

THE PATH AHEAD

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Let's clear the path ahead.

tmgwisconsin.com

Keep Up-To-Date with TMG!

Did you know that TMG is on Facebook and Twitter?

Search “TMG Wisconsin” on these sites to find and follow our pages!

We share the latest information on long-term care and upcoming events, as well as provide insights on issues affecting people with disabilities, their families and support providers.

Join the conversation on TMG’s Facebook and Twitter pages to share your experiences, opinions and ideas with other people and organizations in our TMG community.

Please remember to avoid sharing personal health information on TMG’s or any other social media pages so that your privacy is protected.



facebook.com/TMGWisconsin



twitter.com/TMGWisconsin

Share *The Path Ahead*

Would you like your family, caregivers, friends and supports to also receive a copy of *The Path Ahead*?

They can sign up by visiting tmgwisconsin.com, scrolling to the bottom of the page and clicking on the green “Emails & Alerts” button, located on the right-hand corner of the page.



IRIS is Growing

TMG is excited to begin providing IRIS Consultant Agency services in Adams, Florence, Forest, Oneida, Taylor and Vilas counties starting this July. We are confident that our skilled staff and our experience with IRIS since the program began in 2008 will make this transition smooth and positive for people who choose to self-direct in IRIS. We look forward to partnering with these new individuals and families.

The History of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

In the past, people with disabilities were mostly invisible to society and limited by low expectations. Thankfully, the 1970s and 80s brought about incredible social change in the United States for many groups that faced discrimination. During that time, a movement was born to create ways for people to live in their home communities. People with developmental disabilities moved out of nursing homes and institutions, and became active citizens.

This movement helped develop inclusive services and supports, empowering individuals to live as fully and independently as possible. In 1987, March was named Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, kicking off a period of much-needed change and advocacy that would take place over the next 30 years.

National attention shed light on the issues that people with developmental disabilities faced. Communities began working with individuals with disabilities to support their goals of leading self-determined lives.

In 1990, the American with Disabilities Act made it easier for individuals with disabilities to join the workforce and live independently. Since then, programs such as Project SEARCH have been created for individuals with disabilities to gain the necessary skills for integrated employment.

It soon became clear that the change in the public's attitude, along with an increase in support and resources, and improvements to healthcare meant that people with disabilities were living longer, more fulfilling lives.

Though the last three decades have seen incredible progress, much remains to be done. Join us this March as we celebrate how far we've come, and continue to clear the path ahead for a brighter future!

To read TMG President Amie Goldman's thoughts on Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, visit the TMG website at tmgwisconsin.com, hover over "TMG News & Notes" and click on "What's New at TMG?"

1987

President Reagan declares March "Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month."

1990

The ADA made it illegal to discriminate against individuals with disabilities in the workplace by requiring employers to provide necessary services and accommodations.

2004

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) made sure students with disabilities receive Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) that meets their individual needs.

Meet Jim Timple, TMG Screener

TMG is made up of employees around the state who work together to partner with you as you self-direct in IRIS. While you are most familiar with your TMG IRIS Consultant, who you meet with on a regular basis, there are many others who are working hard every day to support you as well.

If you've been in the program for more than a year, you may have already met with a TMG Certified Screening Specialist. These are the people who complete the annual assessment, called a functional screen, which is required by the State of Wisconsin. It is meant to see if you're still functionally eligible to be in the IRIS program.

Jim Timple (right) has been working as a TMG Certified Screening Specialist for over two years, and has more than six years of experience in the field. Each month, Jim receives a list of people who are due for a functional screen. He then calls them to schedule a visit and stops by their home to do the assessment.

“We visit and I ask questions to learn how they're doing physically, and what their goals and services are,” says Jim.



Often, the person will invite family members, caregivers or guardians to join them for the functional screen. According to Jim, this can be very helpful to the process.

“It's great to have information from as many people as possible. They can help provide another point of view and participate in the discussion.”

Once the functional screen is done and before Jim leaves the home, he always talks through his notes with the individual. This gives them the chance to ask questions and share any final thoughts. After the assessment, Jim follows up with the individual's TMG IRIS Consultant and health care providers to gather additional information to support the functional screen.

“I think being honest and direct is important,” says Jim. “I know some stuff is difficult to talk about. I really try to get to know the person and explain why I'm there so that they feel comfortable.”

Though it may be difficult for some to open up to a new person, Jim explains that the functional screen must be done by a Certified Screening Specialist. Throughout the process, one of Jim's main goals is to make sure that the individual feels comfortable during the functional screen.

Preparing for your Functional Screen

“I think it would be hard for a TMG IRIS Consultant who sees day-to-day stuff to do an accurate functional screen. As TMG Certified Screening Specialists, it’s the only thing we do - it allows us to specialize in it and do a very good job.”

And doing the job to the best of his ability is important to Jim. After all, he says it’s a part of TMG’s tagline, “Let’s clear the path ahead.”

“At TMG, we really have the best of the best in employees and services. So for me, it’s about leading the way and setting a high standard for other agencies to follow.”



