

**Helping Family Care Members Resolve Problems  
with an MCO's care or services  
Fact Sheet for Providers**

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Family Care aspires to be a high-quality program, and high-quality programs benefit from the willingness of stakeholders to come forward with concerns and complaints.

The Department of Health Services urges providers who serve Family Care members to support members in speaking up about any problems the members encounter, and to assist the Department in discovering information that will help us to monitor the quality of care and to make both individual and systemic improvements.

**Important note:** *Encourage members to act promptly to voice complaints about their services or interactions with the MCO, or a change in eligibility.*

If a member waits to begin a formal appeal of certain decisions, he or she may lose formal appeal rights. In addition, MCOs may be required to keep services in place during a formal appeal of a denial or reduction of a previously authorized service if the member requests that. Members have been given instructions on how to start a formal appeal process; providers can find these instructions:

- On the 'Notice of Action' sent to the member when the MCO denied or reduce a service;
- In the Member Handbook each MCO provides to its members upon enrollment;
- In a booklet titled, "Being a Full Member in Family Care," which is also available online: <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/lcicare/BeingAFullPartner.htm>

**Four places to take complaints and grievances about the quality of care and services:**

**1. Member Rights Specialist at each MCO**

Each MCO has at least one staff person designated as 'Member Rights Specialist,' whose job is to assist individual members with issues and concerns that relate to the quality of their care, help them to understand and initiate formal appeals and grievances, and to assist the MCO in assuring quality services throughout the MCO.

While member-rights specialists' explicit responsibilities involve helping members rather than providers, you should expect member-right specialists to listen to providers' concerns, to be interested in information about quality lapses, and to be able effectively to intervene in a member's case when quality issues exist.

The name and number of the MCO's member-rights specialist is in the Member Handbook; you should also be able to obtain that contact information from the MCO's general phone number.

## **2. State Family Care Hotline**

The Department contracts with our external quality-review organization to operate a hotline to receive complaints about Family Care services. The member, family members, or providers are invited to contact the hotline with any questions or complaints about Family Care program quality.

Hotline Phone: (888) 203-8338

### **DHS Family Care and Partnership Complaints**

c/o MetaStar

2909 Landmark Place

Madison, WI 53713

Fax: (608) 274-8340

E-Mail: [dhsfamcare@wisconsin.gov](mailto:dhsfamcare@wisconsin.gov)

If no one answers the telephone, leave a message and someone will be in touch with you within 24 hours to help get information and help to resolve the situation. Providers will be asked if they have the member's permission to call; the hotline staff will not investigate without the members' involvement. The matter may be referred to the DHS MCO Oversight team (see below), but will also be tracked to resolution by the Hotline staff.

Careful records are kept of hotline calls, so contacting the hotline has the additional benefit of assisting DHS in identifying patterns and trends in complaints.

## **3. DHS staff Oversight teams**

The Department has designated a small team of DHS staff to carry out lead responsibility for MCO oversight. Hotline complaints are often referred to the Oversight teams.

If you would like to contact DHS Oversight staff directly, email the OFCE mailbox at [DHSOFCE@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DHSOFCE@wisconsin.gov). This mailbox is monitored by DHS staff; OFCE managers will make the appropriate assignment for DHS staff to follow up on your email.

#### 4. **Family Care ombudsmen**

The Department also contracts with independent ombudsmen to assist members in resolving problems with Family Care services. Regional Ombudsmen are available to respond to your concerns in a timely fashion. Both Ombudsmen programs will typically use informal negotiations to resolve your issues without a hearing.

Different ombudsmen serve different age groups:

- [Wisconsin Board on Aging and Long Term Care](#) for members age 60 and older.

Board on Aging and Long Term Care  
1402 Pankratz Street, Suite 111  
Madison, WI 53704-4001  
Toll-free: 800-815-0015  
Fax: 608-246-7001

- [Disability Rights Wisconsin \(DRW\)](#) for members under age 60.

131 W. Wilson St., Suite 700  
Madison, WI 53703  
608-267-0214  
TTY: 888-758-6049  
Fax: 608-267-0368  
Madison Toll-free: 800-928-8778  
Milwaukee Toll-free: 800-708-3034  
Rice Lake Toll-free: 877-338-3724