

# Teamwork Starts with Building Trust: IM Agencies and Community Partners Working Together

Wisconsin Enrollment Conference  
September 20, 9:15 AM – 10:30 AM

*This presentation is supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$1,901,875 with 69% funded by CMS/HHS and \$117,825 amount and 4% funded by non-government source(s). The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CMS/HHS, or the U.S. Government.*

**covering**  
**Wisconsin**  
Connect to Care, Engage in Health

# Partnerships are essential and should be intentional.

---

Good partnerships:

- Ongoing and ever-changing
- Bi-directional (but not all the time)
- Authentic
- Share a goal (even if you don't share the reason for the goal)
- Centered in transparent communication

# Introductions

**Moderator**



**Caroline Gómez-Tom**

*Enrollment Network and  
Accessibility Manager*

Covering Wisconsin

**Speaker**



**Masiel Gomez**

*Enrollment and Outreach  
Coordinator*

Bureau of Eligibility &  
Enrollment Policy, Department  
of Health Services

**Speaker**



**Lindsey Schwarz-Nichols**

*Social Worker and Western  
Region Enrollment  
Network Coordinator*

La Crosse County Health  
Department

**Speaker**



**Kayte La Due**

*Economic Support  
Supervisor*

Monroe County, Western  
Region for Economic  
Assistance (WREA)

# “Unwinding” Defined

---

The process states will undertake to return to routine operations in Medicaid programs, as temporary policies related to the pandemic start to end.



# Unwinding Goals

- Implement a successful return to routine operations for Wisconsin's BadgerCare Plus and Medicaid programs
- Make sure Wisconsinites have health insurance, whether through a state program, their employer, or [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov)



# Collaboration Goals

- Inform and educate members on upcoming changes
- Help members update their contact information
- Assist with renewals
- Help those who no longer qualify for Medicaid or BadgerCare Plus transition to [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) or other quality coverage



# Unwinding Task Force

- Established in November 2021
- Key Stakeholders advise DHS on our outreach strategies and member communication
- Take an active role in reaching out to members and helping them navigate the unwinding period
- Provide feedback on in-the-field operations during unwinding

# Members of the Task Force

- Covering Wisconsin
- ABC for Health
- Disability Advocacy groups
- Federally Qualified Health Centers
- BadgerCare & SSI Medicaid HMOs
- Hospitals
- Income Maintenance Agencies
- Family Care MCOs
- IRIS Consulting Agencies
- Milwaukee Enrollment Network
- Tribes
- Other community-based organizations



