

The Arc Wisconsin supports people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) over “The Arc” of their lifetime. Since 1960, The Arc Wisconsin has served individuals and their families through our 14 locally affiliated chapters across the state. The Arc Wisconsin works to develop programs and advocate for public policy — giving people with I/DD the opportunity to learn, live, and work inclusively in their communities.



Lisa Pugh
State Director,
The Arc Wisconsin

PO Box 201
Stoughton, WI 53589
608.422.4250 | info@arcwi.org

SUPPORT FAMILIES

Families are the backbone of the caregiving industry in Wisconsin, providing an estimated 80% of all care for loved ones with disabilities and older adults. In Wisconsin, nearly two-thirds of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (of a total of 54,202) live with their family and a quarter of these caregivers are over age 60.² More than half of all family caregivers say they are very or extremely stressed and cannot find respite care and other resources to give them a break. These caregiving responsibilities are impacting people’s ability to work their regular jobs — with 55% saying they’ve had to cut back hours, take a leave of absence (43%), or take an early retirement (17%).³

The state’s Respite Care program (State Statute 46.986) has not had a funding increase in 18 years. Other states have invested in sophisticated worker registries that facilitate recruitment of trained workers and match workers with local care needs and individuals and families seeking support.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:



Increase respite funding and supports available to families. \$1.17 million over the biennium.



Provide funding and direct the Department of Health Services to issue a request for proposals (RFP) to develop a worker registry that would include care workers (individuals), providers (agencies/facilities), and fiscal agents.



Fund a Family Caregiver/Family Navigator pilot project to meet the needs of family caregivers in underserved communities, including areas of the state with demonstrated racial disparities in the adult long-term services and supports system. \$1.1 million over the biennium.



Support the Governor’s proposal to expand access to family medical leave to people who work for smaller employers (down to 25 employees from 50) and expand the category of people who qualify for leave to include those caring for grandparents, grandchildren, or siblings.

² Braddock et al., Coleman Institute and Department of Psychiatry, University of Colorado, 2017. <http://stateofthestates.org>

³ Family & Individual Needs for Disability Support Report 2017 (Institute on Community Integration; The Arc of the United States.)