



Family Care

MEMBER HANDBOOK

2009




Northern Bridges
Connections & Choices in Long-Term Care



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Welcome to NorthernBridges

NorthernBridges is a managed care organization that offers the Family Care program. NorthernBridges serves the 11 counties of Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Polk, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, and Washburn. This member handbook is an explanation of your rights, benefits, and responsibilities as a member of NorthernBridges. If you need help in any way to understand this handbook, or need a copy in another language, Braille, or large print, please call:

(715) 934-2266 or toll free 1-866-306-6499
TTY 1-800-947-3529

Reciba asistencia gratuita para traducir esta, por favor llame
Toll free 1-866-306-6499
TTY 1-800-947-3529

Peb muaj kev pab pub dawb rau nej nrog txhais cov ntawv no, thov hu
Toll free 1-866-306-6499
TTY 1-800-947-3529

If you have questions or want more information and are not yet enrolled in NorthernBridges, please call your county Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). ADRCs give information, assistance, and eligibility screening for long-term care services. ADRCs are separate county agencies and not part of NorthernBridges.



NorthernBridges - We are mission and values driven

NorthernBridges is a local mission- and values-driven managed care organization (MCO) established as a public long-term care district with board representatives from each of the 11 counties in our service region. “Connections & Choices in Long Term Care” is our slogan. We are committed to providing quality, individualized services to seniors and adults with disabilities. We build connections among our members, care managers, and providers to give each NorthernBridges’ member more choices, quality services, and the opportunity to meet his or her goals or outcomes.

Family Care was developed by the State of Wisconsin to provide supports and services to people with long-term care needs.

The goals of Family Care are:

- Choice – Give people better choices about the services and supports available to meet their needs.
- Access – Improve people’s access to services.
- Quality – Improve overall quality of the long-term care system by focusing on achieving people’s health and social outcomes.
- Cost Effectiveness – Create a cost-effective long-term care system for the future.



How can the NorthernBridges' Family Care program help me?

The State of Wisconsin, counties, and NorthernBridges are working together to improve the long-term care system for you. We believe that if you need long-term care services, you should be able to choose when and where you need them. This new way of helping older people and people with disabilities is known as Family Care.

The NorthernBridges' Family Care program helps you live as independently as possible in your home or other setting. You get the long-term care services that meet your needs.

When you choose the Family Care program, you will become a member of NorthernBridges. You and a team of professionals will work together to make decisions about your health and lifestyle. Together you will make the best possible choices to meet your personal needs, goals, and preferences.

NorthernBridges offers a number of services that can be “individually tailored” to meet your needs. Bathing, transportation, housekeeping, and medical equipment are just some of the services we can offer. We will work with you to get the support you need to find safe and healthy ways to reach your personal goals. If your needs change, your services will change right along with them. For example, if you ever need care outside of your own home or where you now live, we will be there to support you and give you the information and help you will need to be as safe as possible.



What does it mean to be a “Member”?

NorthernBridges gives you personalized services. We will work with you and your family to give the kind of long-term care services you need and want. A personal plan is developed with you and your family, or significant others, and a NorthernBridges’ “Interdisciplinary Team.” Your Team includes the following people:

- You and your choice of significant others
- A Nurse Care Manager
- A Social Services Care Manager

You and the professionals on your Team will work together to make good decisions about your health, lifestyle and how to best meet your goals. Your Team will work with you to identify any health or supportive care needs you may have. The Nurse and Social Services Care Manager will help you to create a plan that meets your needs and choose services that help you to reach your personal goals and outcomes. You will be asked to sign your service plan showing that you agree and are satisfied with the plan. You will get a copy of your signed plan. If you are not happy with your service plan, you may make a grievance or appeal described later in this handbook.

As a member of NorthernBridges, all of your long-term care services will be managed through the Family Care program. You may choose your long-term care service providers from the list of providers who have agreed to work with NorthernBridges.

You can keep your doctors, hospitals, clinics and pharmacies you have now. The NorthernBridges’ Family Care program is not responsible for these services. They are paid for by Medicare and/or Medicaid, not the Family Care program. However, your Team will help coordinate these healthcare services with you and your doctors.

How are services selected and authorized?

NorthernBridges is responsible for helping you reach your personal goals or outcomes. We also have the responsibility to consider costs when planning your care and choosing providers to meet your needs. To do this, your Team will use the Resource Allocation Decision Method or “RAD.” The Family Care RAD process will help you and your Team find the most efficient and appropriate ways to meet your needs and support your goals. You and your Team will make a plan of your needs and outcomes along with the services to address them.

Many times, you can reach one or more outcomes without a lot of help from NorthernBridges because family or other people are helping you. A goal of NorthernBridges is to support the people in your life who are supporting you. This “informal support” can keep people important to you in your everyday life.

Your Team will also help find service providers to help you. These “formal supports” must have a contract with NorthernBridges. If you are unhappy with any provider, you have the right to ask for a new provider. You must first talk with your Team, which must authorize all services you get.