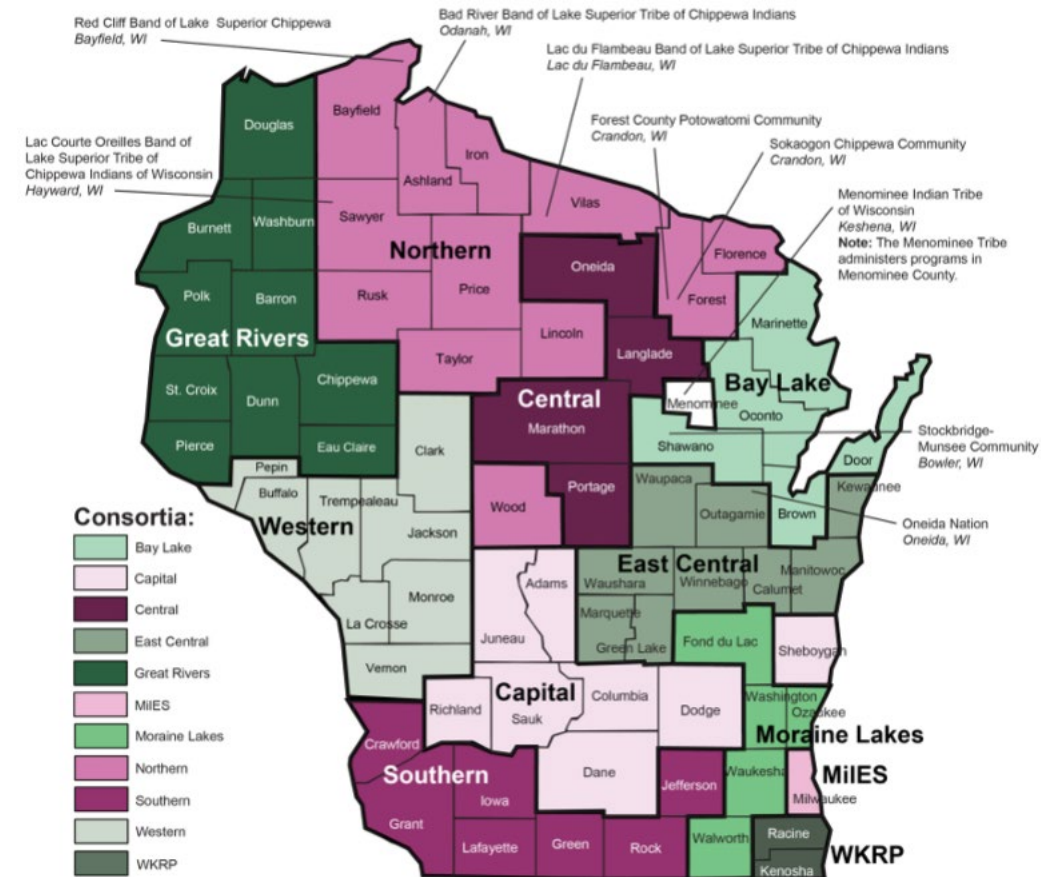
# Poll Question 1

# Income Maintenance (IM) and Tribal Agencies

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) partners with counties and tribes to help you apply for or enroll in programs such as:

- BadgerCare Plus
- Medicaid
- FoodShare

These county agencies are called income maintenance (IM) or economic support agencies. County agencies join together to form a consortium.



# What IM agencies help with

The IM agencies can help you:

- Answer questions about eligibility and benefits
- Apply for benefits
- Conduct FoodShare interviews
- Process
  - Applications
  - Benefits changes
  - Benefits renewal
  - Documents provided as proof or verification
- Renew benefits

You can get these services at any of the agencies in your consortium. Each one has its own center you can call for help.

# IM/Partner Workgroup

- Focuses on connecting the Income Maintenance Agencies and Stakeholders on matters related to COVID Unwinding, to ensure collaboration related to communication, trends, and methods on how to address issues.
- Collect stakeholder and Income Maintenance input for the Department and other IM meetings.
- Be responsible for sharing, discussing, evaluating, and communicating best practices on ways that Income Maintenance and Stakeholders can interact with one another to aid with the unwinding process.
- Share discussions, potential tasks, and results to the Unwinding Task Force, and the Regional Enrollment Network meetings.

# Partner Resource Guide



Topics include:

- Working with local Agencies
- Verifying information (providing proof)
- Backdating health care coverage
- Translation services
- Resolving issues before a fair hearing
- Completing health care renewals
- Key contacts

[dhs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid/partner-resourceguidefinal-v4.pdf](https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid/partner-resourceguidefinal-v4.pdf)



# Questions

Connect with your local IM agencies to build relationships and when you experience issues:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/em/im-agency-consortia-operational-contacts.pdf>

Email:

[DHSForwardHealthPartners@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:DHSForwardHealthPartners@dhs.wisconsin.gov)

---

# Enrollment Networks

# Enrollment Networks Purpose

---

A collaboration between local stakeholders and state county agencies, facilitating improvements to health insurance outreach, promotion, direct assistance, program administration, and education.



# Enrollment Networks

Enrollment Networks support information sharing, outreach coordination, and regional—and culturally—relevant messaging.

Originally created before the first HealthCare.gov open enrollment period.

