

# Connections

A Newsletter for the Members of Community Care



On the Job  
with Meseret  
P.6



**PG.5**  
**Vaccination  
Reward  
Program**

**A NEW REWARD FOR  
MEMBERS ENROLLED  
IN OUR PARTNERSHIP  
PROGRAM WHO ARE  
ELIGIBLE FOR MEDICARE.**

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# The Importance of Member Advisory Committees

Mark your  
calendars for  
upcoming meetings!



Community Care hopes to increase participation in our Member Advisory Committees in 2023. Member Advisory Committees play a crucial role in helping to provide valuable input and feedback on the programs we offer – Family Care, Partnership, and PACE.

During Member Advisory Committee meetings, Community Care staff provide updates on current projects, and share information on topics like immunization rates, member satisfaction, and care management practices. The meetings are member driven, and members have an opportunity to suggest topics that they wish to learn about.

Member Advisory Committees are one important way that our members can share information with us that helps us to improve the services we provide. We invite members, their family members, or legal guardians, to attend one of our Member Advisory Committee meetings.

We are pleased to announce that in 2023, as a “thank you,” each member or legal decision maker (LDM) who participates in one of our Member Advisory Committee meetings will get a \$20 Culver’s gift card.

Mark your calendars for these upcoming Member Advisory Committee meetings:

### **Living a Meaningful Life - Vliet PACE MAC (for members enrolled in our PACE program)**

- Monday, April 17
- Monday, July 17
- Monday, October 16

All meetings are scheduled from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Vliet Day Center, 3220 W. Vliet, Milwaukee.

If you wish to participate, but can’t attend in person, please contact Halanna Lathon at 262-207-9416 for more information.

### **Waukesha PACE MAC (for members enrolled in our PACE program)**

- Tuesday, April 18
- Tuesday, July 18
- Tuesday, October 17

All meetings are scheduled from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Waukesha Day Center, 1801 Dolphin Drive, Waukesha.

If you wish to participate, but can’t attend in person, please contact Halanna Lathon at 262-207-9416 for more information.

### **Family Care/ Partnership MAC (for members enrolled in our Family Care or Partnership programs)**

- Wednesday, April 5
- Wednesday, July 5
- Wednesday, October 4

All meetings are scheduled from 1 to 2:30 p.m. by telephone or Webex Meeting. These meetings are not held in person. To participate, please contact Halanna Lathon at 262-207-9416 for more information.

# Continuous Medicaid Enrollment Ends March 31

Due to COVID-19, Wisconsin put temporary policies in place (referred to as Continuous Medicaid Enrollment) to protect the health and safety of anyone participating in Medicaid programs.

Normally, DHS asks members enrolled in Medicaid programs to provide updated information about themselves yearly and renew their participation in Medicaid if they still qualify. Since 2020, DHS has not asked for this information.

It is important for Community Care members to know that Continuous Medicaid Enrollment for Wisconsin residents ends March 31.

This means that Community Care members will once again be screened yearly to ensure they meet functional and financial eligibility criteria so they can stay enrolled.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress passed a law that required states like Wisconsin to maintain continuous coverage for Medicaid members.

The continuous coverage requirement ensured that individuals enrolled in Medicaid

throughout the pandemic did not risk losing their coverage.

Once the Public Health Emergency (PHE) expires, members must again complete an application or renewal process to keep their coverage.

Starting April 1, Medicaid renewals will be scheduled by your local Income Maintenance Department. This process will take place over a 14-month period. You will receive notice prior to your renewal date. Renewals are not done by Community Care staff, but are available to help if needed.

The most important thing for Community Care members to do is to make sure we have the most up-to-date contact information on file for you, especially your current address.

If you need to update your address or other details, please contact your care team at Community Care.

By ensuring we have this information, you will receive all the communications regarding this change and how it could impact your coverage. It is important for members to read anything they receive from Community Care or DHS regarding their Medicaid coverage.

## What to Expect at Renewal Time

- 1) The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) will send you a letter 45 days before your benefits renewal is due. Members will also receive another notice from DHS as the PHE ends, letting them know when their renewal date will be.
- 2) You may need to update the information DHS has on file. This may include your household details, income, and assets. You may be asked to submit proof later.
- 3) Your local agency will review your renewal and follow up if they need more information. Then, you will get a letter that tells you if your Medicaid eligibility is changing.