Cost effectiveness is an important part of the Family Care RAD process. Your outcomes must be reasonable and your service plan should be both effective and efficient in reaching your outcomes. This means that we will not support outcomes that are impractical or dangerous.

You don't have to accept a plan that does not help you reach your outcomes. In partnership with you, NorthernBridges seeks to find the most cost-effective solutions and services to best meet your outcomes. You and your team may have to compromise on some of your outcomes if reaching them fully or right away is so difficult or expensive that it is not reasonable.

NorthernBridges must approve long-term care services before you receive them. Ask your Team if you need a service that is not already approved in your service plan. NorthernBridges does not have to pay for services you received if they were not approved before you got them.




How do I use the NorthernBridges' provider network?

We contract with a network of providers that will help you reach your goals. Our providers work with us in a cost-effective way and meet our quality standards. Please see your Provider Directory for a complete listing of all NorthernBridges' contracted providers.

Northern Bridges will hire any provider you choose to come to your home or give personal care, home health, private duty nursing, or supportive home care, as long as that person meets NorthernBridges' requirements and accepts our rates.

NorthernBridges wants you to receive help from people who are familiar to you. In most cases, these individuals will need to be employed by an agency that NorthernBridges has contracted with to provide these services.

Another option for paying your chosen caregivers is Self-Directed Supports or "SDS" (See "What is Self-Directed Supports?" for more information). Your Team will help you and your care providers through this decision process. Whichever option you choose, your care providers must get training to meet your needs.



For most services, you can choose from the providers in the NorthernBridges' provider network. To choose a provider not in our network, you must talk with your Team and NorthernBridges will consider your request. A new provider might be used when a network provider:

- Does not have the capacity or expertise to meet your need
- Cannot meet your need on a timely basis
- Cannot meet your cultural or language needs
- Is located in geographic locations or buildings that make transportation or physical access an undue hardship to you

There are times when you may want to switch providers. Contact your Team if you want to change from one provider to another in the network. Your Provider Directory gives you a full listing of all NorthernBridges' contracted providers.



What is Self-Directed Supports or SDS?

Self-Directed Supports (SDS) is a way for NorthernBridges' members to arrange, purchase and direct their long-term care services. In SDS, you have greater flexibility and control over service delivery. You must also take more responsibility for managing those services.

Generally, you will work with your Team to determine a budget for certain services based on your service plan. Then, you manage the purchase of services within that budget, either directly or with the help of another person you choose. Please talk with your Team to learn more about SDS and/or ask for a copy of our Self-Directed Supports Guide for a complete description of benefits and limitations.



What if I need services while I am out of the area?

If you are going to be out of NorthernBridges' service area for a temporary absence, you must notify your Team. If you want your services to continue while you are gone, NorthernBridges will consult with the County Economic Support Unit to make sure you will still be considered a NorthernBridges' service area resident while you are gone. If you choose to be a non-resident, you may lose eligibility for the program.

If Economic Support decides you are still a resident, NorthernBridges will work with you to plan a cost-effective way to reach your outcomes and keep you healthy and safe while you are gone. If NorthernBridges believes it cannot develop a cost-effective plan that meets your outcomes and assures your health and safety, NorthernBridges can ask the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) to disenroll you from the Family Care program. You would be notified of the results of the DHS review of the NorthernBridges' involuntary disenrollment request. If you are disenrolled for a temporary absence, you can re-enroll when you return to the service area.

NorthernBridges does not pay for care if you move permanently out of the service area. You can work with your Team to coordinate the transition of services to other providers in your new location.

What if my needs change?

You and your Team will review your needs every six months, or whenever you have a change in condition. Your care plan will be updated to show any changes. You may contact your Team at any time to discuss your needs and can ask that services be added, changed, or stopped.

What services are provided in the Family Care benefit package?

The NorthernBridges' Family Care program provides long-term care services. You and your Team will make decisions about the services that will meet the level of care you need to support your outcomes. Your Team must approve all services before you start receiving them.

All services on the following list make up the Family Care benefit package and are available to members who meet the nursing home level of care. Services marked with a double-asterisk (**) are available to members who meet the non-nursing home level of care.

- Adaptive Aids (general and vehicle)
- Adult Day Care
- Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Day Treatment Services (in all settings)**
- Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (except those provided by a physician or on an inpatient basis)**
- Care and Case Management**
- Children's Foster Care and Treatment Foster Care
- Communication Aids and Interpreter Services
- Community Support Program**
- Consumer Education and Training
- Counseling and Therapeutic Resources
- Daily Living Skills Training
- Day Services and Treatment
- Day Services for Children
- Durable Medical Equipment (except for hearing aids and prosthetics)**
- Financial Management Services
- Home Health**
- Home Modifications
- Housing Counseling
- Meals (delivered to your home)
- Medical Supplies**

