



WAITE RUG GAZETTE

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Wisconsin Hospital Association Applauds State Legislature for Passing 'Next-of-Kin' Legislation, Sending Bill to Governor's Desk

Bipartisan Bill Will Ease Hospital Capacity Concerns and Improve Patient Access to Post-Acute Care

MADISON, Wis. — The Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) praises the Wisconsin State Legislature for passing Assembly Bill 598, commonly known as the “next-of-kin” bill, with strong bipartisan support in both chambers. The legislation now goes to Governor Tony Evers for his signature.

The Assembly passed the legislation 77-18 in mid-February, and the Senate followed with a 28-5 vote today, reflecting broad agreement across party lines that Wisconsin families deserve a better path forward when a loved one needs care. This legislation has been a key WHA priority for two legislative sessions.

“This is a significant step forward for patients and their families,” said WHA President and CEO Kyle O’Brien. “By creating a clear and practical pathway to identify a patient’s next-of-kin for care transition decisions, this legislation will help ensure patients can move more quickly to the most appropriate setting for their recovery, while also improving hospital capacity for those who need hospital care.”

This legislation addresses a longstanding challenge facing hospitals, patients and families across Wisconsin. Under current law, some incapacitated patients who no longer require hospital-level care can remain hospitalized for extended periods while guardianship decisions are resolved through the courts, due to the lack of a health care power of attorney. This delays access to needed post-acute services and contributes to capacity constraints within hospitals.

“Wisconsin’s hospitals are grateful to the Senators of both political parties who supported Assembly Bill 598 today,” said O’Brien. “The leadership of Senator Wimberger, Representatives Snyder and Subeck, and Governor Tony Evers has been critical to move this legislation forward. We applaud their tenacity and are grateful for their bipartisan partnership with WHA in advancing AB 598.”

AB 598 gives family members, including spouses, limited authority to help their incapacitated loved ones obtain prompt access to post-acute care without that court process, reducing unnecessary hospital stays, easing emergency department backlogs, and ensuring patients receive the right care in the right setting. Importantly, the legislation keeps intact the ability to seek guardianship for patients that need it, and preserves and expands important patient protections under the next-of-kin process.

According to the American Bar Association, at least 46 states have similar “next-of-kin” laws already on the books recognizing the importance of surrogate decision-making for patients without previously appointed health care decisionmakers.

5 Ways to Set Healthy Boundaries for Mental Wellbeing

“Set healthy boundaries.”

We hear that advice all the time, whether we're talking about screen time, work-life balance or relationships. But what does it mean? How do we set healthy boundaries?

In a world that constantly demands our time, energy and attention, setting healthy boundaries is essential for protecting our mental wellbeing. But many people don't know where to start, or even what “boundaries” means.

While it might sound like building walls around yourself, it's helpful to think of boundaries more like guardrails to protect your time, energy and wellbeing.

What Are Healthy Boundaries?

Boundaries are the limits and rules we set for ourselves in relationships, work and daily life. They define what we are comfortable with and how we expect others to treat us. These limits can be physical, emotional, mental or even digital.

Healthy boundaries are about creating space for yourself, not about shutting people out.

When you set boundaries, you give yourself permission to prioritize what matters most, reduce stress and burnout, and create space for healthier relationships — with your phone, the office or a loved one.

Why Are Boundaries Important for Mental Health?

Without boundaries, it's easy to become overwhelmed quickly. Constantly saying “yes” when you really mean “no” takes a lot of energy and time, leading to stress, anxiety and burnout.

But saying “no” doesn't sound like a good thing, does it? We want to be helpful and valued, and saying “no” might make us feel guilty or selfish. Still, too much people-pleasing is exhausting, and boundaries give you the space and capacity to be your best self.

Setting boundaries is important because helps you:

- Protect your mental and emotional energy.
- Build healthier, more respectful relationships.
- Improve self-esteem and confidence.
- Reduce stress and prevent burnout.

So, how do you set boundaries? How do you know when saying “no” is the right choice?

Here are five ways to set healthy boundaries, especially when learning to say “no” feels difficult.

1. Listen to Yourself

Unfortunately, there isn't a magic button that turns on boundaries for you. You have to listen to yourself and decide what you need.

Take some time to reflect on situations that have left you drained or uncomfortable. What happened in those moments? Would it have helped to set a boundary?

Establishing the boundaries you need starts with self-awareness. Ask yourself:

- What drains my energy?
- What makes me feel overwhelmed?
- What makes me feel healthy?

When you understand your limits — how much time you can give, how much work you can take on, what kind of communication feels respectful — you're far more equipped to speak up.

