

# Core WILN Talking Points

- **People with disabilities and older adults should have the choice and support to remain independent in their homes and communities.** Wisconsin's long-term care, housing and transportation policies should make community living possible throughout a person's life.
- **Disability can be part of life at any age.** The policies and infrastructure that support independence for people with disabilities today also help build communities where Wisconsinites can remain independent as they grow older.
- **Wisconsin should support people before they reach a crisis.** Too often, assistance becomes available only after someone's needs become more severe, they enter an institution, or they meet restrictive financial or functional eligibility requirements. Earlier support can help people maintain independence.
- **Community living requires more than health care.** A person may have services in their home but still be isolated if they cannot find accessible housing, hire a caregiver, get reliable transportation or access the community. Long-term care, housing and transportation are interconnected.
- **People should have meaningful choices about where they live and receive support.** Institutional care may be appropriate for some people, but people who can and want to live in the community should have access to the services that make that choice possible.
- **Home and Community-Based Services are essential infrastructure.** Medicaid guarantees eligible people access to nursing facility services, while HCBS does not have the same federal guarantee. WILN wants Wisconsin to protect access to community-based long-term care in state policy.
- **Getting into an institution should not become a one-way trip.** Wisconsin's Independent Living Centers have a role in helping people with disabilities transition from hospitals and nursing facilities back into their communities, but additional capacity is needed. WILN is seeking an additional \$2.6 million in state funding for Wisconsin's ILC network and changes to the transition referral process.
- **People shouldn't have to become poorer or need substantially more care before assistance becomes available.** WILN proposes developing a state-

supported long-term care coverage option for people who need some help remaining independent but do not qualify for Medicaid long-term care.

- **Wisconsin's caregiver shortage threatens independence.** WILN is proposing changes to nurse supervision requirements and reimbursement that it believes could reduce unnecessary administrative burdens, address staffing problems and protect continuity of personal care services.
- **Family Care should help people live in the community.** WILN is concerned about Medicaid community-based waiver dollars being used for institutional placements and is calling for stronger state monitoring of Managed Care Organizations, adequate provider networks and fair provider reimbursement.
- **Self-direction means trusting people with disabilities to make decisions about their own lives.** WILN wants Wisconsin to protect the original principles of IRIS and reconsider restrictions that limit how participants can use approved resources to meet their individual needs.
- **Transportation is an independence issue.** People need reliable transportation to reach work, medical care, groceries, family, friends and community life. WILN supports increased and more stable transportation funding, better coordination of funding sources and allowing communities to establish regional transportation authorities.
- **Accessible housing is infrastructure for a lifetime.** WILN supports visitability standards for new homes, incentives for accessibility modifications to existing housing and policies that expand affordable, accessible homeownership. A home that accommodates disability and changing mobility needs can help someone remain there as circumstances change.
- **People with disabilities need to be part of the decisions that affect their lives.** Wisconsin's Independent Living Centers are disability-led organizations. WILN's policy priorities reflect the Independent Living principles of consumer control, choice, self-direction and full participation in community life. The draft identifies WILN as Wisconsin's eight disability-led and run ILCs, WCILC and ILCW.