- Mental Health Day-Treatment Services (in all settings)**
- Mental Health Services (except those provided by a doctor or on an inpatient basis)**
- Nursing Facility (including nursing home and intermediate care facility for people with mental retardation—ICF/MR)**
- Nursing Services (including respiratory care, intermittent and private duty)**
- Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy (in all settings, except for inpatient hospital)**
- Personal Care**
- Personal Emergency Response System Services
- Prevocational Services
- Relocation Services
- Residential Services (including Adult Family Home, Community-Based Residential Facility, Residential Care Apartment Complex)
- Respite Care
- Self-Directed Supports (Support Broker)
- Skilled Nursing Services
- Specialized Medical Supplies
- Specialized Transportation Services
- Speech and Language Pathology Services (except inpatient)**
- Supported Employment
- Supportive Home Care
- Transportation Services (all Medicaid-covered transportation, except ambulance and common carrier, covered by Medicare/Medicaid card or other sources)**
- Vocational Futures Planning

You and your Team may also choose different services from any of the services listed above in the Family Care benefit package. Sometimes, alternate support or services can better meet your needs, personal outcomes, or be a cost-effective option.



What services are not provided in the Family Care benefit package?

The following services are not in the Family Care benefit package. Even though Family Care does not directly provide these services, your Team will work closely with you to get these services when you need them. If you have Medicaid, Medicare or other private insurance, these insurances may cover the following services.

- Alcohol and other Drug Abuse services (provided by a physician or in an inpatient setting)
- Audiologist
- Chiropractic Services
- Crisis Intervention
- Dentistry
- Eyeglasses
- Family Planning Services
- Hearing Aids
- Hospice
- Hospital, Inpatient and Outpatient (including emergency room care)
- Independent Nurse Practitioner Services
- Lab and X-Ray
- Medications
- Mental Health Services (provided by a physician or in an inpatient setting)
- Optometry
- Physician and Clinic Services
- Podiatry
- Prenatal Care Coordination
- Prosthetics
- Room and Board (in Adult Family Home, Community-Based Residential Facility, and Residential Care Apartment Complex)
- School –based services
- Transportation by ambulance or common carrier



Does the Family Care program pay for residential services?

An important NorthernBridges' goal is to support your choices for where and with whom you want to live, and to do that in the most cost-effective way possible. If you are living in your own home and you and your Team agree you cannot stay there, you will decide together about other residential services. Options may include moving to a residential setting such as an Adult Family Home, a Community-Based Residential Facility, a Residential Care Apartment Complex, or you may need Nursing Facility care.

You and your Team must find the most cost-effective residential options within NorthernBridges' provider network. Your Team must authorize all residential services. Also, Medicaid funds may not be used for the room-and-board portion of the residential facility's cost. Your Team will help you find a setting where you can afford the room-and-board costs, or help you find other funding for the room and board, if possible. For these reasons, it is very important that you do not select a residential provider on your own. You must work with your Team on these decisions to make sure NorthernBridges will be able to pay for these services.



Does Medicare, regular Medicaid or any other insurance pay for any services?

NorthernBridges expects that members who have Medicare Parts A and/or B will use this insurance benefit. When a member has Medicare, there is a federal rule that requires Medicare must be billed first. Private insurance and Medicaid would be billed next and may pay for services that are not in the Family Care benefit. Your regular Medicaid (Forward Card) pays for services that are normally covered by Wisconsin Medicaid and not covered under the Family Care benefit package. Always carry your Medicaid (Forward Card), Medicare, and/or private insurance cards and use them for services covered under those plans.

NorthernBridges expects members who have Medicare Parts A and/or B to give service providers that information so they can bill Medicare first for services that Medicare covers. If you have Medicare and choose not to use your Medicare benefits, NorthernBridges may refuse to pay for those services that would otherwise be covered by Medicare. If you do not now have Medicare because of its cost, your Team may be able to find a program that will help pay for Medicare premiums.



How are my other benefits coordinated?

When you enroll in NorthernBridges, you will be asked whether you have insurance coverage other than Medicare and/or Medicaid. Examples of other insurance are medication coverage, homeowners' insurance, workers' compensation and pension plan health coverage, and private health insurance. It is important that you give us this information because we are legally responsible for coordinating claim payments with other insurance you have. It is also important you tell us if you receive a payment from an insurance company, since you may have to reimburse NorthernBridges. How you handle any insurance payment to you may affect your eligibility for the NorthernBridges' Family Care program.

Will I be required to contribute to the cost of my services?

Some people in the NorthernBridges' Family Care program may have a monthly cost share. Your cost share is based on your income and eligibility for Medicaid. Your county Economic Support worker determines your cost share. If you have a cost share, each month you will receive a bill from NorthernBridges. You must pay your cost share to NorthernBridges each month to remain eligible for Medicaid and Family Care.

The amount of your cost share will be looked at once a year, or anytime your income changes. You are required to report all income and asset changes to your Team and the county Economic Support worker within 10 days of the change. If you do not pay your cost share, you will no longer be eligible for services from NorthernBridges. Please note that your cost share and your room-and-board expenses at a residential facility are two different things. It is possible that you may have both a monthly cost share and room-and-board expenses.

