



# Wisconsin Assisted Living Association

## News Blast

*March 29, 2011*

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Email form instead,  
please contact the  
WALA office at  
608/288-0246 or email  
[membership@ewala.org](mailto:membership@ewala.org)**

Thank you to all the Sponsors, Exhibitors and Attendees for making this years Spring Conference a success!

WALA Members receive these blasts whenever breaking news in Assisted Living develops. If you are a member and want to join the mailing list please follow the link on the left of the page.

Have you renewed your membership for 2011? If not, contact Sarah Bass, WALA's Operations Director at [sbass@ewala.org](mailto:sbass@ewala.org) or call her at 608/288-0246 to renew or to become a new member today!

For more information about WALA please visit our website at [www.ewala.org](http://www.ewala.org). Let us know how you feel about the new look and feel of our website!

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**DHS Secretary Dennis Smith Keynotes at WALA Conference**

On Thursday March 24, DHS Secretary Dennis Smith presented the keynote address at the 16th Annual WALA Spring Conference. He presented information on the Budget Repair bill as well as the Governor's proposed Biennial Budget. He encouraged all to provide comments to him via WALA on changes that need to be made in these documents. He also mentioned that there are three ways for you to provide input to DHS and **WALA encourages you to do as many as possible.**

1. WALA is gathering and accepting comments on the changes members wish to see in Family Care. We will organize and combine comments into one document to present to Kitty Rhoades, Deputy Director of DHS as well as at WALA's upcoming meeting with Secretary Smith. In addition, since Governor Walker has clearly announced that "Wisconsin is Open for Business" we will also provide ways to make DHS friendlier to the assisted living business. To that end, we are also gathering and accepting comments and ideas on ways to streamline policies and change regulations to reduce the costs to providers. **Please submit all comments via email to Jim Murphy at [jmurphy@ewala.org](mailto:jmurphy@ewala.org) no later than April 1.**

2. As you can see below, DHS is hosting six Town Hall meetings. This is an important opportunity, please plan to attend and provide written testimony. This is the time for WALA membership to provide direct suggestions on needed changes in the Medicaid and Family Care program. See details below.

3. In addition, the Joint Finance Committee is hosting four public hearings and will accept public testimony on the Biennial Budget bill. These meetings are April 7, 8, 11 & 13. See details below.

**WALA strongly encourages you to use each of these three avenues to make your concerns heard. Let's take Secretary Smith up on his word that he is interested in hearing from us. Please encourage other providers in your area to make their voices heard.**



### Six Town Hall Meetings Held By DHS to Find \$500 Million in Medicaid "Efficiencies"

The Department of Health Services (DHS) will hold its first public hearing on Wednesday, March 30, 2011 at 1:00 PM at the Chippewa Valley Technical College (Eau Claire). The Governor has included in his proposed 2011-13 Wisconsin State Budget a reduction of \$500 million to the Medicaid program. The DHS has stated in notices that the "town hall meeting is designed to collect ideas on efficiencies and cost-savings to meet this amount while improving overall consumer care, streamlining program delivery and stabilizing the program to ensure long-term sustainability. Individuals who are interested in testifying will have up to three minutes to share their ideas. Those who have ideas and do not wish to testify are encouraged to submit written testimony at the meeting." DHS is seeking cost-saving and efficiency ideas on all Medicaid programs, including SeniorCare, BadgerCare Plus, Family Care, IRIS and other LTC programs.

WALA will make members aware of the other town hall \ public hearings as soon as DHS makes that information available.

**DHS Town Hall Meeting on  
\$500 Million Reduction to Medicaid**

**Wednesday, March 30, 2011**  
**1:00 PM**  
**Chippewa Valley Technical College**  
**Business Education Center, Room 103 - Auditorium**  
**620 W. Clairemont Avenue**  
**Eau Claire, Wisconsin**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS HELD BY THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Immediately following the conclusion of the agency briefings (listed below), public comment and testimony will be taken on the biennial budget bill.

