



Ask DHS and the Legislature to Keep their IRIS Promise

What is happening now?

The Department of Health Services has released its [Concept Paper](#) outlining how it plans for long-term care services including IRIS self-direction, to look in the future. There are many good things in the Concept Paper and DHS has shown they are willing to listen to advocates. We are asking that the final draft of the Concept Paper address our concerns about Self-Direction. IRIS participants need to act before April 1st to have an impact on what will be in the final Paper.

When Legislators passed the [state budget](#), they promised that people would continue to be able to self-direct the same services in the same way in which they do today in IRIS, with few exceptions.

We are concerned that the Concept Paper describes the IRIS budget process in a very different way than happens now.

What you can do:

- Call all [16 Joint Finance Committee Members](#) before April 1st and ask them to support a change in the Concept Paper that keeps the IRIS budget allocation process the same as it is today. Ask them to please keep their IRIS Promise.
- Call or meet with your [State Assembly Representative and your State Senator](#) before April 1st and ask them to tell the Joint Finance Committee to keep the IRIS budget allocation process working like it does today. Explain how you use creativity and flexibility in your budget to meet your needs in a cost-effective way. Share your concerns about an IHA and their care team now determining and directing your IRIS budget. Share some of the talking points on the reverse side of this document.

"Save IRIS, Wisconsin's Self Direction Advocates" is a non-partisan association of IRIS participants and their allies dedicated to promoting self-direction in Wisconsin.



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Talking points to share with your legislators regarding the IRIS (Self Direction Part) of the Concept Paper

- **The current IRIS budget process is cost-effective:** My present IRIS budget is based on my functional assessment. Under this current process, most people spend significantly under (nearly 20% under) their IRIS budget allocation. An IRIS budget allocation is not a blank check, but it is a guide for an IRIS participant that allows for creative and cost-effective decisions. IRIS participants can still only use their budgets on allowable services.
- **Base my budget on my assessed needs:** The Concept Paper instead bases my budget on an insurance company's (IHA) determination of my service needs. This limits participant flexibility to use their budget to meet their long-term care goals.
- **Keep What Works:** The current IRIS budgeting process has been revised and improved multiple times by the state over the last several years. It works and is getting better. This process should continue, not be handed over to each IHA.
- **Be consistent and fair:** If each IHA can determine budgets using a unique new process that is not based on functional assessments, budgets will look much different depending on where a participant lives.
- **Managed Care is NOT self-direction:** The IRIS budgeting process described in the Concept Paper means a "Care Team" will now have a role in coordinating my self-direction. When you add too much bureaucracy, you lose the benefits of self-direction, such as the creativity that has led to significant cost savings.
- **Safety comes from continuity of care:** This proposed budgeting process looks very different than what IRIS self-direction looks like now, which was not the Legislature's intent. I am worried that my care needs will not be met.
- **Keep the current IRIS Budget Process and you will be keeping the IRIS Promise**
 - **Now:** Results of the Functional Screen (Assessment) determine an individual's budget. Participant and IRIS consultant then develop the plan.
 - **What we fear:** Each IHA could use a unique unspecified tool to determine an individual's budget. IHA Care Team will authorize budget allocations for separate service categories. Participant may not have the flexibility to use their budget to address varying support needs. This is not full self-direction.

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