You may call the following numbers to contact your local Economic Support/Income Maintenance worker:

Ashland County	(715) 682-7004
Barron County	(715) 537-5691
Bayfield County	(715) 373-6144
Burnett County	(715) 349-7600
Douglas County	(715) 392-7800
Iron County	(715) 561-3636
Polk County	(715) 485-8400
Price County	(715) 339-2158
Rusk County	(715) 532-2299
Sawyer County	(715) 634-4806
Washburn County	(715) 468-4747



How do I make a payment?

Payments can be made by check, money order or electronic funds transfer.

Make checks/money orders out to: NorthernBridges.

Mail to: NorthernBridges

P.O. Box 918

15954 Rivers Edge Drive, Suite 300

Hayward, WI 54843

If you would like to pay electronically, please ask your NorthernBridges' care manager for an electronic funds transfer (EFT) form.

What happens if I get a bill?

Members do not have to pay for services that are authorized by NorthernBridges.

If you receive a bill, contact your Team.



What should I do in case of emergency?

If you think you need emergency care, call 911. Follow-up services are sometimes needed after a medical emergency. Please let your Team know about any needed follow-up services after getting emergency care. If you experience a non-medical emergency at any time day or night, you may call your Team's Hub office. The number is listed in the back of this handbook and on the phone numbers card in your folder.

How do I receive services after regular business hours?

In an emergency, you should always get care immediately. You do not need to ask your Team for authorization first in an emergency. Dial 911 for help by phone or go to the nearest emergency room, hospital, or urgent care center.

If you require authorization of services when NorthernBridges' offices are closed and it is not a medical emergency, call your Team's Hub office number listed in the back of this handbook and on the phone numbers card in your folder. You can talk with on-call Team staff on evenings, weekends, or holidays for an urgent service that needs authorization.



What are my rights as a member of NorthernBridges?

As a NorthernBridges member, you have the right:

1. To participate in planning and evaluating your services including:
 - Planning and evaluating your own treatment and services
 - Choosing any other people you want to participate in planning your services
 - Making service plan decisions using objective criteria
2. To choose to enroll in NorthernBridges, if eligible, and to disenroll from the NorthernBridges Family Care program at any time for any reason.
3. To be free from unlawful discrimination in applying for or receiving the Family Care benefit.
4. To receive prompt eligibility, entitlement, and cost-sharing decisions and assistance.
5. To receive information regarding all services and supports potentially available to a member through the Family Care benefit.


6. To choose services and providers including:


- For “critical personal services,” to choose any qualified provider who will accept a rate NorthernBridges is willing to pay and meets other NorthernBridges’ requirements and standards. “Critical personal services” are services that involve intimate personal needs involving personal care, home health, private-duty nursing or supportive home care and a provider who is in your home frequently.
- For other services, to choose from the providers within the NorthernBridges network and to request consideration for providers to be added to the network.
- To have a family member, relative, or friend paid to provide a service approved by the Team if the family member, relative, or friend accepts the NorthernBridges’ rate and requirement standards.
- To choose providers outside the NorthernBridges’ network if the network does not have providers with the specialized knowledge needed to treat your condition or meet your specific needs.

7. To receive the services identified in the individualized service plan including:

- An objective, individualized assessment to determine your needs and help you identify your own long-term care needs and personal goals or outcomes.
- A service plan tailored to meet your unique needs, circumstances, and preferences as determined by the assessment.
- Services and supports from qualified providers that are prompt and appropriate for meeting your individual needs and, as much as possible, preserve your health, safety and well being, and keep you free from abuse and neglect.

8. To accuracy and privacy of any information NorthernBridges may have about you. You also have the right to get this information upon request. NorthernBridges must follow the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) to assure your health information remains confidential.

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9. To personal autonomy and other civil and legal rights including being able to:
 - Make your own choices and decisions to the extent that you are able, and to be supported in decision-making in a manner that maximizes your ability and autonomy.
 - Manage and control your own services to the extent you are willing and able.
 - Receive treatments/services in the least restrictive conditions consistent with your service plan and outcomes.
 - Live in the setting you choose unless there are essential health or long-term support needs that cannot reasonably be met in such a setting, or the preferred setting includes a package of services that is more than you need.
 - Develop an advance directive, such as a durable power of attorney for healthcare or a living will.
 - Fully exercise your rights as a NorthernBridges' member and any other civil and legal rights to which you are entitled.
 - Identify, eliminate or monitor, and manage situations where a conflict of interest may exist due to a person or entity having an interest in, or the potential to benefit from, a particular decision, outcome or expenditure.
 10. To dignity, respect, fair and equitable treatment, and to be free from discrimination.
 11. To request and obtain information on the results of member surveys, contact the Quality Manager for NorthernBridges at (715) 934-2266, toll free 1-866-306-6499, or TTY 1-800-947-3529.
 12. To receive services from culturally competent providers and to information about the specific capacities of providers, such as languages spoken by staff, or adherence to a particular set of religious customs.


