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Come for a visit!

On the web...

www.northernbridges.com

At our board meetings...

Our Board of Directors meet monthly. Check our website for dates and times.

CONTACT US:

For general questions, please call toll free 1-866-306-6499.

For newsletter questions or comments call 715-635-3122 Ext. 1817 or email: jjoyce@northernbridges.com

NorthernBridges' Mission

Providing our members the best life possible

Teamwork Helps Stroke Survivor

Once the owner of his own construction business, Rich Albano needed only a pencil, paper and ruler to figure out all he needed to build an entire house.

“That’s the way his father taught him,” said his wife Judy Albano. “He didn’t need a computer.”

Two years after a stroke, Rich needs a computer today to speak for him. When he touches a picture on the screen, an electronic voice asks for breakfast. He touches another and a big smile flashes over his face as the voice says, “The Green Bay Packers are Super Bowl champs.”

While lucky to survive his stroke, Rich may be even luckier to have the right team to support him.

More than a year after his hospital stay, it looked like Rich’s recovery had gone as far as it could go.

Judy believed he could understand no more than that of young child.

But last year Rich’s NorthernBridges care team thought there was a chance his future might hold something more. They arranged for him to see a speech therapist.

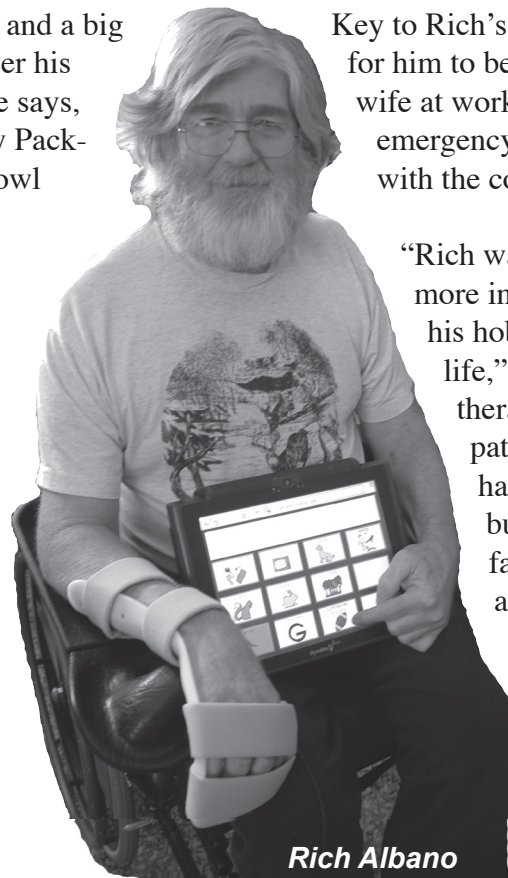
It turned out Rich could understand much more than he could say.

Rich now uses a computer that can talk for him.

Key to Rich’s independence is for him to be able to dial his wife at work or 911 in case of emergency. He can do that with the computer.

“Rich wants to become more independent in his hobbies and social life,” said his speech therapist. “By far the patients who not only have the motivation but also support of family and services are the ones who have the most success.”

Rich can now tell you he has both.



Rich Albano

What Will the New State Budget Mean for Members and NorthernBridges?

by John T. McMahon, CEO NorthernBridges

Our members have many questions about what Governor Walker's proposed budget bill will mean for them and NorthernBridges. I will try to answer some of those questions as best as I can with what we know at this time.

What is the Governor's proposed budget bill all about?

Due to the state's budget shortfall, Governor Walker's budget includes many sweeping changes. In this letter, we talk about changes to the Medicaid program only.

The Governor wants to cut Medicaid spending by \$500 million over the next two years. About \$110 million of that would come from Family Care, a Medicaid program. NorthernBridges brings you Family Care, which pays for your support and services.

How will \$110 million be cut from Family Care?

The proposed budget will stop or "cap" for two years the number of new people who can join Family Care beginning the end of June 2011 through June 2013.

IRIS, Family Care Partnership, and PACE will also have the same enrollment cap.

What this means is that no new members may enroll in any of the long-term care programs after June 30, 2011. This includes all those on waiting lists at that time. The only way new members can be added to any of these programs will be when a member leaves or dies and there is an opening.

Will I be able to stay with NorthernBridges?

Yes. Just as before--as long as you continue to qualify for Family Care--you will continue to be a member of NorthernBridges. We just may not be able to take any new members, unless there is an opening.