2. Practice Saying No Without Guilt

Saying “no” can feel uncomfortable. If you're used to always putting others first, it can feel selfish. But every time you say yes to something that drains you or crosses your limits, you're saying no to your own mental wellbeing.

Think about the safety presentation on an airplane. The flight attendants explain that, if the cabin loses pressure, you must secure your own oxygen mask before helping others. If you aren't taking care of your needs, you won't be able to take care of others.

Saying “no” is a skill, and like any skill, it becomes easier with practice. You might feel like you owe apologies or explanations, but a simple, firm and kind “no” is enough.

Try some of these phrases:

- “I can't take this on right now.”
- “I appreciate the invitation, but I have to pass.”
- “No, but thank you for thinking of me.”

Protecting your energy isn't a reason to feel guilty.

3. Communicate Your Boundaries Clearly

Just as you can't turn your boundaries on with a button, other people won't magically know what your limits are. You must communicate them.

Express them clearly. You don't need to over-explain or justify your needs.

Let's say your coworkers invite you to get together after work. While you enjoy spending time with them, maybe you're tired or just don't want to go. You don't need to apologize and make excuses to not join them.

Try: "I appreciate the invitation, but I have to pass."

When you communicate confidently, you're setting a healthy boundary.

4. Create Supportive Self-care Routines

Having healthy, balanced boundaries means setting them with yourself too. Creating habits that support your boundaries also supports [your self-care routine](#).

Here are some things to try:

- Silence your notifications after a certain time.
- Schedule daily downtime.
- Create space between work and home tasks.
- Block off focus time on your calendar.

Steady routines give you something to rely on consistently. Tough day at work? You already have dedicated "me-time" scheduled into your calendar. Phone won't stop blowing up? After 9 p.m., put it on silent.

Be consistent. Consistency in your self-care habits builds trust in yourself and your limits and helps you to communicate your boundaries to others. If you set a limit but don't follow through, you'll send mixed signals.

5. Practice Self-compassion

When setting boundaries, we may fear disappointing others. In fact, we may feel guilt or stress about our limits — and isn't that what we wanted to avoid in the first place?

Be patient with yourself. It's normal and healthy to take time to adjust when you start expressing your needs more openly. As you practice, setting boundaries will feel more natural and relationships will improve.

When guilt shows up, remind yourself that your worth is not measured by your availability. You can care about others without sacrificing yourself.

How Boundary-setting Supports Mental Wellbeing

Healthy boundaries are an important step to building mental wellbeing. They empower you to show up more fully and lead a more balanced life — at work, at home and in your relationships.

Healthy boundaries are especially important when talking about mental health or helping someone else through a tough moment.

In [Mental Health First Aid \(MHFA\) training](#), you learn to recognize and respond to signs of a mental health or substance use challenge and be the first line of support for someone else.

Mental Health First Aiders are neighbors, parents and friends. They're teachers, first responders and veterans. They could be your coworker or your classmate. Anyone who wants to make their community healthier and happier can be a First Aider.

MHFA training takes the fear and hesitation out of talking about mental health. We give people the tools to start these conversations, so more people can get stigma-free support. First Aiders are a vital link between someone facing a mental health or substance use challenge and the help they need.

Setting boundaries for yourself is an important piece of MHFA training is learning about setting boundaries for yourself — it feeds into creating your go-to self-care plan.

Boundaries and self-care are necessary for tough conversations and every day wellbeing.

Start this week: Begin with one small boundary. Stay consistent and notice how it feels. Over time, these small acts become a powerful practice of caring for your own wellbeing.

~ article from April article with Mental Health First Aid from National Council for Mental Wellbeing

Spring has sprung so let's exercise!

Why Exercise

As we age, staying active becomes a necessity for maintaining health, independence, and quality of life. Yet many aging adults struggle to keep moving, especially when managing chronic conditions. Something as simple and accessible as a daily walk can offer profound health benefits, making it a crucial habit for aging well.

General recommendations for exercise indicate that people should aim for 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercises weekly to help support health. For those over age 65, a daily walk can be a simple and beneficial option, especially if they live with chronic conditions affecting their mobility.

What are the benefits of walking

As we age, we may find it challenging to maintain regular physical activity. Reasons could include busy schedules, chronic health issues or mobility limitations.

However, a daily walk can provide exercise and many health advantages for aging adults.

Depending on your fitness level, walking for 30 minutes five days a week or longer periods over fewer days could have many health benefits.

Walking can help with weight management while supporting heart and brain health, reducing age-related disease risk, strengthening muscles, and boosting immunity and energy. It can also improve mental health, memory and decision making while lowering the risk of dementia, stroke, and cancer.