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13. To request a private room in residential services and to have the procedures explained regarding the authorization of private rooms and the procedure if a private room is not immediately available.
 14. To assistance and support in understanding your rights and resolving complaints, grievances, and appeals, including assistance from:
 - Your Team and other service providers.
 - The NorthernBridges' Member Advocate at toll free 1-866-306-6499, TTY 1-800-947-3529, or email at madvocate@northernbridges.net.
 - An external advocate not associated with NorthernBridges or its providers such as a Disability Benefits Specialist or Elderly Benefit Specialist.
 15. To use all available rights and grievance and appeal processes beyond those specified in the Family Care benefit such as your rights as a resident of a nursing home or a community-based residential facility.




What are my responsibilities as a member of NorthernBridges?

The services of NorthernBridges depend upon your involvement and/or your caregivers. Along with the rights you have when you enroll in NorthernBridges, you also have some responsibilities which include the following:

1. To provide the staff with correct information regarding your health care needs, finances, and preferences.
2. To sign a “release-of-information” form so that we can obtain information you might not readily have available.
3. To participate in the initial and ongoing development of your plan of care.
4. To use the providers or agencies that are part of NorthernBridges, unless you and your Team decide otherwise.
5. To comply with emergency care service procedures.
6. To report in a timely manner any changes in your personal health (including hospital stays) that might affect your need for services or functional eligibility.
7. To report in a timely manner any changes in your financial status that might affect your eligibility.

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8. To notify us if you move to a new address or change your telephone number.
 9. To notify us of any planned move out of the service area or a temporary absence.
 10. To work cooperatively and respectfully with staff and caregivers who are helping you achieve your outcomes and to accept services without regard for the provider's race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or national origin.
 11. To use your Medicare benefits, when appropriate.
 12. To become familiar with the information in this handbook including your rights, and the rules you must follow when enrolled in NorthernBridges.
 13. To talk with your Team if you have any questions and to give your Team information they need to help you achieve the results you want from your care and supports.
 14. To work with your Team to develop and follow a service plan that will meet your needs in a cost-effective manner.
 15. To take care of any durable medical equipment (DME), such as wheelchairs, and hospital beds provided to you by NorthernBridges.

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16. To pay any monthly costs on time, including any room-and-board charges you may have.
 17. To let NorthernBridges know as soon as possible when you have questions, suggestions or if you have problems with your payment.
 18. To report fraud or abuse on the part of providers or NorthernBridges' employees.
 19. To not engage in any fraudulent activity or abuse benefits. These may include:
 - Misrepresenting your level of disability
 - Misrepresenting income and asset level
 - Misrepresenting residency
 - Selling medical equipment supplied through Family Care


The member is advised that fraudulent activity may result in disenrollment in Family Care or possible criminal prosecution.

What does “abuse” or “neglect” mean?

NorthernBridges’ members have the right to be free from abuse and neglect. It is important to be clear about the definitions of abuse and neglect. It is also important that you know what to do if you are experiencing or witnessing abuse and neglect of a vulnerable adult.

Abuse can be:

- Physical--it does not matter whether the abuse is intentional or reckless, but that the action of one person results in physical pain or injury, illness, or any impairment of physical condition to another person.
- Emotional--including language or behavior that serves no legitimate purpose and is intended to be intimidating, humiliating, threatening, frightening, or otherwise harassing, and that does or reasonably could intimidate, humiliate, threaten, frighten, or otherwise harass the person to whom the behavior or language is directed.
- Sexual--defined as a violation of criminal assault law. It usually involves a sexual activity that is not agreed to by both people involved and/or causes physical or emotional injury.
- Any treatment that is not agreed to and forced upon a person, such as: the administration of medication to an individual who has not provided informed consent, or the performance of psychosurgery, electroconvulsive therapy, or experimental research on an individual who has not provided informed consent, or with the knowledge that no lawful authority exists for the administration or performance.

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- Unreasonable confinement or restraint, such as: the intentional and unreasonable confinement of a person in a locked room, involuntarily removing a person from his or her living area, putting a restraining device on a person, or making a person take unnecessary or excessive medication. There are very rare exceptions when the use of these methods is allowed because all other methods have failed, but any use of these methods or devices must be applied according to state and federal standards governing confinement and restraint.

Neglect can be:

- Intentional or unintentional, but it is the failure of a caregiver to secure or maintain adequate care, services, or supervision for a person in their care. This includes food, clothing, shelter, or physical or mental health care, and the result of the neglect creates significant risk or danger to the person's physical or mental health. Neglect does not include a decision that is made to not seek medical care for an individual, if that decision is consistent with the individual's previously executed declaration such as a do-not-resuscitate order, a power of attorney for health care, or as otherwise authorized by law. Self-neglect means that a person who is responsible for his or her own care does not obtain adequate care, including food, shelter, clothing, or medical or dental care. The inability to obtain care results in a significant danger to the person's physical or mental health.



How can I discuss or report abuse or neglect?

Your NorthernBridges' Team is available to talk with you about issues that you feel may be abuse or neglect. They will help you with reporting or securing services for safety.

