used by 8-31-2021.
2. Consolidated Appropriations and Stimulus Act 2021. This was signed in January and included \$175 million nationally for Older Americans Act Home Delivered Meals programs.
3. American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. This was signed in March and included \$750 million for Nutrition Services; \$145 million for Family Caregiver; \$44 million for Disease Prevention; \$460 million for Supportive Services including vaccination outreach and activities to prevent social isolation due to COVID.

We have not been given our individual county appropriations yet but we have been told that the funds will be distributed using the same formula used with the other COVID relief funds in 2020. With that in mind, here is what we anticipate our approximate allocations to be in the various programs.

Older Americans Act Program	Consolidated Appropriations/Stimulus	American Rescue Plan
Title III - C2 (meals on wheels)	\$30,000	Up to \$133,000*
Title III – B (supportive services)		Up to \$88,000**
Title III – D (health promotions)		Up to \$9,700^
Title III – E (NFCSP or family caregiver)		Up to \$28,000

* The funding is actually 60% meals on wheels and 40% senior dining but we will have the option of transferring between the two. We would likely move all of the funds to meals on wheels

**We are uncertain how much, if any of these funds will be targeted for vaccination outreach, social isolation or general III-B activities.

^We did not receive additional III-D funds in previous COVID relief so this estimate is based on usual appropriations.



**STATEMENT OF EXPLANATION
2021 AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER PROGRAM
PRIORITIZATION**

7.1

Background: Each year the ADRC Board receives information about the various programs and services offered by the ADRC. With that information, each Board member is asked to rank these in terms of priority. While the agency has never had to use this information for the purposes of resource allocation, that potential always exists. The ADRC Board has also requested that ADRC staff provide their perspective on program prioritization to provide them with great insight about what our customers are needing or asking for information about.

Action: The recommendation to the ADRC Board is to approve the compiled 2021 Program Prioritization report as ranked by the Board Members.

Aging & Disability Resource Center

Form for ADRC Board Ranking Programs

Program or Service	2021 ADRC Division 1-12	2021 ADRC Board 1-12
Bridging Chippewa County	10	10
Caregiver Support (AFCSP and NFCSP)	6	4*
Dementia Care Specialist	5	8
Disability Benefits Counseling	3	2*
Elder Benefits Counseling	2	1
Health & Wellness Programs	12	11
In-home Support Services	9	6*
Meals on Wheels	4	6*
Memory Screening	11	12
Options Counseling	1	2*
Senior Dining	8	9
Transportation	7	4*

- Disability Benefits Counseling and Options Counseling tied for #2
- Caregiver Support and Transportation tied for #4
- In-home Support Services and Meals on Wheels tied for #6



STATEMENT OF EXPLANATION TRANSPORTATION CO-PAY

7.2

Background: Transportation co-pays were waived through June 2021 due to COVID. Ridership has been steadily increasing. The 2021 grant was written with participants contributing to the cost of the ride through a co-pay and with a budget that reflects generation of revenue from this.

Action: The recommendation to the ADRC Board is to reinstate the transportation co-pay to \$3.00 per one way trip beginning July 1, 2021.