

THE PATH AHEAD

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THE ELECTRONIC VISIT
VERIFICATION (EVV) EDITION

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A scenic photograph of a wooden boardwalk bridge curving over a river in a lush forest. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The bridge has a wooden railing and is made of weathered planks. The surrounding forest is dense with green trees.

tmg[®]
Let's clear the path ahead.

ALL ABOUT EVV



One of the things that sets the IRIS program apart from other long-term care programs is that it is fully self-directed. In IRIS, you decide what supports and services will help you meet your goals. You also choose who provides your supports and services. Along with this freedom and choice comes certain responsibilities. One of these responsibilities is to make sure your workers that don't live with you are using electronic visit verification (EVV) correctly to show when they work and the services they provide.

TMG had the opportunity to talk with **Dana Raue from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS)** about why we use EVV, some of the common issues people have had with EVV, and tips to help you and your employees navigate EVV more smoothly. Dana is the Deputy

Bureau Director for DHS's Bureau of Programs and Policy and the EVV program lead for the IRIS and Family Care programs.

What Is EVV and Why Do We Use It?

In 2016, the federal government passed a law called the 21st Century Cures Act. This law requires that every state, including Wisconsin, uses EVV to track the personal care and home health care services that are paid for with Medicaid funds. This includes the supports and services that are purchased with your IRIS budget. EVV is not specific to IRIS. It is required of all Medicaid programs. This also includes Medical Assistance Personal Care (MAPC), Family Care, Family Care Partnership, and BadgerCare Plus and SSI Medicaid HMOs.



Dana Raue, Deputy Bureau Director at Wisconsin Department of Health Services

“If we don’t follow this federal law, Wisconsin will lose money for Medicaid services,” says Dana. “So it is very important that each worker checks in and out of their visits using their EVV system.”

So what exactly is EVV? It's an electronic system that makes sure people who use Medicaid programs such as IRIS receive the services they need. Workers check in with the EVV system at the beginning of their visits and check out with EVV when they are done providing their services. The law requires that the EVV system captures six important pieces of information:

Information Captured by EVV

- **Who receives the service (That would be you)**
- **Who provides the service (Your workers)**
- **What service or services are provided (Self-Directed Personal Care (SDPC) and Supportive Home Care routine)**
- **Where the service is provided**
- **The date of service**
- **The time the service begins and ends**



Dana says it's important to know that EVV does not monitor or track a worker's location throughout the visit. Your worker's location is only captured at the start and end of a visit as required by the federal law. Please note that live-in caregivers are not required to use EVV.

Your fiscal employer agent (FEA) provides you with an EVV system to capture the required visit information. Each of the four IRIS FEAs – Acumen, GT Independence, iLIFE Financial Management Services, and Premier Financial Management Services – use different EVV systems and each system has different options for workers to check in and out of visits. These options may include the use of an app on your smart phone or tablet, a landline telephone, or a fixed EVV device. Dana says that these various ways of capturing EVV information – either on a smart device, landline, or fixed EVV device – allows you and your workers to use EVV in a way that you're both comfortable with.

What are Some Common Issues People Have Had With EVV?

To be successful in meeting this IRIS program expectation, it is important to make sure your workers are checking in and out of every visit by using your FEA's EVV system. Sometimes, workers may have difficulty learning how to use the EVV system or may forget to use EVV during their visits. And that's ok, because we're here to help get anyone who is struggling with EVV get back on track!

EVV Solutions: Difficulty Learning a System

Dana says that for some people, using EVV on a smart phone or tablet can feel a bit intimidating and that's normal. With a little bit of one-on-one support and practice, workers can gain confidence and are able to successfully check in and out of visits. If after training and support, the worker is still uncomfortable using a smart phone or tablet, Dana suggests considering having your workers check in and out of EVV with a landline if you have one in your home, or by using a fixed EVV device. If you or your workers are more comfortable using EVV on a landline or fixed EVV device and your FEA does not offer those options, you have the option to choose an FEA that does offer EVV through your preferred device. Your local ADRC can help you enroll in a different FEA.

EVV Solutions: Options for Non-English Speakers

Another issue Dana says is that some people need to use the EVV system in languages other than English. Each EVV system has different options for a variety of languages. If the system used by your FEA does not offer the needed language, work with your IRIS consultant to explore the options offered by other FEA systems.

EVV Solutions: Getting Help with EVV

Finally, one of the biggest reasons Dana says that people have struggled to use EVV is that they have difficulties with the system and don't know where to go for help. Fortunately, each FEA offers EVV trainings to help you and your workers learn their EVV system. You can visit your FEA's website or call them to find out what trainings or other support they offer. DHS also offers a Wisconsin EVV Customer Care phone line that you can call with your EVV questions. Please see page 5 of this newsletter to learn more about the EVV resources that are available to help you. Also, know that your TMG IRIS Consultant is happy to help you find EVV resources as well, so that you and your workers can feel comfortable using EVV.