You should always call 911 in an emergency for immediate assistance. Your county Health and Human Services Department offers Adult Protective Services which are provided to people with developmental disabilities, degenerative brain disorder, serious and persistent mental illness, or other similar incapacity to keep the individual safe from abuse, neglect, or misappropriation of property or prevent the individual from experiencing deterioration or from inflicting harm on himself or herself or another person.

You may call the following numbers to report incidents of witnessed or suspected abuse:

Ashland Co. Health/Human Services Dept.

Daytime Hours: 7:30 - 5:00

Daytime Phone: (715) 682-7004

After Hours Phone: (715) 682-7023

Barron Co. Dept. of Health & Human Services

Daytime Hours: 8:00 - 4:30

Daytime Phone: (715) 537-5691

After Hours Phone: Same

Bayfield Co. Dept of Human Services

Hours: 24 Hours

Phone: (715) 373-6144



Burnett Co. Health & Human Services Dept.

Daytime Hours: 8:30 - 4:30

Daytime Phone: (715) 349-7600

After Hours Phone: N/A

Douglas Co. Dept. Health & Human Services

Daytime Hours: 8:00 - 4:30

Daytime Phone: (715) 395-1304

After Hours Phone: (715) 395-1371

Iron Co. Human Service Dept.

Daytime Hours: 8:00 - 4:00

Daytime Phone: (715) 561-3636

After Hours Phone: (715) 561-3800 or 911

Polk Co. Human Services Dept.

Daytime Hours: 8:30 - 4:30

Daytime Phone: (715) 485-8400

After Hours Phone: (715) 485-3131

Price Co. Aging Unit

Daytime Hours: 8:00 - 4:30

Daytime Phone: (715) 339-3943

After Hours Phone: (715) 428-2814

Rusk Co. Dept. of Health & Human Services

Daytime Hours: 8:00 - 4:30

Daytime Phone: (715) 532-2299

After Hours Phone: (715) 532-7089


Sawyer Co. Health & Human Services Dept.

Daytime Hours: 8:00 - 5:30

Daytime Phone: (715) 634-4806

TOLL FREE: 1-800-569-4162

After Hours Phone: (715) 634-5213 or 911



Washburn Co. Health & Human Services Dept
Daytime Hours: 8:00 - 12:00 -- 1:00 - 4:30
Daytime Phone: (715) 468-4747
After Hours Phone: (715) 468-4720

The Crisis Hotline or Agency has staff available 24 hours per day to discuss issues of domestic violence and provide support services. You may call the following numbers at any time 24 hours per day:

Ashland County (715) 682-9565 1-800-924-4132
Northwoods Women Inc./New Day Shelter--Domestic Abuse Services

Barron County 1-888-552-6642
Department of Health and Human Services Domestic Abuse Program

Bayfield County 1-800-649-2921
CASDA—Bayfield County Outreach--Domestic Abuse Services

Burnett County (715) 349-7272 1-800-261-7233
Community Referral Agency, Inc., Burnett County Outreach--Domestic Abuse Services

Douglas County 1-800-649-2921 *CASDA--Domestic Abuse Services*
Human Development Center 1-800-924-0772

Iron County (906) 932-0310 1-800-711-6744
DOVE--Domestic Abuse Services

Polk County 1-800-261-7233
Community Referral Agency, Inc.--Domestic Abuse Services

Price County 1-800-924-0556

Time-Out Price Co. Outreach--Domestic Abuse Services

Rusk County (715) 532-7089 1-800-924-0556

Time Out Family Abuse Shelter--Domestic Abuse Services

Sawyer County 1-877-552-7474

Oakwood Haven Program & Shelter--Domestic Abuse Services

Washburn County 1-800-924-0556

Time-Out Washburn County Outreach--Domestic Abuse Services

You may also go to the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence website at: www.wcadv.org for more information.

What if I am not satisfied with my services?

NorthernBridges is always looking for ways to improve services we provide to our members. We encourage you to work with us to resolve your concerns. You have many ways to get help if you do not agree with NorthernBridges or if you have a problem with our services. If you are not satisfied with your care or treatment, you should talk with your Team first.

If you do not want to talk with your Team, you can call our Member Advocate toll free at 1-866-306-6499, TTY 1-800-947-3529, or email madvocate@northernbridges.net

The Member Advocate can help you write a grievance or appeal.

What is an appeal?

An appeal is when NorthernBridges takes an “action” and you request a review of our action. An action is when NorthernBridges:

- Denies or limits a service that you request.
- Reduces, suspends or terminates a service that you are receiving.
- Denies payment for a service in whole or in part.
- Does not provide services or items included in your service plan in a timely manner.
- Fails to resolve your grievance or appeal within the timeframes in this handbook.
- Develops a service plan that is not acceptable to you because:
 - a. The plan requires you to live in a place where you don’t want to live
 - b. The plan does not provide care, treatment, or support to meet your needs
 - c. The plan requires you to accept care, treatment, or support items that are unnecessarily restrictive or you do not want

NorthernBridges will notify you in writing when it takes an “action” as described above.

