

Make It Work Milwaukee! Coalition

Strengthening Milwaukee County through better health and human services

Alzheimer's Association,
SE Wisconsin Chapter

American Red Cross in
Southeastern Wisconsin

ARC Milwaukee

Automated Health Systems

Badger Association of the Blind and
Visually Impaired

Bell Therapy, Inc.

Curative Care Network

Coalition of Wisconsin Aging
Groups

Community Advocates

Community Care, Inc.

Disability Rights Wisconsin

Eisenhower Center

Goodwill Industries of Southeastern
Wisconsin, Inc.

Grand Avenue Club, Inc.

Guest House of Milwaukee, Inc.

HealthWatch

Impact

IndependenceFirst

Independent Care Health Plan

Interfaith Conference of Greater
Milwaukee

Jewish Family Services

Justice 2000, Inc.

Managed Health Services

Mental Health America of Wisconsin

Meta House, Inc.

Milwaukee Mental Health Task
Force

Milwaukee Aging Consortium

Milwaukee Center for Independence

Milwaukee Jewish Council for
Community Relations

NAMI Greater Milwaukee

Our Space, Inc.

Partnership Council Public Policy
Committee

People Can't Wait

Public Policy Committee, Milwaukee
Child Abuse Prevention Services
Coalition

Rosalie Manor Community & Family
Services, Inc.

Transitional Living Services, Inc.

Vital Voices for Mental Health

UEDA

Wisconsin Community Services, Inc.

Wisconsin Council on Children
and Families

Gwen Jackson

2009 - 2011 State Budget Priorities (3/14/09) *Growing Our Community*

Make It Work Milwaukee! is a cross-disability, aging, youth, and families coalition that is dedicated to strengthening Milwaukee County through better health and human services. Our agencies contribute to the quality of life in our community by helping and empowering people to maintain their independence, health, and well being. We look forward to working in partnership with elected officials to implement innovative and cost-effective ways to bring vital services to those in need and to maintain the quality of life in Milwaukee County and in our state.

Our Vision for the 2009 – 2011 State Budget:

- **Support Our Wisconsin Quality of Life.** As we confront a tough budget, it is important to preserve the things that make our communities great places to live, work, grow up, and grow old. Given the great needs in our state, we support efforts to enhance revenue, to modernize the state tax system, and to close loopholes to ensure fairness. These options should be fully explored and addressed before considering the serious cutting of basic services.
- **Leverage Federal Funding.** Wisconsin should aggressively move forward with initiatives which help our state to leverage additional federal funding - Wisconsin ranks 47th in per capita return of federal dollars. Examples include the Disability Benefit Specialist Program and expansion of Family Care.
- **Ensure the Promise of Family Care** and serve younger people with disabilities in Milwaukee County so they can continue to live in the community.
 - **Serve people on the Milwaukee County waiting list starting in November 2009** to enable people with disabilities to maintain their independence in the community and stay out of costly nursing homes. Don't let Milwaukee County be the only county in the state which would NOT serve people on the waiting list in the first year of Family Care.
 - **Invest in Aging and Disability Resource Centers** so they can enable elderly people and people with disabilities to use their private funds more effectively; avoid or delay admission to nursing homes and stay in their home with less costly services; and learn their choices for long term care.
 - **Restore the Ratio for the Family Care Ombudsman program** (for enrollees under age 60) which provides Family Care members with unbiased external advocacy. Returning to the 1.0 FTE Ombudsman to 2500 enrollees (the ratio set by the legislature for the 2007-09 biennium) and adding participants in the IRIS self-directed waiver program will ensure consumer protection.
- **Address the benefits crisis in Milwaukee County** to provide people in need with improved access to Medicaid and FoodShare. Design a system that puts people in need first and has increased accountability and responsiveness; increase funding to reflect the dramatic increase in need; and establish a Milwaukee County Disability Benefit Specialist program and expand the Elderly Benefit Specialist Program to improve access and draw down Federal funds.

Contacts for MIWM:

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- **Improve Transportation Services** by supporting the Governor's increase in funding for the Specialized Transportation Assistance Program (85.21) for the elderly and people with disabilities and the creation of a Regional Transportation Authority for Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee Counties.
- **Restore Funding for Independent Living Centers (ILCs)** which assist persons with disabilities to live independently in the community. They are an excellent investment because they use home and community-based programs to assist people with disabilities to become more self-sufficient and less dependent on long term government supports.
- **Maintain funding for the Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Support Program** which provide direct support to families as they struggle daily with enormous caregiving responsibilities. AFCSP dollars fund adult day care, respite care, transportation and other support services necessary for families to continue caregiving in the home.
- **Fully fund BadgerCare Plus and open enrollment for childless adults July 1.** BadgerCare Plus contributes to the health of our entire community by extending access to affordable healthcare, and decreasing reliance on costly emergency room services. The need to enroll new childless adults is urgent since GAMP, the General Assistance Medical Program, has now ended. GAMP was a critical safety net for Milwaukee County residents - until BadgerCare Plus accepts new enrollment, there is a gaping hole in the safety net in Milwaukee County.
- **Support continuation of the SeniorCare Prescription Drug Program,** and adopt the SeniorCare Plus proposal which would permit elderly Medicare beneficiaries to choose between SeniorCare or enroll in an expanded Medicare Savings Program which would provide additional support for very low-income and low-asset Medicare beneficiaries who have disabilities or are over age 65.
- **Maintain Addiction Treatment.** Investing in addiction treatment will enable people to recover and be contributing employees and community members. Maintain Milwaukee County's \$5 million TANF state grant to provide AODA treatment for TANF verified Milwaukee County residents.
- **Support treatment instead of prison to provide** effective alternatives to incarceration for non-violent offenders with addiction and mental health issues. Investing in Milwaukee's Treatment and Diversion Program (TAD) will provide the largest fiscal benefit of any county in terms of diverting people into treatment, and saving court and prosecutorial costs, jail bed days and prison days. TAD is also improves public safety by getting people the help they need and reducing the likelihood of re-arrest. Include treatment funding dollars which are essential to success.
- **Enable people with mental illness to maintain their recovery and health by pursuing a 1915(i) Medicaid state plan amendment** to fund mental health services. This program permits states to offer home and community-based services as a benefit under the State Medicaid Plan while allowing the state to limit the number of slots. Provide funds for the state share of this benefit.
- **Enable low income parents to maintain employment** by supporting access to affordable and high quality childcare. Fully fund the **Wisconsin Shares Childcare Program** to avoid higher co-pays and increase rates to providers to support quality nurturing care.
- **Support High Quality Early Childhood Education** by developing a statewide quality improvement initiative to ensure that children have access to high quality early learning opportunities; and improve the quality of early care and education for at-risk children by rewarding higher quality programs in the Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program.
- **Help W2 families move out of poverty** by continuing transitional jobs program, so parents can develop the skills needed to get good jobs; extending the length of time parents of infants may stay home with their newborn children, increasing W2 emergency assistance payments, and creating new options for W-2 participants with disabilities and multiple barriers.