**WALA encourages you to attend:**

- [April 7](#) (10 AM - 6 PM): UW-Stevens Point, Lee Dreyfus Center, Melvin Laird Room, Stevens Point
- [April 8](#) (10 AM - 5 PM): Northwood School, Richard's Auditorium, Highway 53, Minong
- [April 11](#) (10 AM - 6 PM): State Fair Park, Expo Center Hall A, West Allis
- [April 13](#) (10 AM - 6 PM): Arcadia High School, Auditorium, Arcadia
- View Schedule Here:  
<http://committeeschedule.legis.state.wi.us/files>

**Joint Finance Committee AGENCY BRIEFINGS**

These are opportunities for the heads of all of the Administration's departments to appear before the JFC to argue their case for the proposals included in the 2011-2013 Wisconsin State Budget. The series of five briefings will occur over the next two weeks. Please note that no public comment is taken during these events.

- [March 29](#) (10:00 AM): Department of Administration, Department of Revenue, Supreme Court, Department of Tourism
- [March 30](#) (10:00 AM): Government Accountability Board, Department of Corrections, Department of Children and Families
- [March 31](#) (10:00 AM): University of Wisconsin System, Higher Education Aids Board, Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Technical College System
- [April 4](#) (10:00 AM): Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Transportation
- [April 6](#) (10:00 AM): Department of Health Services, Department of Commerce, Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority, Department of Safety and Professional Services (currently the Department of Regulation & Licensing), Department of Justice
- View Schedule Here:  
<http://committeeschedule.legis.state.wi.us/files/HearingNotices/11-03-29-1000-2011JFIN-15324.html>

[Wisconsin Eye](#) will carry the agency briefings live -- and will likely carry at least two of the public hearing

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*To request additional information, please contact  
Forbes McIntosh, Lobbying Consultant  
[forbes@wis-gps.com](mailto:forbes@wis-gps.com)  
(608) 255-0029*



## Summary Available of 2011-13 Biennial State Budget

The Wisconsin State Legislature's "Legislative Fiscal Bureau" has released its 540-page summary of the Governor's 2011-13 Biennial State Budget.

This is considered the best independent summary available to the public.

Below are the links to the entire summary and those sections impacting health care.

### **Entire Summary of the Governor's Proposed 2011-13 State Budget**

<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lfb/2011-13%20Budget/Governor/tableofcontents.htm>

### **Section: Health Services**

<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lfb/2011-13%20Budget/Governor/dhs.pdf>

### **Board on Aging and Long-Term Care**

<http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lfb/2011-13%20Budget/Governor/baltc.pdf>



## BAL's Kevin Coughlin Testifies in Washington DC

Kevin Coughlin, Director of the Bureau of Assisted Living, was invited to testify at the Senate Committee on Aging on March 15. It was an incredible honor for Wisconsin and for the BAL assisted living regulations to be showcased in this manner before a national audience.

Go to: [http://aging.senate.gov/hearing\\_detail.cfm?id=331935&](http://aging.senate.gov/hearing_detail.cfm?id=331935&) for the entire testimony - it is fascinating. BAL has indicated that they will provide a public report at a later date.



## Division of Long-Term Care Releases Memo on "Influencing the Exercise of Participant Freedom of Choice"

The Division of Long Term Care (DLTC)/Department of Health Services (DHS) developed a document which clarifies all providers of long-term care services are prohibited from influencing participants' choice of long-term care program, provider or managed care organization (MCO) through communications that are misleading, threatening or coercive. DHS may impose sanctions against a provider that does so. **This is worth reading carefully.**

Please visit the link below to view *Influencing the Exercise of Participant Freedom of Choice*.

<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/lc/PDFs/freedomofchoice.pdf>



## WALA Wall Now Open to Members

WALA has opened the WALA Wall, an online discussion forum for members to chat with others in the field about the issues relating to them!

Talk about Family Care, Legislative Issues, Regulatory Issues and much more!

All you need to do is go to the WALA Website at [www.ewala.org](http://www.ewala.org), log in using your member username and password to the member only area and click on the WALA Wall to start the communication!

Please contact the WALA office if you need your username and password, or if you have questions at 608/288-0246 or email [membership@ewala.org](mailto:membership@ewala.org)

**Sincerely,**

Jim Murphy, Executive Director  
Sarah Bass, Operations Director

Wisconsin Assisted Living Association