What is a grievance?


A grievance is when you are not satisfied with NorthernBridges and it is not because of an action. Grievances might include:

- Quality of care or services
- Rudeness of a provider or employee
- Failure to respect your rights

How do I file an appeal or grievance?

You, or with your permission, your legal representative or a provider involved in your care have the right to file a grievance or appeal with NorthernBridges, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), or to request a State Fair Hearing anytime you are concerned or dissatisfied with the care or services you have received from NorthernBridges. You can file a grievance or appeal at any time if you are not satisfied with your services. You must submit a grievance or appeal no more than 45 days after you receive a Notice of Action from Northern Bridges. You can request an expedited resolution of an appeal if you feel that your health or life is in jeopardy as a result of the action, and NorthernBridges has three (3) working days to offer a resolution.

A grievance can be filed orally or in writing. An appeal can be filed orally, but must be followed by a written appeal unless you are requesting an expedited resolution. You can contact the NorthernBridges' Member Advocate for additional information and/or assistance about the process for filing an appeal or grievance. The Member Advocate can be reached toll free at 1-866-306-6499 or TTY 1-800-947-3529 or by email at madvocate@northernbridges.net



You can file a grievance or appeal with the NorthernBridges' Appeal and Grievance Committee and, if you don't agree with the decision, you can still file a grievance or appeal with DHS or request a State Fair Hearing. At any time, you can also file directly with DHS or request a State Fair Hearing.


The contact information for these agencies is:

NorthernBridges – You or your representative can contact the NorthernBridges' Member Advocate toll free at 1-866-306-6499 or TTY 1-800-947-3529 or by email at madvocate@northernbridges.net You can also send a grievance or appeal letter to:

NorthernBridges
Member Advocate
15954 Rivers Edge Drive, Suite 300
Hayward, WI 54843

Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) – You or your representative can request a DHS review of an appeal or grievance by contacting DHS in writing, by telephone, or by e-mail:

DHS Family Care Grievances
c/o MetaStar
2909 Landmark Place
Madison, WI 53713
Toll Free 1-888-203-8338
Fax (608) 274-8340
E-mail dhsfamcare@wisconsin.gov



State Fair Hearing – You or your representative can request a State Fair Hearing with the Division of Hearings and Appeals, which has its own guidelines. You or your legal representative can file for a State Fair Hearing by sending your request in writing to:

Family Care Request for Fair Hearing
c/o DOA Division of Hearings and Appeals
PO Box 7875
Madison, WI 53707-7875
Phone (608) 266-3096
TTY (608) 264-9853
Fax (608) 264-9885



What is the appeal and grievance resolution process?


For grievances and appeals submitted to NorthernBridges, our Member Advocate will talk with you about the grievance or appeal. Your designated family member or an authorized representative may participate in the grievance and appeal process. The NorthernBridges' Grievance and Appeal Committee will review and resolve appeals and grievances that are brought before it. You or your representative will be notified of the committee review and may present additional information or appear before the committee. The NorthernBridges' Member Advocate can assist with making these arrangements and can be reached toll free at 1-866-306-6499 or TTY 1-800-947-3529 or email madvocate@northernbridges.net

The Grievance and Appeal Committee will give you a decision no later than twenty (20) days after we receive your appeal or grievance. We will keep your grievance or appeal private. NorthernBridges will not take punitive action against you, your representative, or your provider for filing an appeal or grievance.

NorthernBridges will continue your current services until a decision is made about your appeal or grievance under the following conditions:

- You file the grievance or appeal before the date of intended action or within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the written Notice of Action from NorthernBridges
- AND the current level of services was authorized by your Team
- AND you request your services to continue by contacting your Team or the Member Advocate

Your Records – You can receive copies of your records that are important to a grievance or appeal, DHS review, or State Fair Hearing. These copies are free of charge. Your Team or the NorthernBridges' Member Advocate can help with getting your records.



Resolution Timeframes – If you receive a Notice of Action, you must submit your appeal no later than forty-five (45) days after receiving the Notice. NorthernBridges will acknowledge in writing the receipt of your appeal or grievance within five (5) working days and the NorthernBridges’ Grievance and Appeal Committee will decide on your appeal or grievance within twenty (20) working days of receiving the appeal or grievance.

In some cases, we may need more than twenty (20) days to resolve your concern. If we need more time, we will let you know in writing. If you or your representative determines that taking twenty (20) days to decide could seriously jeopardize your health or ability to maintain or regain maximum function, you can request an expedited resolution. In an expedited review, NorthernBridges will decide on your grievance or appeal within three (3) working days of receiving the grievance or appeal.

If the Grievance and Appeal Committee, DHS, or State Hearing decision about your appeal or grievance upholds NorthernBridges’ denial of services and you have continued to receive those services during the appeal process, you will be required to pay for the cost of those services.