How walking affects your mental health

Walking is not only essential for your physical health, but it also improves your mood and mental well-being. Walking releases endorphins to reduce stress and anxiety, increases confidence and provides a sense of accomplishment. It also helps reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Another benefit is how walking everyday improves sleep quality and duration. Studies show that morning walkers are less likely to struggle with insomnia.

Lastly walking with friends, neighbors or groups promotes socialization. It provides accountability, safety and fun.

How do I make it easier to walk regularly

First and foremost, you should always consult your healthcare provider first to determine what type of exercise, including walking, you can safely participate in regularly.

Once your healthcare provider gives you approval to start your routine, start small. Begin with 5-10 minutes and gradually increase your time and pace. You can monitor your intensity with the "talk test" – you should be able to talk while walking, and if you can your pace is great. Staying safe is essential while starting a walking routine. Dress for the weather, stay hydrated and watch for hazards.

To build a sustainable walking habit, a person may start with manageable goals, such as walking 15 minutes daily or 30 minutes twice a week, then gradually increasing the goal over time. It may also help to walk at the same time each day and pair the activity with something enjoyable, like music or pleasurable reward afterward

How do I support my body while walking?

As we age, we may encounter mobility challenges which may hold us back for exercise, especially if you have a condition that can cause pain or affect our mobility.

That said there are some assistive devices that can help support your body while walking. These include:

- Canes or crutches: A cane or crutch may help if you experience pain on one side of your body that affects your ability to balance or walk.
- Walkers: These can offer extra stability if you feel shaky while standing or walking
- Footwear: Orthotics and supportive soles or inserts can help ease joint pressure and make walking more comfortable. If you have difficulty bending, you can use a shoehorn with a long handle when you put your shoes on.
- Back Braces: These can help support your back if you experience back pain.

The key is consistency rather than intensity. A daily 20-30-minute walk can add years to your life and life to your years. As we age, we often cannot control all aspects of our health, but we can control whether we take that daily walk. It's a simple decision with profound implication for how we age and the quality of life we maintain through our later years.

These walks will be monthly in May, June and July. Hope to see many of you on our walks at your buildings. It will be a fun way to connect with us and your neighbors. You are welcome to join us at any of the Housing Authority Buildings.

Other Nurses Notes:

The nurse's phone number is 920-424-1450 extension 124.

Nurse hours are Monday through Friday 8AM to 4PM. We cover all 6 of the housing authority buildings so please be patient with us. We do have a monthly nurse open hours at each building which are on a first come first serve basis. You do not need to wait for open hours. Call if you need us and we will see you anytime during our usual hours.

Sharps containers – As a reminder, sharps containers as now required to be able to drop them off at Mercy Medical Center so if you are using a detergent bottle stop using it and ask one of the nurse's or your social worker to get you a sharps container. Use the sharps container until it is full and turn it in to your social worker or nurse and we will get you a new one. Only put sharps in the container everything else can go in the garbage.

Expired medication or medications you no longer need - do not throw medication in the garbage or down the drain. Use the Drug Drop box at the Oshkosh Police Department. If you are unable to drop them off, you can give them to either your social worker or one of the nurses and we will get them over to the drug drop box.

Walk With The Housing Authority Nurses

May Dates and Locations:

Tuesday, May 12th:


- 12:30 to 1:00 PM: Marion Manor
- 1:30 to 2:00 PM: Court Tower
- 2:30 to 3:00 PM: Fox View

Tuesday, May 26

- 12:30 to 1:00 PM: Raulf Place
- 1:30 to 2:00 PM: Waite Rug
- 2:30 to 3:00 PM: Riverside

Join Us! **Public Health**
Winneshago County, WI

920-424-1450 extension 124



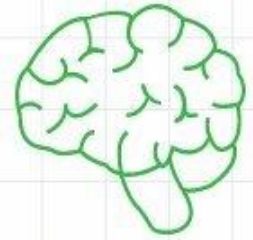
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9 benefits of walking on your health

- Stimulates creative thinking of **60%**
- Helps to sleep
- Makes us happier and cheerful 6 min / day = **+30%**
- Reduces stress, anxiety, tension and arterial pressure
- Helps to lose weight
"15 minutes burns about 56 calories"
- Gives energy
- Reduces diseases and injuries risks
- Control cravings
- Can extend life expectancy **3 to 7** years



Mental Health Awareness Month



Mental Health Awareness Month has been annually observed during May in the United States since 1949. It seeks to reduce stigma surrounding mental health and mental illnesses by educating the public. The color green is used to represent mental health and show support.



