



THE PATH AHEAD

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tmg[®]
Let's clear the path ahead.

TMG PARTNERING FOR 15 YEARS WITH IRIS

As we celebrate 15 years of the IRIS program, we reflect on when TMG first partnered with the Department of Health Services to get the IRIS program up and running. **We loved the program design because it was a simple idea: You are provided an IRIS budget based on your needs and make choices within that budget to purchase the support you need to meet your goals.** You are your own expert and decide what works best for you. The IRIS program has evolved over the last 15 years, but that simple idea remains the same and TMG has been honored to help each of you along the way.

I began my own journey with TMG 22 years ago. Throughout the various changes since then, TMG and its staff have remained committed to the success of the people we partner with, our community partners and TMG's mission.

TMG is proud to be the first and largest IRIS Consultant Agency. Today, we partner with nearly 19,000 of the 25,000+ people enrolled in the IRIS program. Our talented employees are dedicated to using our years of experience and knowledge of local resources to ensure that we do everything possible to help you reach your goals. We understand that you know yourself better than anyone else, so your opinion is the most important. We take our responsibility to be your best partners very seriously.

We have been privileged to see people in IRIS experience all types of successes in the last 15 years - people found jobs, moved into their first apartments, got married, hired great workers, and took action to improve their health. Each story has been meaningful and important and is a perfect example of why we love what we do.

We are grateful that you chose TMG as your IRIS Consultant Agency and we look forward to continuing to be a part of your story - whatever you need that part to be - for years to come.

Thank you,

Shanna Jensen

Shanna Jensen
TMG President



IN THEIR OWN WORDS: BEING A GOOD PARTNER

TMG celebrated its 15th anniversary with the IRIS program in July 2023. While many things have changed, TMG's commitment to our partnerships has remained the same. **We are proud of the dedication that our 800 staff living all over Wisconsin have to the people we partner with.** Since TMG was the first IRIS Consultant Agency, individuals and their IRIS Consultants have developed strong trusting partnerships over the years and built great relationships.

In honor of our 15 years of supporting people to live their best lives, hear from people enrolled in the TMG IRIS Consultant Agency and their IRIS Consultants as they describe their partnerships.



Randy and Tammy

For nearly thirteen years, Randy and his TMG IRIS Consultant, Tammy, have been great partners. Before Randy and Tammy partnered in IRIS, they knew each other from their community. When Tammy became Randy's Consultant, they say their past encounters helped them feel comfortable with each other right away.



"We've got the same personality, so we just kind of always got along," says Randy.

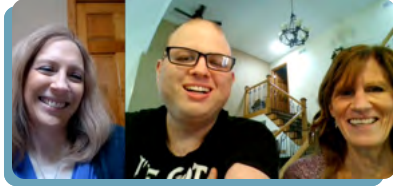
Already knowing each other helped them build a trusting relationship. Randy knows he can tell Tammy about his problems and what he needs. Tammy knows they can always talk through issues to find solutions. Randy and Tammy have learned to be a great team by being patient and listening to one another.

"I have a great respect for Randy, and he does for me as well," says Tammy. "We both know we're just human!"

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: BEING A GOOD PARTNER (CONT'D)

Jacob and Theresa

In 2010, Jacob partnered with his TMG IRIS Consultant, Theresa. At that time, Jacob was planning to graduate from high school. He and his mom, Jean, hoped Theresa could help Jacob find ways to learn new skills and be more active in his community after high school.



Over the past 12 years, Theresa has helped the family find supports and services. As a result, Jacob has increased his independence and has become more social. He loves taking art classes and has become a talented artist. Theresa also helped Jacob connect to job training, and for the past two years, he has been working at a job he enjoys.

“I’m proud of myself,” says Jacob.

Jacob enjoys Theresa’s visits and likes to share “dad jokes” with her when they meet. Jean says that Theresa has become a friend to their family. And Theresa is thrilled to be continuing the partnership.

**“I’m always impressed by you, Jacob,” says Theresa.
“I’m thankful to have you on my team!”**

Melissa and Kelly

Having a kind and supportive person by your side can make living the life you choose easier.



Melissa and her TMG IRIS Consultant, Kelly, have been partnering since 2010. Since then, Kelly has learned what Melissa likes and her goals. This has helped Kelly find great resources for Melissa. Some of Melissa’s favorite resources have been access to a day program and the YMCA. Kelly has also helped Melissa get involved in Special Olympics, where she has learned basketball skills, swimming, and gymnastics. Melissa says that Kelly is helpful and likes having Kelly as her Consultant.

“She’s a nice person,” says Melissa.

Of course, Melissa is a good partner, too. Melissa lets Kelly know what she wants and needs. Kelly says this open communication has helped Melissa get what she needs to live a good life, and she’s happy to help support her.

**“It’s been a joy partnering with Melissa,” says Kelly.
“She’s very friendly and helpful and makes my job easy.
It’s been a good experience!”**

Jordan and Matt

It can be hard to open up to new people, but doing so can also open opportunities to grow.