“We understand there is confusion with EVV,” says Dana. “But we’ve also seen a lot of success when people reach out and ask for help.”



How to Set Your Workers Up for Success:



Once you and your workers are familiar with how to use EVV, there are several things you can do as an employer to help your workers be successful with EVV:

1. Dana says that one way to do that is to remind your workers to check in and out for each visit. Consider posting a sign reminding people to check in and out of EVV at the beginning and end of each visit.
2. People have found success in having a smart phone or tablet that is specifically for workers to check in and out of EVV. This way, if your workers don't have a smart device, aren't able to download the EVV app, or simply forget to bring their smart phone to a visit, they will always be able to check in and out by using the device you've provided.
3. Another tip is to keep the device used for EVV in a specific spot at your home that's easy for your workers to see. This way your workers always know where to find the EVV device.
4. To help your workers remember the information they need, you can also create Worker Visit Cards. These cards could include

ID numbers, service codes, and important contact information.

5. Finally, Dana says that one of the best ways to help your workers successfully use EVV is to remain positive and understanding. Ask your workers how you can help them learn EVV. If they don't always remember to check in with EVV, remind them at the start of each visit until they're in the habit of checking in with EVV on their own.
6. If a worker needs additional help learning the EVV system, together you could call DHS's EVV Customer Care line or watch an EVV training webinar provided by your FEA (see page 6 for information on EVV resources). People are most successful when they partner with their worker to find solutions!

“The biggest thing we’ve learned about EVV is that in order to be successful, it takes practice and patience,” says Dana. “Don’t give up; you can do it!”

WISCONSIN EVV CUSTOMER CARE LINE AND OTHER DHS RESOURCES:



Learning how to use Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) is a new skill for you and your workers. Fortunately, you're not alone! The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) has great resources that can help you and your workers with EVV.

☰ Wisconsin EVV Customer Care Line:

Want to talk to someone about EVV? DHS has an EVV Customer Care line that's ready to take your call!



EVV Customer Care Line
833-931-2035
Monday-Friday 7 am - 6 pm CT

People who use Wisconsin's EVV solution, Sandata (which is the system used by the iLIFE FEA), can call DHS's EVV Customer Care line for personalized assistance. The customer care representative can walk you through all of your Sandata questions: From how to download the app on your phone, to logging in to the system for the first time, to checking in and out of shifts, and any other Sandata question you might have!

For people enrolled in other FEAs, the Wisconsin EVV Customer Care representatives are happy to answer your general EVV questions, but you may need to contact your FEA if you have questions about their specific EVV system. If you would like support when calling the EVV Customer Care line, feel free to ask your TMG IRIS Consultant for assistance.

☰ Online EVV Resources:

DHS also offers webinars, Questions & Answer sessions, and has training resources available online. If you have not been to the DHS EVV webpage yet, be sure to visit! Here are some places to start your online learning:

- For those needing more information about using Sandata: dhs.wisconsin.gov/evv/training-workers.htm
- For IRIS participants who need resources: dhs.wisconsin.gov/evv/iris-evv.htm
- General information about EVV: dhs.wisconsin.gov/evv/index.htm



HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT EVV? CONTACT YOUR FISCAL EMPLOYER AGENT



To learn about what EVV training resources your Fiscal Employer Agent has, call, email or visit their EVV webpages, listed below:

Acumen (Formerly called Outreach):

- **EVV Webpage:** tinyurl.com/acumenevv
- **Phone:** 877-901-5826
- **Email:** outreach.wi@outreachfiscalagent.com
- **Hours:** Monday–Friday 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. CT

GT Independence:

- **EVV Webpage:** tinyurl.com/gtindevv
- **Phone:** 877-659-4500
- **Email:** customerservice@gtindependence.com
- **Hours:** Monday–Friday 7 a.m.–5 p.m. CT

iLIFE:

- **EVV Webpage:** tinyurl.com/ilifeevv
- **Phone:** 855-511-6443
- **Email:** IRIS.EVV@iLIFE.org
- **Hours:** Monday–Friday 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. CT

Premier:

- **EVV Webpage:** tinyurl.com/premierevv
- **Phone:** 855-224-5810
- **Email:** etimesheets@premier-fms.com
- **Hours:** Monday–Friday 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. CT



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SAVE THE DATE FOR THE 2024 SELF-DETERMINATION CONFERENCE!

Save the date and make plans now to attend the Self-Determination Conference, happening **October 21-23, 2024, at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells, WI.** Talk to you. IRIS Consultant if you are interested in attending!

Registration opens this summer, so be sure to visit tinyurl.com/selfdeterminationcon to learn more.



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