Members include enrollment assisters and state and local community partners.

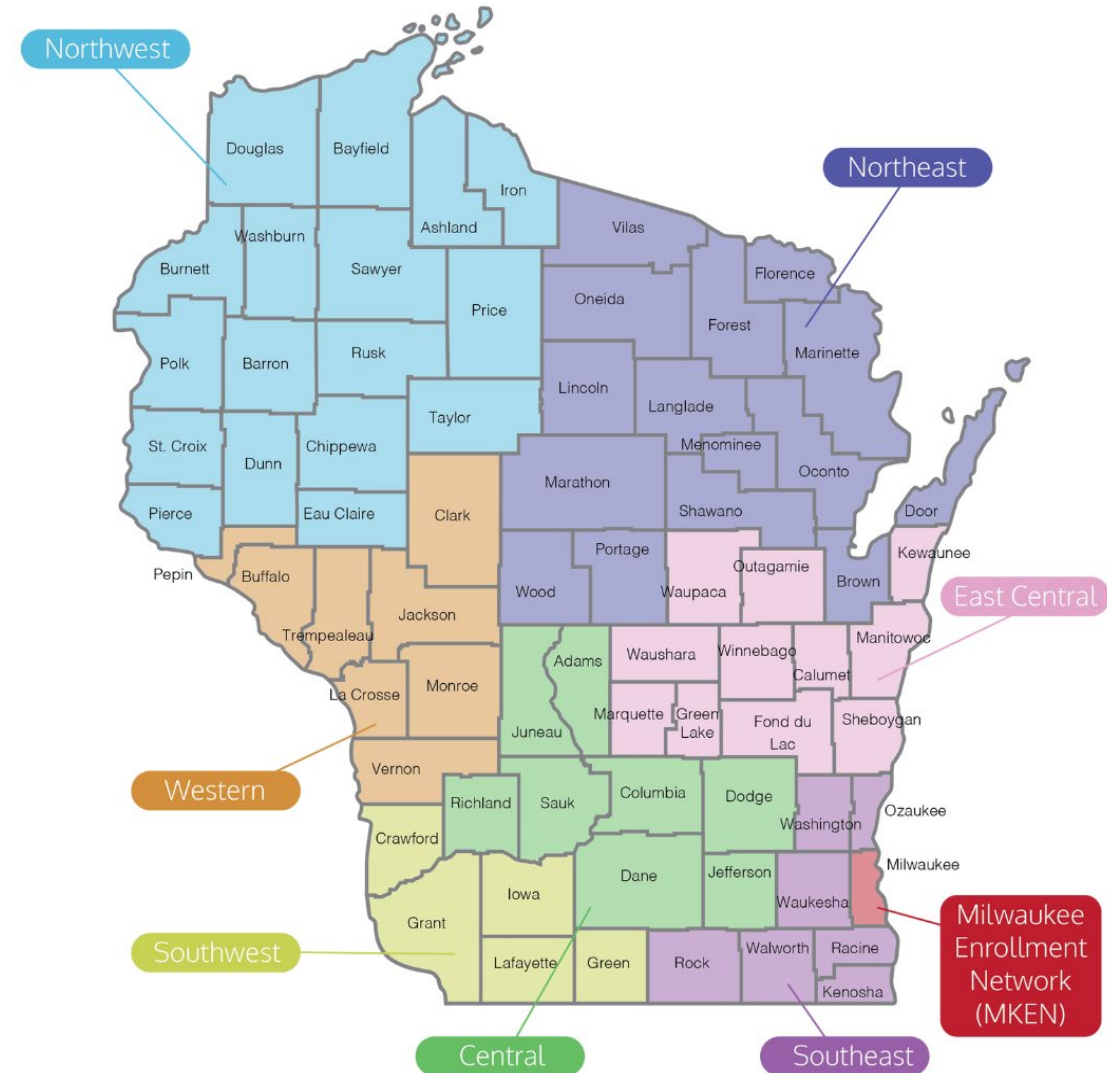


Covering WI Contact:

**Caroline Gómez-Tom**

Enrollment Network and Accessibility Manager

[cbgomez@wisc.edu](mailto:cbgomez@wisc.edu)



**Latine Enrollment Network:** Statewide

**Hmong Enrollment Network:** Statewide

# Enrollment Networks Help Us Do the Work

---

## Enrollment networks help:

- Keep local partners informed about policy changes and enrollment trends
- Build enrollment assister support and capacity
- Organize and streamline local outreach efforts
- Create regionally -- and culturally-- relevant messaging and promotion
- Provide a venue for open communication between local partners, the Department of Health Services, and other statewide partners to meet the needs of Medicaid members and the local community

## Enrollment networks members include:

- Enrollment assisters (Navigators, Certified Application Counselors, agents, brokers, IM consortia staff, financial counselors and public benefit specialists.)
- Key stakeholders from health care systems, community health centers, free clinics, public health departments, health insurance plans, state agencies, and many more community-based organizations.

# Join an Enrollment Network!



**Central**  
**Tina Marshalek**  
*tina.marshalek@wisc.edu*



**Hmong Enrollment Network**  
**You Lee**  
*youle@newhmongprofessionals.org*



**Milwaukee (MKEN)**  
**Justin Rivas**  
*jrivas@mkehcp.org*



**Northwest**  
**Mike Rust**  
*mike@safetyweb.org*



**Western**  
**Lindsey Schwarz-Nichols**  
*lschwarz@lacrossecounty.org*

**East Central**  
**Julia Garvey**  
*julia.garvey@thedacare.org*



**Latine Enrollment Network**  
**Lourdes Godinez**  
*lourdes@micentro.org*



**Northeast**  
**Tony Lee**  
*anthony.lee@wisc.edu*



**Southeast and Southwest**  
**Caroline Gómez-Tom**  
*caroline.gomez@wisc.edu*



## Poll Question 2



**A story of partnership with the Western Enrollment Network and Western Region for Economic Assistance (WREA)**

# This Partnership is 10 years in the Making

---

## Before Open Enrollment 1 – 2013

- Brand new policy: Everyone needed to understand the new law and new system (HealthCare.gov)
- Members were heavily new enrollment assisters, like Navigators, Agents, Brokers, and Certified Application Counselors
- New relationship with DHS, WREA, and the new enrollment network – while managing unknown health insurance landscape

## Medicaid Renewal Unwinding and Open Enrollment 11 - 2023

- Old policy being implemented again – remembering processes or new staff learning for the first time
- Membership include both enrollment assister, state partners, and more community partners who help get the word out (Mobilizers)
- The enrollment network members are able to give direct feedback to DHS and WREA to improve process for Medicaid members

# Examples of Collaboration

---

- Mailed resources to faith-led community-based organizations
- Sent food pantries posters to connect people to enrollment assister and outreach workers in the region
- Invited new mobilizers to join the enrollment network
- Encourage members to help lessen the WREA call center workload by promoting and using [access.wi.gov](https://access.wi.gov) for Medicaid member renewals
- Provided BadgerCare Plus 101 presentations offered by WREA staff to schools and other mobilizer groups
- Partnered on community outreach across the region

# Let's Build Some Partnerships

---

- Get involved and join an enrollment network:  
[https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_3NlubzPOQFQu5Rs](https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3NlubzPOQFQu5Rs)
- Get to know your IM partners and work together on Medicaid questions:  
<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/em/im-agency-consortia-operational-contacts.pdf>
- Know where to go when you have more Medicaid questions or see trends:  
[DHSForwardHealthPartners@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:DHSForwardHealthPartners@dhs.wisconsin.gov)
- If you don't know where to start, reach out to [Covering Wisconsin!](#)





**KEEP  
CALM  
AND**

*Unwind*

**ON**