Will the services I need be cut?

No. Just as before, you and your care team will work to meet your needs and outcomes in the most effective and cost-effective way possible.

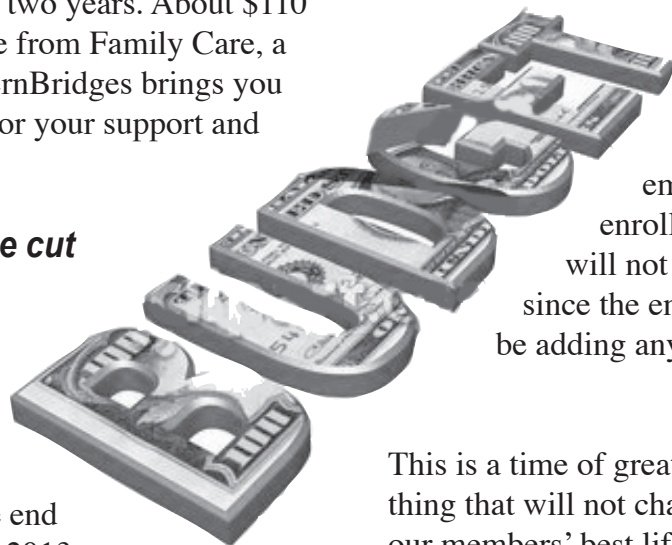
Will NorthernBridges lay off employees?

There is no plan to lay off employees. If there is an enrollment cap, NorthernBridges will not be adding new care managers since the enrollment cap means we won't be adding any new members.

This is a time of great change in our state. One thing that will not change is our mission to support our members' best life possible. It is what we do and why we are here.

NorthernBridges will continue to work with the State Department of Health Services to bring Family Care to all those whose lives depend on it.

To keep you as informed as possible, we will post more information on our website and in our Member Newsletters. Please also ask your care manager if you have any questions or concerns.



Diabetes Control About Lifestyle Changes

by NorthernBridges' Registered Nurse Kim Bortz, Park Falls Hub



Kim Bortz knows how important it is to control diabetes. Over half of the 66 members whose care she manages have diabetes.

“The hardest part for many is just changing their lifestyle,” said Bortz. “I go over the risk factors and encourage them to do the best they can. I try to work on their schedules and routines and give them and their families the information and encouragement they need to make the best choices for their situation.”

Bortz shares the following with her members who have diabetes:

Get Regular Check Ups--See your doctor for lab work on your blood sugar and blood pressure.

Watch your blood sugar daily

Walk or do other regular exercise. It helps you lose weight and lower blood sugar.

Wear good-fitting shoes

Wash your feet daily (do not soak) and dry between the toes.

Eat right--especially foods high in fiber such as fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts and whole grains (it must say “whole” on the package.

Member Rights Specialists Are On Your Side

When a member has a problem, Member Rights Specialists help them find the best way to get it resolved. They are mediators and problem solvers, making sure members' rights are upheld and maintained according to state and NorthernBridges' policies.

NorthernBridges recently welcomed a new Member Rights Specialist to the team, Karen St. George.

“I am committed to helping people have the best life possible,” said Karen. “I am delighted to join NorthernBridges in assisting elderly and members with disabilities in our communities.”

Karen joins NorthernBridges' other Member Rights Specialist Nancy Tischbein.

You are encouraged to talk to your care management team and our Member Rights Specialists if you are not satisfied with any part of your care or treatment.



NorthernBridges' new Member Rights Specialist Karen St. George.

Make a Difference-- Volunteer for Member Advisory Committee

In keeping with NorthernBridges' mission of providing members the best life possible, we are recruiting members to participate in a Member Advisory Council.

This council is member-focused, giving members a voice and the ability to advise NorthernBridges on quality-related issues.

The council meets 3 times a year to discuss issues relating to quality and share concerns as well as creative and innovative solutions.

They will also review printed material for members.

The council consists of 9-12 members. We seek member representatives from each of our “target” groups which are:

- 1) those over 65
- 2) those with physical disabilities
- 3) those with developmental disabilities.

Family members, guardians, or any interested community member will also be considered for the council.

For more info, please visit our website or call 715-635-3122.



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Toll Free 877-307-2288

Hayward / Sawyer Co.
15735 US Hwy. 63
Hayward, WI 54843
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Toll Free 877-934-2282

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Burnett Counties
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Centuria, WI 54824
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