If you do not complete your renewal by the due date, your coverage will end. Free, expert help for completing your renewal or getting additional coverage is available at **WisCovered.com** or, call **211** to find a local navigator.



# Vaccination Reward Program *for Partnership members in Medicare*

Community Care is offering a new benefit for members enrolled in our Partnership program who are eligible for Medicare.

We are giving our Medicare members a \$20 reward for getting vaccinated.

The Vaccination Reward will be loaded onto the Over-the-Counter (OTC) Benefit Card each quarter.

Members can earn a \$20 reward each time they get one of the following vaccines:

- Influenza
- Pneumovax (pneumonia)

- COVID-19 (initial and boosters)

Reward dollars can be used on items like food, supplies, clothing, and household items at many stores like Walmart and Family Dollar.

The Vaccination Reward incentive runs through December 31, 2023. Reward dollars expire March 31, 2024.

The OTC Benefit will continue through 2023. New this year, we have increased the OTC Benefit to \$45. This means that \$45 will be loaded onto your OTC Benefit Card each month for you to buy

items like pain relievers, cough syrup, toothpaste, and other personal supplies.

If you have a caregiver who helps you with shopping, they can use both the OTC Benefit Card and any Vaccination Reward dollars you've earned to shop on your behalf.

We value your membership in our Partnership program. We hope the OTC Benefit Card and the new Vaccination Reward will be helpful to you.

If you have any questions, please contact a member of your care team.

## *Making the Call*

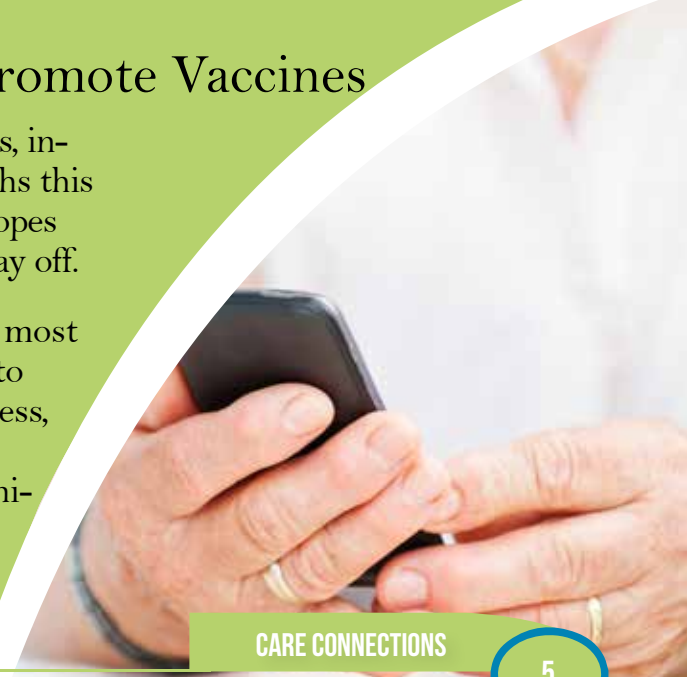
### Care Teams Try New Approach to Promote Vaccines

There is a new effort underway in the Calumet, Outagamie, Waupaca, and Winnebago counties to encourage more members to get their flu shots.

During the remainder of the flu season, some employees will devote one hour a month to call members who have not received the flu vaccine and share the benefits of the shot and discuss how they can access it.

With respiratory illnesses, including flu, at record highs this year, Community Care hopes this new approach will pay off.

Vaccination is the single most important intervention to help prevent serious illness, hospitalization, or death from influenza. Community Care is committed to ensuring all members have access to the flu vaccine.



# On the Job *with Meseret*

**Member: Meseret Moges**

**Age: 57**

**Employer:**

**Walmart**

**Neighborhood Market**

Growing up in Ethiopia, Meseret Moges never thought she had much of a future. When she was just a year old, Meseret contracted polio.

Unfortunately, when Meseret was born in 1965, Ethiopia was far behind other countries when it came to vaccinating for diseases like polio.

While she does not remember the experience of having the disease, she's had to live with the consequences her entire life.

Meseret, 57, has always required crutches to walk and can't stand for very long. This has never stopped her from living a full life. But that didn't really happen until she came to the United States.