Jordan was quiet when he first met his TMG IRIS Consultant, Matt, 11 years ago. Jordan can be shy, and it took some time for him to start trusting Matt.

As they got to know each other, Jordan started telling Matt his goals. Matt helped Jordan put plans in place so that Jordan could reach those goals. Jordan's mother has shared that Jordan also strengthened his communication skills. This has made it easier for Jordan to connect with his family, Matt, and other important people in his life.

"I'm calmer, more respectful, helpful, more caring," says Jordan. "I'm happier."

Matt has seen the difference in Jordan, too. He even says Jordan has helped Matt to grow as an IRIS Consultant. Today the two have a great friendship, and Matt says he's honored to help Jordan live the life he wants to live.

"This guy is working so hard," says Matt. "I'm so proud of him for that!"



IMPORTANT MEDICAID RENEWAL INFO

Special rules that were in place during the COVID pandemic to ensure people had the needed Medicaid services are ending this year, and it will be important for you to take steps to continue to get the services you need.

If you require a renewal, you should have received a letter from the state in March or April with your renewal date and next steps. If you have lost this letter or have yet to receive it, you can find your renewal date by logging into your account on access.wi.gov or using the MyACCESS app. You can also update your contact information there.

Your renewal date will be between June 30, 2023, and May 31, 2024. You will receive a renewal packet 45 days before your due date. Only renew once you receive this information, but please act quickly once you receive the renewal packet. You will remain covered until your renewal.

If you have questions, reach out to your IRIS Consultant.

MEET TOM: IRIS PARTICIPANT SHARING TALENTS AS IRIS CONSULTANT

One of the best things about the IRIS program is that it can take your life down paths you had never imagined exploring. For Tom Gierke, getting the support he needed through the IRIS program was just the beginning. This connection to the IRIS program also led to him finding a fulfilling career helping others.

In 2010, Tom enrolled in the IRIS program as a participant of TMG to self-direct his services and supports. He soon realized this extra help allowed him to focus on pursuing other life goals. For Tom, that meant sharing his talents with others on a professional level. **After his IRIS Consultant encouraged him to apply for an open position at TMG, Tom was hired as a TMG IRIS Consultant (IC). This past May, he celebrated 12 years as a TMG employee.**

As someone who's been an IRIS Consultant for so long, Tom has plenty of good advice to share. His coworkers are happy to learn from him as well. He also enjoys being a representative on the State's IRIS Advisory Committee. This workgroup provides recommendations to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) about the IRIS program. Most importantly, Tom likes connecting with the people he partners with as their IRIS Consultant. Since he also continues to use the IRIS program for his long-term care supports and service needs, Tom

6 has been through many of the same challenges

that the people he partners with experience. That lived experience goes a long way to building good relationships with his partners, and it helps Tom to find ways for the people he partners with to reach their goals.

"I like being able to not only provide my professional knowledge, but I like to share my personal experiences, too," says Tom. "It's really cool."



Being someone who uses the IRIS program and who is also an IC takes a special talent. One of the reasons Tom is so successful at both is because he's a very independent person and doesn't shy away from a challenge. However, he also says he's not afraid to ask others for help when needed. In fact, getting help through the IRIS program has allowed him to be more independent. It also has helped him to achieve personal and professional goals.

"The days that I'm the most successful are when I have caregivers in place," says Tom. "Then I can just focus on being a good IRIS Consultant."

TMG is thankful that Tom has chosen to share his talents with us and the people we have partnered with for the past 12 years. Tom says he's also happy to be a part of our organization and to have the chance to partner with other self-advocates. He's also grateful that the IRIS program gave him the support he needed to be an IRIS Consultant. He hopes that he can help others get the most they can out of the IRIS program as well, and he encourages everyone to keep dreaming big.

"Create your own life," says Tom. "Work with your IRIS Consultant and you can start to put your goals together. You can have quite a beautiful life."



Electronic Visit Verification Update

On May 1, 2023, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) fully launched Electronic Visit Verification (EVV).

EVV is an electronic system that verifies that you have received personal care and Supportive Home Care-Routine services authorized under the IRIS program and other Wisconsin long-term care programs. In IRIS, workers who live with you do not have to use EVV.

If you have questions about EVV or need assistance using EVV successfully, please contact your Fiscal Employer Agency (FEA) or your TMG IRIS Consultant.

You can also contact Wisconsin EVV Customer Care by phone at 833-931-2035 or by email at vdxc.contactevv@wisconsin.gov.

To learn more about EVV, visit dhs.wisconsin.gov/evv.



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WANT TO WORK FOR TMG?

Are you or someone you know passionate about helping others live meaningful lives? Do you have talents you're excited to share with a great organization?

Check out TMG's Career Page to see our available job opportunities. TMG offers remote positions across Wisconsin, excellent benefits, and an inclusive company culture.

Visit tmgwisconsin.com/career-opportunities or scan the QR code.



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