

**West Central Consortium**  
**For Long-Term Support and Health Care Reform**  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 26, 2008

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**Long-Term Care District Says Western Wisconsin Cares  
Board Picks Name for Regional Family Care Program**

The board of directors for the state's first long-term care district hopes area residents remember Western Wisconsin Cares. The group's members selected that name Tuesday from more than two dozen suggestions submitted for consideration when the board met for the first time as the official governing body for the district.

The 14-member Western Wisconsin Cares Board of Directors will oversee a managed care organization that will provide supportive services to frail elders and adults with physical and/or developmental disabilities who meet Medicaid eligibility requirements under the state's Family Care program. Operation of the eight-county MCO will eliminate wait lists for home- and community-based services, such as respite and assisted living, for more than 500 individuals in the WWC region by early 2011, as well as provide intensive care coordination for thousands of others already receiving services.

The board needed to select a name in order to complete the organization's bylaws and file articles of incorporation as a non-stock public entity. Although the boards of supervisors in Buffalo, Clark, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Trempealeau and Vernon counties voted in December to create the district, Western Wisconsin Cares will operate independently of those counties.

The board's formation represents the culmination of more than two years of planning by the West Central Consortium for Long-Term Support and Health Care Reform. That group formed in response to a request by the state Department of Health and Family Services for local partners to work toward the creation of a regional Family Care program.

WCC Project Coordinator Melissa Gilbert called creation of governing body crucial to MCO development.

"Our progress would stall indefinitely without a board authorized to make legal decisions for the organization," Gilbert said. "We also need a body to set strategic direction for the MCO. The name 'Western Wisconsin Cares' represents the overriding philosophy of the board members."

The board also appointed its officers at the meeting. Members elected Ron Carney as chair, Stephanie Genz as vice chair and Tara Johnson as secretary by unanimous votes. Carney, Genz and Johnson also will serve on the executive committee, and all members will serve on either the personnel or finance committees.

The board meets from noon – 3 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the La Crosse County Care Management Organization in La Crosse. Western Wisconsin Cares expects to start enrollment in the regional MCO on Oct. 1, beginning in La Crosse County.

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