Despite having a family that always encouraged and supported her, Ethiopia was not as understanding about people with disabilities.

"In our country, some communities they think that when you have a disability you are worthless and a burden to your family. They don't give you an opportunity," Meseret said.

"When I was growing up, it was very hard; they think that if your leg is sick your mind is sick, too."

Meseret's family never treated her any differently. Her parents both believed she could be whatever she wanted to be and encouraged her to follow her dreams.

When she eventually came to the United States nearly 25 years ago, Meseret did not know any English.

An American family in Marinette, Wis., sponsored her and helped her

to start her new life here. She took English classes, and eventually completed an office assistant course at a community college. This was also where she learned to drive.

This kind of life was not something she could have imagined growing up in Ethiopia.

"When I came to this country my goal was to improve myself and move forward and earn money and live independently," Meseret said.

Meseret's first job was working in a Salvation Army kitchen in Marinette. Then she got a job with Walmart, where she worked for nearly 20 years. The one thing that was missing in Marinette was an Ethiopian community.

Meseret realized that she was homesick.

Eventually, she moved to Milwaukee where she is now an active member of the Ethiopian

"Even handicap people are productive; we can do productive things for the community."



Evangelical Church.

Independence has always been important to Meseret and working was the best way she knew to maintain that independence.

Today, Meseret owns her own home, and for the past few years she has worked as

a customer service assistant at Walmart Neighborhood Market. It is a job she really enjoys.

Not only has working allowed her to earn her own money, but it has also given her a purpose and a sense of pride.

“I like to go out and work and contribute. Only my legs are weak. My arms work perfectly. My brain works perfectly,” Meseret said. “Even handicap people are productive; we can do productive things for the community.”

## WINTER

Find the words in the grid . When you are done, the unused letters in the grid will spell out a hidden message. Pick them out from left to right, top line to bottom line. Words can go horizontally, vertically and diagonally in all eight directions.

S T O O B I N T H E D E P T H  
H Y P O T H E R M I A O M S F  
W S I N T W O N S E R R W I S  
F K T U O E T I H W O E F F F  
I A E D I N A L L T A Y L R F  
R T T N E B L U S T E R Y O U  
E E A U S A R W E N E A D Z M  
P S N O T N O R L E K H B E R  
L A R B E N O E T R L L T N A  
A H E W S T V W A E I C R E E  
C W B O A O I P P Z S S I I N  
E M I N H E A H Z L N L I C N  
V I H S N C I A W B O L E E I  
S U M M E R R K B L L W R D V  
B V Q W J D Q X M S K I S T Y

By Jimmy and Evelyn Johnson - [www.qets.com](http://www.qets.com)

Blizzard	Hypothermia	Snow
Blustery	Icicle	Snowbound
Boots	Parka	Snowplow
Earmuffs	Shovel	Snowstorm
Fireplace	Skates	Sweater
Frozen	Skis	White
Hibernate	Sled	Whiteout



# Dealing with Caregiver Stress

Community Care recently completed the 2022 annual PACE Caregiver survey. The goal of this survey was to get feedback from those individuals helping to care for a member enrolled in the Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE).

We learned from the survey that there has been a significant increase in caregivers feeling overwhelmed with the stress of caregiving.

Caregiving is hard work. Contributing to the challenge of caregiving are the financial burden, increased responsibility, adverse effects on family life, and/or the role change.

**It is important to recognize some of the signs of caregiver stress:**

- Social withdrawal
- Loss of interest in your usual hobbies

- Anger, irritability
- Sleep problems
- Change in appetite
- Anxiety
- Depression; crying easily or crying for no reason
- Physical health problems

It is natural for these signs of stress to occur for all of us, to some degree, for shorter periods of time. When stress becomes chronic, long-term, or sustained, it can lead to negative effects on both the caregiver and those needing care.

## What can you do?

- Work with your care team from Community Care.
- Do not be afraid to ask for help, including respite.
- Add to your support team: family members, friends, and your health care provider.

The most important thing you can do is to take care of your-

self. Make sure you're eating healthy, staying active, and taking time for yourself.

**Here are a few other ideas for taking care of yourself as a caregiver:**

- Make time for a hobby you enjoy.
- Go to sleep a half an hour earlier.
- Take a short walk outside.
- Try a yoga class.
- Meet a friend for lunch.
- Join a support group.

