

# Lakeland Long Term Care District

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160 South Macy Street, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin 54935

[www.lakelandltdistrict.org](http://www.lakelandltdistrict.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 9, 2008

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## **Area Family Care Expansion Planning Commences**

*Updated Information Available on Web*

Area officials have begun planning for expansion of Family Care, the managed care program providing long-term care services for eligible elderly and disabled adults in Wisconsin.

County Executives Allen Buechel of Fond du Lac, Bob Ziegelbauer of Manitowoc and Mark Harris of Winnebago, joined by area County Board Supervisors Judy Goldsmith (Fond du Lac), Ralph Kozlowski (Manitowoc) and Jim Koziczowski (Winnebago), comprise the Steering Committee for the Lakeland Long Term Care (LTC) District, the project's working title. The group met recently to sanction planning processes for expansion of Family Care in the region. To expand the program, any proposal must be reviewed and approved by each participating county's Board of Supervisors.

The Family Care program takes a different approach to providing services, using a nurse and social worker to develop a cost-effective care plan designed to keep participants healthy and provide specific, targeted services to support a person's independence and life goals. Those goals could include supports to help a member work, live in their own home, or remain active in their community. Family Care delivers the services that allow people to maintain these activities by providing assistance such as home-delivered meals, housekeeping, or temporary relief for relatives who are caregivers.

"Family Care lets our seniors and people with disabilities choose the types of assistance they need to live independently within their community, or to meet other personal goals," said Fond du Lac County Executive Allen Buechel. "Fond du Lac County is proud to have been the first county to pilot Family Care."

Traditional long-term care services funded through Medicaid focus primarily on institutionalized care, which may not meet a person's needs or goals, and is often the most expensive service available. While a few "waiver"-based programs operating in Wisconsin offer community-based care and assistive services to help people stay in their homes and community, limited funding for these programs has resulted in long waiting lists for services in many parts of the state.

"We look forward to starting Family Care because, when fully implemented, the program will eliminate waiting lists for people who need these important support services but can't get them now because of funding restrictions," noted Manitowoc County Executive Bob Ziegelbauer.

At the beginning of the decade five Wisconsin counties, including Fond du Lac, began testing the Family Care program. In 2005, an independent audit found that the program demonstrated a high rate of achieving customer's desired outcomes and attained an average cost savings of \$452 per person per month. State lawmakers authorized statewide expansion of the Family Care

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*To develop a Long Term Care District that builds on the strengths, knowledge, and experience of its member counties and other regional planning groups, with a goal to provide the highest quality services to its members in an efficient, accountable, cost-effective and individualized manner.*

program in 2006 and since then, large regional coalitions of counties have been examining options for expansion of the program.

In Northeastern Wisconsin, human services professionals from a twelve-county region extending from Oconto to Fond du Lac County have been discussing proposals. The Lakeland Long Term Care District, a subset of this group, is planning development of a public long-term care district to serve Fond du Lac, Manitowoc and Winnebago counties. Over time, additional counties in the region could join the effort.

“While there are several options for delivering Family Care services, we believe that creating a public district with oversight by a local board of directors, is the best way to meet our citizens’ needs,” said Winnebago County Executive Mark Harris.

To help interested residents track and participate in planning activities the Lakeland LTC District is developing a website at [www.lakelandltdistrict.org](http://www.lakelandltdistrict.org). Consumers, providers, members and other stakeholders are invited to visit the website for the latest information on committee proceedings, and to attend planning meetings to help develop the Family Care expansion plan for the three counties.

Throughout planning, the Lakeland LTC District will continue to seek opportunities to communicate with and hear from those affected by the long-term care service delivery system. If funding is available, the group’s goal is to begin enrolling eligible individuals from the tri-county area in the new district’s program in 2010 or 2011. Approval for the District rests with the involved county boards.

Members currently receiving Family Care services through Creative Care Options in Fond du Lac County will ultimately be served by the new district, benefitting from an expanded network of providers available through this larger, regional entity. In Manitowoc and Winnebago counties, case managers will assist clients currently receiving services to transition to the Family Care program, and people who are eligible for assistance but currently on waiting lists will receive services once the new district begins operations, expected by 2011.

Additional information on the new long-term care district is available at: [www.lakelandltdistrict.org](http://www.lakelandltdistrict.org). Questions can be directed to Katie Mnuk, Project Coordinator, at (920) 929-3127.

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