



The Arc Wisconsin  
P.O. Box 201  
Stoughton, WI 53589

T 608.422.4250  
Lisa Pugh, State Director  
pugh@thearc.org  
arcwi.org

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Contact: Lisa Pugh, [Pugh@thearc.org](mailto:Pugh@thearc.org); 608-422-4250

### **The Arc Wisconsin Members are Grateful for New Support for Home and Community-Based Providers and People with Disabilities**

Today's announcement by Governor Evers that federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding will be directed to needs in Wisconsin's Home and Community-Based Services system is welcome news to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families across Wisconsin who have been particularly anxious about the future.

"Thousands of people with disabilities rely on home and community-based workers to help them live their lives, including to support daily needs like getting out of bed, eating meals, getting dressed and getting to work and out in the community," says Lisa Pugh, Executive Director. "In many parts of the state these services have been stopped entirely."

"Home and community-based workers are essential health care workers. They need to be prioritized for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 testing and eventual vaccination against COVID-19 to protect themselves and the people they support from infection."

As a member of the Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations chapters of The Arc Wisconsin participated in a statewide survey showing that more than 72% of responding providers are experiencing additional costs - including purchasing PPE, cleaning supplies, offering over-time pay, providing new staff training and more. Some have not yet re-opened their businesses due to health concerns, leaving people with disabilities without their daily supports. Nearly one-fifth says they are not sure they cannot remain in business without some financial assistance.

"Without service providers, families are supporting their loved ones with disabilities at home and are getting stressed. They will also need access to supports to keep family members healthy," says Pugh. "This additional funding is badly needed and is coming at a critical time."

*The Arc Wisconsin advocates for and serves people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD), including Down syndrome, autism, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, cerebral palsy and other diagnoses. The Arc Wisconsin has 14 local chapters and is connected to a network of more than 650 chapters across the country promoting and protecting the human rights of people with I/DD and actively supporting their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes and without regard to diagnosis.*

**Editor's Note:** The Arc is not an acronym; always refer to us as The Arc, not The ARC and never ARC. The Arc should be considered as a title or a phrase.