Activities like these can lower your stress, boost your mood, and help make you a better caregiver, too.

Learn more about caregiving at [www.nia.nih.gov/caregiving](http://www.nia.nih.gov/caregiving).

For an extensive list of helpful resources, visit our website [www.communitycareinc.org](http://www.communitycareinc.org).

# Employees Award Excellence



Three Community Care employees received Employee Excellence Awards for their contributions to the organization throughout 2022. In November, Tammy Harp, Kelsey Lawton, and Laura Moodie were selected from 30 employees who received nominations.

Each year, Excellence Awards are given to employees based on excellence in customer service, exemplary achievement and performance, and initiative and innovation. Each winner received a \$1,000 prize and a framed award.

Community Care is proud of all the nominees and grateful for the staff who took time to recognize a deserving employee by nominating them for an award. Congratulations to the 2022 CCI Employee Excellence Award winners:

### *Tammy Harp, Certified Nursing Assistant (Sacred Heart Convent)*

As a CNA working at the Sacred Heart convent, Tammy Harp has developed a reputation. For Tammy, it is all about the sisters. She goes out of her way for the sisters. She loves working for them. If one of the sisters in her care says they need something, Tammy won't stop until she gets them what they need or finds someone who can help her get what they need. That is just Tammy being Tammy. In addition to the lengths Tammy goes to for the sisters at Sacred Heart, she also goes out of her way to help her fellow CNAs. If there are open shifts available, Tammy will fill in to ensure the work

gets done. Those who know her understand that when patience can run low, Tammy seems to exude an abundance of it. This does not go unnoticed by the sisters. She cares for people with patience, thoughtfulness, and grace, which leaves a positive and lasting impression.

### *Kelsey Lawton, Finance/Financial Reporting & Government Relations Project Manager (Bishop's Woods)*

Due to her role in Community Care's finance department, not many employees know Kelsey Lawton. Kelsey is one of those employees whose behind-the-scenes efforts are crucial to our organization's success. In addition to helping with the 2023 Department of Health Services business plan, Kelsey is also

responsible for coordinating the audit by the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI). Both projects require an extensive amount of research and writing. Kelsey's superb writing skills help bring clarity to complex business concepts. Not only does she complete her work with a high degree of efficiency, but she does it with the finesse required to obtain and coordinate responses from a variety of individuals and departments. This helps lighten the load for others. Most importantly, Kelsey maintains a calm demeanor while working under compressed deadlines. This calm and collected demeanor is not only appreciated, but it is also contagious! Her professionalism, positive attitude, and achievements reflect highly

upon her, the department, and Community Care.

*Laura Moodie, Nurse Practitioner (Our Lady of Angels)*

Laura Moodie exemplifies the best of Community Care with her warmth, good sense of humor, and willingness to help. She goes well beyond her job description to ensure our members enrolled in the PACE program get the best possible care. She is very thorough in her treatments and recommendations for our members. Laura exceeds in communicating with the PACE team members with any concerns and getting team input to work toward achieving the best outcomes for members. She does a great job recognizing the best plan of care for members and really advocates for all-inclusive care for the elderly, making realistic and achievable goals as part of the treatment plan. Laura also does a great job coordinating discharge planning when any member is hospitalized to help ensure a smooth transition back into the community. In addition to her efforts on behalf of our members, Laura shares her knowledge and expertise with colleagues and is always willing to assist whenever called upon.

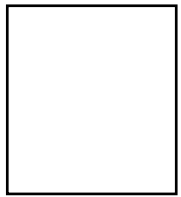
Congratulations to all this year's nominees:

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Maureen Ansay      | Donna Henning     |
| Michelle Becker    | Torrie Hill       |
| Joe Bekkers        | Kathy Kaiser      |
| Jessica Berger-    | Michelle Kortsch  |
| Martinez           | Jane Kosednar     |
| Daniel Bootz       | Scott Kupkovits   |
| Jean Briseno       | Mary Jo Landry    |
| Michaela Dao       | Patrice Olszewski |
| Megan Farley-Snieg | Vera Reid         |
| Kristine Fischer   | Shelly Smith      |
| Lauren Fischer     | Linda Stempel     |
| Miho Gil           | Zoran Tomasovic   |
| Aisling Gray       | Margaret Whitmore |
| Amanda Hart        | Michael Willis    |





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