

# senior review

FREE

November 2025

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**November is Home Care/  
Hospice Care, Alzheimer's  
and Dementia Care Month**

A Senior Magazine for Living a Healthier, Smarter and More Active Life in Rock County



## Getting The Right Fit: Affordable Home Medical Equipment

by Mercyhealth

Home medical equipment may sound expensive, but Medicare and private insurance carriers can make it easier for Rock County residents to find affordable options with a prescription.

The first step is talking to your doctor, whether you need CPAP supplies, mobility aids, or even a hospital bed. Your provider can then write a prescription or send a referral directly to the Mercyhealth Mall in Janesville.

At the Mercyhealth Mall, trained staff can demonstrate different types of home medical equipment, then adjust each item to fit your height, weight and comfort needs. Technicians can also deliver the equipment to your home and provide instruction on its safe and proper use.

While some equipment may be cheaper online or through national retailers, buying locally ensures your equipment is adjusted to your specific needs. You'll also benefit from the personalized support of professionals who understand your needs.



Once you call the Mercyhealth Mall, the process moves quickly. Customer service representatives will work with you and your doctor to gather the necessary documentation to help determine if your equipment is covered by insurance or Medicare.

Your doctor may be asked to provide "face-to-face documentation" to confirm the medical need for the equipment. This information helps determine the correct size and type of equipment and will be reviewed by our staff, your insurance, or Medicare to help determine coverage eligibility. In some cases, our staff will need to obtain prior authorization before

the equipment can be provided.

While some customers choose to pay out-of-pocket, the Mercyhealth Mall team is always available to help you navigate the insurance process and find the most affordable solution.

For more information, call the Mercyhealth Mall at (608) 755-7989



## SMART *and* SWEET

White sugar can raise your risk for heart disease and cause your blood sugar to spike, then crash. But you don't need to go without! