

Caregiver Connection

Spring 2021 Newsletter



The Caregiver Connection provides information to help support family caregivers who are caring for someone with a chronic health condition or a disability. If you have questions about articles or information in the newsletter, or if you would like your name removed from this quarterly newsletter mailing list, please connect with the Caregiver Support Coordinator you have worked with:

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Caregiver Support Coordinator
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Or reach us toll free at 1-888-486-9545

Spring Renewal and Self-Care by Meagan Fandrey, Caregiver Support Coordinator

“The beautiful spring came, and when nature resumes her loveliness, the human soul is apt to revive also.”
~Harriet Ann Jacobs

Spring brings warmth, light, growth, and vivid colors in ways that somehow continue to surprise our senses each year. There is so much to see, hear, feel, and smell – trees budding, grass turning green, flowers blooming, birds singing, the warmth of sunlight on your skin, and a freshness in the air. It is a time of renewal for nature and it can be a time of renewal for you as a caregiver as well.

As you breathe in the fresh air on a warm spring day, take a moment to reflect on what you currently do *for you*.

- Is there a relaxing activity that you do regularly?
- Do you have a physical activity routine that you feel good about?
- Is there someone that you go to for emotional support?
- Are you seeing your medical provider regularly to manage your own health?
- Is your diet balanced to include plenty of water, protein, fresh fruits and vegetables?

If the answer to any of these questions is “no” then there may be some opportunities to begin new self-care habits, just as new seeds might be planted in the spring. As with new seeds, these new habits will take some attention and care to flourish. Consider beginning by thinking about areas of your life that might feel neglected – maybe it’s relaxation time, perhaps it is exercise, or it could be your physical or mental health. After you’ve identified one or two areas to begin, you can then set some goals to promote growth in these areas of your life. Some examples might be:

I will go for a walk for 20 minutes on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays to improve my physical activity. I will do this when my sister is able to visit with my husband, who I care for.

I will contact home care agencies with the goal of hiring in home respite care once per week to allow me a break from caregiving, time to go fishing again, and time to manage my own medical appointments.

I have been struggling with difficult emotions and I don’t have any informal supports to talk to about this. I am going to look for a counselor that I can see to help me work through these feelings.

I will begin attending a virtual caregiver support group monthly (and attend in person when it becomes available) to help me connect with other caregivers. I’m not sure if it will work for me, but I’m going to try it.

I will begin journaling on a daily basis as a way to get my feelings out and also a way to reflect on what I am grateful for.

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Setting goals for self-care can be a challenge, but it is not something that must be done alone. You can contact the staff member you have connected with at the ADRC-CW to work together in identifying areas where your self-care could use some nurturing and brainstorming possible options to consider. There are resources at the ADRC-CW that can help you meet your self-care goals – staff members to assist you in identifying your priorities and setting goals, a directory of home care agencies, a listing of counselors that have experience in caregiving-related stressors, support group options, and so much more.

Today, you can take a step toward improved self-care. This is a step that will not only help you - it will also benefit the person you care for. In a season where there are a multitude of possibilities for revival and renewal, what will *you* do to plant a seed for self-care?

Aging Plan 2022-2024 Survey Opportunity

The Aging and Disability Resource Center of Central Wisconsin (ADRC-CW) needs your help to develop a three-year aging plan that establishes goals and priorities in areas that YOU feel are important in keeping individuals independent, healthy, and living in the places they wish. The ADRC-CW is interested to learn what you feel our communities are doing well, need to improve, or need to create. What services, programs, or supports would help you stay healthy, remain in your own home, and allow you to stay connected to your community?



Please help us develop our plan by taking our survey and sharing your comments. You can find the survey by going to our website www.adrc-cw.org. The survey link is located under the “Welcome” area or you can use the copy that was provided with this newsletter and send back in the stamped envelope enclosed.

Your opinions, ideas, and comments are very much appreciated. Thank you!

The Remember Project: “In the Garden” coming to Central Wisconsin!

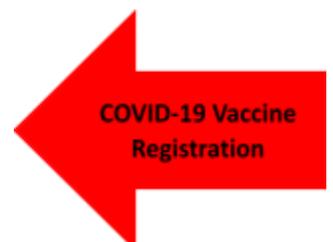


The ADRC-CW is partnering with 'The Remember Project' on **June 24th** to mark Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness month by using the arts to increase awareness and reduce fear, stigma, and isolation of memory loss with a virtual performance of a play called 'In the Garden' by Matthew Widman.

The event will be held **virtually** and those interested can call the ADRC-CW at 1-888-486-9545 for more information and to reserve a spot.