1 in 5 adults experience mental illness each year in the U.S.

[SAMHSA 2019](#)

Mental Health in a Pandemic

According to the [CDC](#), during late June 2020, 40% of U.S. adults reported struggling with mental health or substance use. Data from [Mental Health America](#) (MHA) shows that in comparison to 2019, the total number of screenings for anxiety and depression during 2020 increased 93% and 62% respectively.

"You Are Not Alone"

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is seeking to spread the message "You Are Not Alone" as part of its awareness campaign.

NAMI has collected data from organizations such as the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the CDC, to help promote education and awareness.

Visit <https://www.nami.org/mhstats> for more information.

May is National Bike Month

Bicycle commuting burns an average of **540 calories** per hour

A daily 4-mile bike commute will save about **66 gallons** of fuel per year

The average person loses **13 lbs** in the first year of commuting by bike

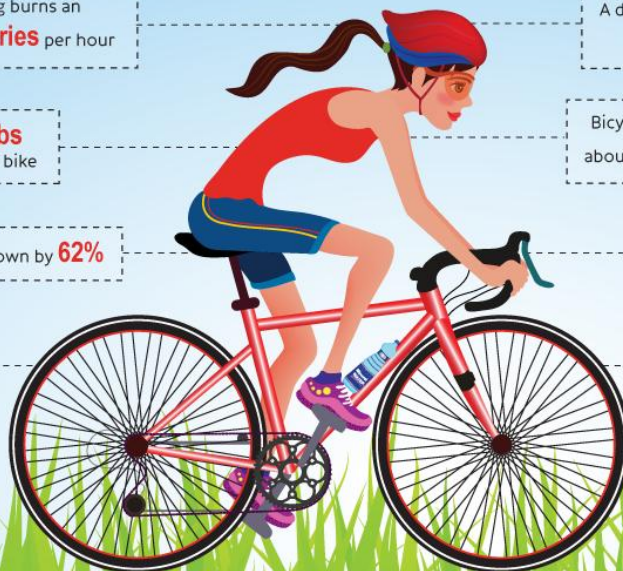
Bicycling at less than 10 miles per hour burns about **300 calories** for a 150-pound woman

Since 2000, bike commuting has grown by **62%**

83% of Americans say obesity is their No. 1 health concern

There were **864,883** bike commuters in 2012

Bicycling just 20 miles per week reduces women's risk of **heart disease by 50%**



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Increase to State Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Payments

Effective May 1, 2026, state SSI payments will be increasing 10% so it will be changing from \$83.78 to \$92.16 for an eligible individual. You automatically get state SSI when you are eligible for federal SSI. This is not to be confused with SSDI which is Social Security Disability Income which many people get if they had ever worked and then became disabled. Typically, you get SSI if you had little work experience or you were found disabled at a young age. There are some people that get Social Security, federal SSI and state SSI as well which often happens when someone does not make much from social security so they get a supplement to their income with SSI. If you ever want to understand what benefits you have, you can always stop in to talk to Erin.

Payees and Rent Changes

It is your responsibility to notify your payee when your rent is adjusted after your recertification. When you get your letter from Katie stating what your new rent amount is for the upcoming 12 months, please call your payee right away to let them know of the new amount. You can also come down to see Erin and she can help you get in contact with your payee as well.

No Open Containers in the Common Areas

Please when you exit your apartment, please make sure any drinks that you have are in a container with a cover on it as we have been finding a lot of spills in the hallways and common areas. If you do accidentally spill your drink, please be respectful and clean up after yourself.

No Visitor Parking in the Parking Lots

Make sure you are letting your caregivers and visitors know that they need to park on the street while they are here visiting you. Tenants with cars have been assigned a parking space in our parking lot. The disabled parking spots are not assigned to anyone so if your visitor has a disabled parking lanyard or disabled license plate, they can park in the disabled parking spots. The disabled parking spots are first come first serve. If someone parks in your parking spot, please let staff know so we can pursue getting the car ticketed and towed. It is also advisable to put a note under their windshield wiper letting them know that the parking lot is only for tenant parking.

Waite Rug Activity Calendar



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5 Bug Inspections (Apt 106 & 111-120) Erin off in the afternoon	6	7 Erin OFF	8 Erin OFF	9
10 Mother's Day	11	12	13	14	15 Peace Officers Memorial Day	16
17	18 7:00am OHA Board Meeting (Court Tower Theater Room)	19 2:30pm Nurse Open Hour (office)	20 10:30am Resident Meeting (theater)	21	22	23
24 Memorial Day	25 OFFICE CLOSED	26 1:30pm Walk with the Housing Nurses	27	28	29	30
31						