For help in submitting a grievance or appeal, please call NorthernBridges’ Member Advocate toll free at 1-866-306-6499 or TTY 1-800-947-3529 or email madvocate@northernbridges.net



Where can I get advocacy services?

The NorthernBridges' Member Advocate can assist you with any aspect of understanding your grievance and appeal options and how to proceed with those options. If you want independent help with your grievance or appeal, you can contact an agency that provides advocacy services. Your county Elderly and Disability Benefit Specialist, ADRCs, and the following agencies are available for assistance:

- Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW) 1-800-928-8778
TTY/Textnet 1-888-758-6049
DRW Ombudsman services for ages 18-59 (715) 736-1232
Toll-free: 1-877-338-3724
- Board on Aging and Long-Term Care ombudsman services for ages 60 and over: 1-800-815-0015
- North Country Independent Living 1-800-924-1220
- Wisconsin Board on Aging and Long Term Care 1-800-815-0015
- Legal Action of Wisconsin 1-800-362-3904
- Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups 1-800-488-2596

How is NorthernBridges doing?

Our goal is to support the outcomes you want to achieve. A key feature of the NorthernBridges' Family Care program is member involvement. You can play an important role by telling us how we are doing. From time to time, you may be asked to participate in interviews or satisfaction surveys. These interviews and surveys help us make sure that you are getting the services you need from your Team and other service providers. Your responses and comments help us to identify our strengths, as well as the areas we need to improve. We may also ask you to participate in the following ways:

- To serve on NorthernBridges' committees or boards where your opinion or advice will help the program better meet member needs.
- To serve on committees that evaluate NorthernBridges or the contracted providers in the areas of quality or ethics.
- To participate in health education and prevention programs.
- To provide input into NorthernBridges' policies and services.

Your involvement will help us provide quality care to all NorthernBridges' members. If you would like to know the results of any surveys, please contact the NorthernBridges Quality Manager at (715) 934-2266, toll free 1-866-306-6499, or TTY 1-800-947-3529 and we would be happy to share that information with you. NorthernBridges has a comprehensive Quality Management program that protects, maintains, and improves the quality of care provided to its members. You may request information from NorthernBridges about our Quality Management program. You can also call or write to us at any time with helpful comments, questions, or observations. Your comments are always welcome, whether it is about something you like or dislike about NorthernBridges.



Will I be subject to estate recovery?

If you are already on Medicaid, or a member of NorthernBridges receiving long-term care services, the estate recovery rules apply to you.

Through estate recovery, the state seeks to be paid back for the cost of your services. Recovery is made from your estate or your spouse's estate after both of you have died. The money recovered goes back to the state to be used for services and others in need.

NorthernBridges' members age fifty-five (55) or older may have all of their costs of care recovered. Recovery is made by filing a claim(s) on an estate. The state will not try to be paid back from your estate when your spouse or child with a disability is still alive. Recovery will happen after their death.

If you choose to receive the Medicaid Hospice benefit, note that both the Family Care and the Hospice Medicaid benefit are recoverable under estate recovery. You will receive a notice and you may ask the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) for information or counseling on this particular estate recovery matter. Your county Economic Support worker will let you know if any of the rules of estate recovery change at any time while you are a member of NorthernBridges. You can disenroll from the NorthernBridges' Family Care program for any reason, such as a change to estate recovery rules.

How do I contact NorthernBridges?

All offices are open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Main Office

15954 Rivers Edge Drive, Suite 300
Hayward, WI 54843
(715) 934-2266
Toll Free 1-866-306-6499

TTY 1-800-947-3529
VOICE - 1-800-947-6644
SPANISH - 1-800-833-7637
SPEECH to SPEECH - 1-800-833-7637

Email: info@northernbridges.net
Website: www.northernbridges.com

Hub Office – Superior

3631 Tower Avenue
Superior, WI 54880
(715) 392-2288
Toll Free 1-800-947-3529

Hub Office – Rice Lake

2900 College Drive
Rice Lake, WI 54868
(715) 234-1050
Toll Free 1-866-994-7484

Hub Office – Spooner

514 Service Road
Spooner, WI 54801
(715) 635-3122
Toll Free 1-877-635-3122

Hub Office - Ashland

400 3rd Avenue W
Ashland, WI 54806
(715) 682-1024
Toll Free 1-877-434-1025

Hub Office - Centuria

1001 State Hwy. 35
Centuria, WI 54824
(715) 646-1477
Toll Free 1-866-751-3147

Member Advocate

Toll Free 1-866-306-6499
TTY: 1-800-947-3529
Email: madvocate@northernbridges.net

Hub Office – Ladysmith

1500 Port Arthur Road
Ladysmith, WI 54848
(715) 532-3040
Toll Free 1-866-532-6534

Hub Office - Hayward

15735 US Hwy. 63
Hayward, WI 54843
(715) 934-2282
Toll Free 1-877-934-2282

Hub Office - Park Falls

898 B
44th Avenue South
Park Falls, WI 54552

How do I call my Team at the Hub Office?

Use this number 24 hours per day to call your Team or on-call Team staff.