Wondering whether you’re due for a functional screen? TMG will send you a friendly reminder letter in the mail a month before the visit should take place. A TMG Certified Screening Specialist will then contact you to schedule a time to complete the functional screen. Here are some tips on how to make sure your next screen goes smoothly.

- *If your guardianship or power of attorney has changed*, have copies on hand of your guardianship or power of attorney documentation.
- *If you have copies of information from your doctors or therapists about your health or medical conditions*, have that on hand for your visit with the TMG Certified Screening Specialist.
- *If any changes in your life have affected your ability to do day-to-day activities*, share that information during your functional screen.

Marilyn's Story: A Remodel Brings Greater Independence

On December 3rd of last year, Marilyn Gruenberg, 64, suffered a stroke – her second in the last 11 years. After two weeks of intensive rehab and care, she was able to come home in time for Christmas.

Had it not been for a bathroom remodel finished just months earlier – a project made possible by a one-time IRIS expense to improve her in-home safety – Marilyn would not have been able to come home so quickly (or perhaps, not at all).

The first stroke, in 2006, came not long after Marilyn (right) and her partner, Karen (left), bought a small shop in downtown New Glarus. The building served a dual purpose: In the front was a small cobbler shop, and in the back was Marilyn and Karen's home. Together, Marilyn and Karen had decades of cobbling experience, repairing shoes and leather goods and fixing apparel and outerwear.

But the stroke, along with a fall that broke Marilyn's hip, left Marilyn using a wheelchair and unable work at the couple's small business.

“Suffering a stroke is devastating,” says Marilyn, “but it’s even worse when you’ve just put everything you have into a small shop. In addition to caring for me, Karen [runs] the shop by herself.”



It quickly became obvious that the building's only bathroom was going to pose a large problem for Marilyn and her wheelchair. To get into the tiny bathroom, Marilyn would have to park the chair outside of it and slowly work her way in. When Marilyn was alone, she had many falls and often had to wait for help.

Without the money to make the bathroom safer and more private, Marilyn turned to her TMG IRIS Consultant, Melanie, for help. They worked together to design a safer bathroom, write a one-time IRIS expense request, and get approvals and contractor bids. The project was finished last August, and Marilyn is overjoyed.

“It’s scary to think that after the recent stroke, I would have been too weak to get myself into the old bathroom – which was hard enough even before the last stroke,” says Marilyn. “I remember when I joined IRIS (in late 2014), I told my TMG IRIS Consultant that I wanted to be able to stay in my own home. The only

reason the doctors let me leave the rehab center was because my house was safe. I’m grateful to Melanie and IRIS for that!”

Now that Marilyn can easily roll her chair into the bathroom, as well as into the shower area, she feels much safer and more independent.

“It’s changed my life for the better,” says Marilyn.

Online Directory

Below is a list of websites that we'd like to share with you, as we have found them to be helpful resources. If you'd like to learn more about resources in Wisconsin, please visit our website at:

tmgwisconsin.com/partner-links

WIHousingSearch.org

A free online tool to help you find a home that fits your needs and budget.

Movin' Out

movin-out.org

Movin' Out has a range of housing solutions in Milwaukee and Dane counties for adults with disabilities and for families that include children with disabilities.

Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)

wheda.com

WHEDA offers unique financing options that gets buyers into homes sooner with mortgages they can afford long-term. WHEDA also works with developers and communities to create affordable and accessible housing in Wisconsin.

The Tenant Resource Center

tenantresourcecenter.org

The Tenant Resource Center gives free information to tenants and landlords statewide about their rights and responsibilities.

Upcoming Events

Wisconsin Employment First Conference

April 5, 2017

Kalahari Resort - Wisconsin Dells, WI

Autism Society of Wisconsin Annual Conference

April 27 – April 29, 2017

Kalahari Resort - Wisconsin Dells, WI

Circles of Life Conference

May 4 - May 5, 2017

Holiday Inn - Stevens Point, WI

NAMI Wisconsin Annual Conference

May 5 – May 6, 2017

Sheraton Madison Hotel - Madison, WI

Alzheimer's Association 31st Annual Wisconsin State Conference

May 7 – May 9, 2017

Kalahari Resort - Wisconsin Dells, WI

2017 Aging Advocacy Day

May 17, 2017

Meet at Capitol Lakes in Madison and walk to State Capitol

Aging Empowerment Conference: Living a Self-Determined Life

June 6 – June 7, 2017

Wilderness Resort - Wisconsin Dells, WI

Wisconsin Healthy Aging Base Camp

June 21, 2017

Holiday Inn Conference Center - Stevens Point, WI



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We're Here to Help!

At the TMG IRIS Consultant Agency (ICA), we value the fact that our employees live and work in communities all around Wisconsin. Our Area Associate Directors provide local leadership for our IRIS Consultant Teams throughout the state. If you have questions about TMG and the services we provide, please visit our website at **tmgwisconsin.com** for more information.



Questions about IRIS,
call: **1-800-223-6048**



For information about the
TMG IRIS Consultant Agency,
visit: **tmgwisconsin.com**