Assistance with Vaccine Registration for Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities

ADRC-CW now has COVID-19 vaccination registration support specialists to help seniors and adults with disabilities register for a COVID-19 vaccination. If you or someone you know needs assistance registering for a vaccine in Lincoln, Langlade, Marathon or Wood counties, please contact the ADRC-CW at 1-888-486-9545 to be directed to one of our vaccine registration staff.



10 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT A POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR HEALTH CARE by Scott Seeger, Dementia Care Specialist

What if you suffered a heart attack, a stroke, a fall with head injury, had some other medical crisis, or were in some other type of accident that left you unable to make your own medical decisions? Who would make medical decisions for you? The answer might surprise you because family has NO automatic authority to make decisions.

1. The Power of Attorney for Health Care is voluntary **BUT** it is highly recommended as it protects and ensures **YOUR** future health care wishes. Completion of a Power of Attorney for Health Care is typically recommended for every adult. Don't wait until it's too late because you cannot predict an accident or illness.
2. The Power of Attorney for Health Care is **different** from the Living Will.
3. The Power of Attorney for Health Care is **different** from the Power of Attorney for Finances.
4. The Power of Attorney for Health Care allows you to designate another adult to make future health care decisions for you when you can no longer make those decisions for yourself. That person you designate is called a health care agent. Your spouse and children are **NOT** automatically your health care agent. You **MUST** designate your spouse or children, in the Power of Attorney for Health Care document, if you intend for them to be your health care agent.
5. The typical Power of Attorney for Health Care is not **activated** until you have been determined by 2 medical professionals to be unable to make health care decisions for yourself (often referred to as being **incapacitated**). In most situations, simply signing a Power of Attorney for Health Care document will not give any automatic decision making authority to the health care agent.
6. No one else can change your Power of Attorney for Health Care. It is a legal document, once properly signed and witnessed, that represents **your** wishes.
7. Once **activated**, because you can no longer make your own health care decisions, your health care agent has a primary job to carry out your wishes. Therefore, it is very important for you to talk to your health care agent, early and often, about your desires and goals for care in the event you become sick or injured.
8. It is **FREE** to complete a Power of Attorney for Health Care document. Support in completing the Power of Attorney for Health Care is typically available through your doctors office. You can also find free forms at **dhs.wisconsin.gov** by searching '**advance directives**'. The document requires you to sign it in the presence of 2 witnesses who **cannot** be family members. You can also contact an attorney but this will likely not be free.
9. Copies of your completed Power of Attorney for Health Care form should be provided to your health care agents, interested family members, and your medical providers. You should retain the original document for your personal records.
10. You can update and change your Power of Attorney for Health Care at any time in the future, provided you understand what you are doing.



If you have additional questions, please call Scott Seeger at 715-261-6066

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Find Strength in Knowing More about Dementia



Dementia Careblazers is a website that is committed to helping family members on their journey of caring for someone with dementia. There is a free downloadable survival guide, a blog that is updated regularly with common questions in caring for someone with dementia, and a youtube channel featuring Dr. Natali Edmonds, a board-certified psychologist specializing in geriatrics. On the youtube channel (found by clicking on “TV” on homepage listed below), Dr. Natali has videos featuring her as she discusses various topics, challenges, and questions about caring for a loved one with dementia and also caring for yourself as the caregiver. To explore this resource, visit: <https://www.careblazers.com>

What is the Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)?

The Senior FMNP offers eligible low-income seniors (age 60 and older) the opportunity to purchase fresh, locally grown fruits, vegetables, and herbs from certified farmers. The goals of the Senior FMNP are:

- To provide fresh, nutritious, unprepared fruits, vegetables and herbs from farmers’ markets and roadside stands to low-income seniors, and
- To increase the consumption of agricultural commodities by expanding or aiding the expansion of farmers’ markets and roadside stands



Who is Eligible? An eligible person **1)** is a resident of the county in which the voucher is being distributed (Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon and Wood Counties), **2)** is a senior age 60 or above, or Native American age 55 years above, **AND 3)** has a monthly household income that meets program eligibility guidelines. Income eligibility guideline information is forthcoming from the State coordinator.

How Does the Program Work? Enrolled seniors will receive \$25 in vouchers for the household. These vouchers may be used to purchase locally grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs at approved farmers’ markets or roadside stands. These vouchers are good until October 31, 2021.

How Do I Get The Vouchers? The number of vouchers is limited, so they will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. **Beginning in June, eligible individuals may contact the ADRC-CW office by calling 888-486-9545** and inquire.

Spring Journal Prompt

Have you ever considered journaling? Many people find daily journaling, often with a focus on gratitude, to be an activity that is helpful in a self-care routine. Some find it helpful to follow different journal prompts, to give them some ideas on topics to reflect on. If you’d like to give journaling a try, here is a prompt to get you started:

What one thing do you like most about spring and why? As a follow up, how can you make that piece of spring a part of your routine this season, for your self-care?

