



FH
[REDACTED]

**STATE OF WISCONSIN
Division of Hearings and Appeals**

In the Matter of

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

DECISION

CWA/149784

PRELIMINARY RECITALS

Pursuant to a petition filed May 31, 2013, under Wis. Admin. Code, §HA 3.03, to review a decision by the Include, Respect, I Self-Direct (IRIS) program to discontinue services, a hearing was held on August 22, 2013, by telephone. A hearing set for July 23, 2013 was rescheduled at the petitioner's request.

The issue for determination is whether petitioner continues to meet the level of care requirement for IRIS.

PARTIES IN INTEREST:

Petitioner:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Respondent:

Department of Health Services
1 West Wilson Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

By: Jill Speer
IRIS Consultant Agency
1 S. Pinckney St., Suite 320
Madison, WI 53703-2887

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE:

Brian C. Schneider
Division of Hearings and Appeals

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Petitioner (CARES # [REDACTED]) is a 62-year-old resident of Monroe County.
2. Petitioner has been eligible for services under the IRIS program. A reassessment was done in May, 2013. Following the reassessment, the program notified petitioner by a letter dated May 6, 2013 that IRIS would end because he no longer met the level of care requirement.
3. Petitioner's primary impairment is obesity and illnesses related to obesity such as apnea, back pain, high cholesterol, hyperlipidemia, and fatigue. He also has recurring problem with bowel control, but is able to clean himself when he has accidents.

4. At the reassessment it was reported that petitioner is independent with activities of daily living except for washing his back and putting on shoes and socks. His condition has improved since losing approximately 28 pounds. He is independent in instrumental activities of daily living, including having set up a medication management system with his wife. He is his wife's supportive home care caregiver.

DISCUSSION

The IRIS program was developed pursuant to a Medical Assistance waiver obtained by the State of Wisconsin, pursuant to section 6087 of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA), and section 1915(j) of the Social Security Act. It is a self-directed personal care program.

The federal government has promulgated 42 C.F.R. §441.450 - .484 to provide general guidance for this program. Those regulations require that the Department's agent must assess the participant's needs and preferences (including health status) as a condition of IRIS participation. *Id.*, §441.466. The Department's agent must also develop a service plan based on the assessed needs. Further, "all of the State's applicable policies and procedures associated with service plan development must be carried out ..." *Id.* §441.468.

An IRIS participant must be elderly, or an adult with physical or developmental disabilities. See IRIS General Information at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/bdds/IRIS/general.htm. The physical disabilities must be such that the person requires a level of care equal to the level of a nursing home. DHS Medicaid Eligibility Handbook, §37.1.3. To qualify for a nursing home level of care a person must have a long-term care condition expected to last at least one year. See Overview of the Long Term Care Functional Screen, §1.2, found at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/lcicare/FunctionalScreen/WebCT/instructions1.htm.

IRIS plans of care are updated when a participant requests a change in the plan. See IRIS Program Policies found at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/bdds/IRIS/IRISPolicySummary.pdf. The plans also are updated at least on a yearly basis.

The Department has developed a computerized functional assessment screening system. The system relies upon a face-to-face interview with a quality assurance screener who has at least a bachelor of science degree in a health or human services related field, with at least one year of experience working with the target populations (or, if not, an individual otherwise specifically approved by the Department based upon like combination of education and experience). The screener asks the applicant, or a recipient at a periodic review, questions about his or her medical conditions, needs, cares, skills, activities of daily living, and utilization of professional medical providers to meet these needs. The assessor then submits the Functional Screen Report for the person to the Department's Division of Disability and Elder Services. The Department enters the Long Term Functional Screen data into a computer program to see if the person meets any of the required levels of care.

If the assessor enters information into the functional screen correctly, then it is assumed that the computer will accurately determine the level of care. In this case, I find that the screen was completed correctly.

In response to the agency's explanation of why petitioner no longer met the functional screen he talked exclusively about his difficult physical condition, in particular his lack of bowel control. His physical impairments are unquestioned, however. The level of care is a test of what assistance he needs with his daily activities and whether he would require institutionalization now. Right now petitioner is functioning with almost complete independence except for needing some help with bathing and dressing. Both of those needs were included in the assessment and he still did not pass the functional screen for IRIS eligibility.

The only service received by petitioner through IRIS was a health club membership, and that fact alone supports the finding that petitioner does not require regular care such as would be provided in a nursing home. I suspect that the membership might be covered by another program for which petitioner is eligible. The Family Care non-nursing home program was suggested as a possibility.

I conclude that the determination by the agency was correct. It does not mean that petitioner cannot receive IRIS again; if circumstances change he can always apply again.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The agency correctly determined that petitioner does not meet the functional requirement for IRIS eligibility.

THEREFORE, it is

ORDERED

That the petition for review herein be and the same is hereby dismissed.

REQUEST FOR A REHEARING

This is a final administrative decision. If you think this decision is based on a serious mistake in the facts or the law, you may request a rehearing. You may also ask for a rehearing if you have found new evidence which would change the decision. Your request must explain what mistake the Administrative Law Judge made and why it is important or you must describe your new evidence and tell why you did not have it at your first hearing. If you do not explain these things, your request will have to be denied.

To ask for a rehearing, send a written request to the Division of Hearings and Appeals, P.O. Box 7875, Madison, WI 53707-7875. Send a copy of your request to the other people named in this decision as "PARTIES IN INTEREST." Your request for a rehearing must be received no later than 20 days after the date of the decision. Late requests cannot be granted.

The process for asking for a rehearing is in Wis. Stat. § 227.49. A copy of the statutes can be found at your local library or courthouse.

APPEAL TO COURT

You may also appeal this decision to Circuit Court in the county where you live. Appeals must be served and filed with the appropriate court no more than 30 days after the date of this hearing decision (or 30 days after a denial of rehearing, if you ask for one).

For purposes of appeal to circuit court, the Respondent in this matter is the Department of Health Services. After filing the appeal with the appropriate court, it must be served on the Secretary of that Department, either personally or by certified mail. The address of the Department is: 1 West Wilson Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53703. A copy should also be sent to the Division of Hearings and Appeals, 5005 University Avenue, Suite 201, Madison, WI 53705-5400.

The appeal must also be served on the other "PARTIES IN INTEREST" named in this decision. The process for appeals to the Circuit Court is in Wis. Stat. §§ 227.52 and 227.53.

Given under my hand at the City of Madison,
Wisconsin, this 26th day of August, 2013

\sBrian C. Schneider
Administrative Law Judge
Division of Hearings and Appeals



State of Wisconsin \DIVISION OF HEARINGS AND APPEALS

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The preceding decision was sent to the following parties on August 26, 2013.

Bureau of Long-Term Support