



Tell Me More about... IRIS



What is IRIS?

IRIS is a program that allows you to direct your own services and supports. IRIS recognizes that you are the decision-maker in your life, including determining your daily activities and the types of support or assistance you need to meet your long-term care needs. IRIS is grounded in the core values of self-determination. These values include:

- Freedom to decide how you want to live your life;
- Authority over a specific budget;
- Support to organize resources in ways that are life enhancing and meaningful to you;
- Responsibility for the wise use of public funds and recognition of the contribution you make to your community; and
- Confirmation of the important role of self-advocates.

How Does IRIS Work?

IRIS Overview.

Self-directing your long-term care services offers you a way to have control over your services and supports. In IRIS, you are provided with an individualized budget that is based on your individualized needs. Participants of the IRIS program decide on the needed services, supports and goods within this budget. IRIS participants schedule services, select providers of services and supports, and select the settings for services.

People who live in a Community Based Residential Facility (CBRF) or nursing home are not eligible for IRIS, while living in those settings.

Purchase Services Within an Individualized Budget Amount.

The amount of funding available for your plan will be determined by the results of a tool called the Long-Term Care Functional Screen. A worker at the ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center), will ask you questions about your abilities, strengths and needs. He or she will enter the information into the functional screen, and the screen will calculate the amount of money that you can use to create your plan for how to meet your long-term care needs.





Potential or current participants in IRIS may apply to the Department for an adjustment to their initial budget, if they are unable to develop a support and service plan with their IRIS consultant that is within the initial budget amount.

Receive Home and Community-Based Services.

The providers of supports and services to IRIS participants receive payment through a fiscal agent. The IRIS program includes a wide array of home and community based long-term care services. You will be able to use your Medicaid card for other Medicaid covered services.

Plan Your Own Care.

Initially, each person who chooses to participate in IRIS works with an IRIS orientation consultant. The orientation consultant will introduce you to the IRIS program and the concept of self-direction, as well as guide you through plan development and the final steps in the IRIS enrollment process. The IRIS orientation consultant will work with you, and any other person providing assistance to you, to develop and approve your initial IRIS plan. This plan is developed by prioritizing long-term care goals and identifying natural and paid supports. In addition, the plan will address your health and safety. The orientation consultant will ensure that necessary paperwork is completed. One of the tasks of the orientation consultant is to help you choose an IRIS consultant who will provide you with ongoing assistance and support after you enroll in the program. The IRIS orientation consultant and the IRIS consultant services are contracted by the State of Wisconsin at no cost to the IRIS participant.

Self-Directed Personal Care.



Individuals who select IRIS also have the option of choosing agency-based personal care or self-directing their own personal care. If you choose to use the Self-Directed Personal Care option, you will manage a personal care budget that is in addition to the IRIS budget. The budget amount is determined using the same Personal Care Screening tool used for agency-based personal care. This budget amount may only be used for personal care or certain other related items. Additional key points include:

- You will be able to hire, supervise, manage and fire your personal care workers in the same ways you manage your IRIS workers. This includes using the IRIS Fiscal Employer Agencies (FEA) as your employer agent or by using a co-employment vendor. (Your IRIS Consultant can explain these options.)
- You will have flexibility to coordinate personal care with supportive home care, transportation and other services, and you may use your IRIS self-directed personal care budget for personal care in community settings outside the home.



The service plan will be developed using a person-centered process that builds on your preferences, choices and abilities.

- You may use your IRIS self-directed personal care budget to purchase certain items that increase independence or substitute for human assistance. For example, a lift chair that will allow you to transfer without assistance.
- You may choose a representative to assist you in directing your IRIS self-directed personal care services.

In accordance with Wisconsin State law, a nurse participates in the development of the personal care plan as part of Self-Directed Personal Care in IRIS. A contracted Self-Directed Personal Care agency will provide a nurse who will help you to develop a Self-Directed Personal Care service plan. This is integrated with your IRIS plan. The service plan will be developed using a person-centered process that builds on your preferences, choices and abilities and can involve other individuals of your choosing. On-going nurse support will be available to the extent that it is needed to ensure health and safety, but at a minimum annually. The IRIS nurse will complete a personal care screen at least annually and more often if your condition changes.

Please note that Self-Directed Personal Care is not available when you live in a group residential setting such as an adult family home. If you have chosen to use a representative for the purpose of Self-Directed Personal Care in IRIS, then you cannot also use that person as a provider of your personal care. In addition, you cannot participate in agency-based personal care through your Medicaid ForwardHealth card and IRIS Self-Directed Personal Care at the same time.

Coordinated Payment to Providers.

An IRIS participant has access to the IRIS Fiscal Employer Agencies at no cost to him or her. This agency takes care of payroll, taxes, and other employer-related financial paperwork requirements. The Fiscal Employer Agencies makes payments to people you employ and to businesses or providers that deliver goods and services as authorized on your IRIS plan.

My Notes and Questions.

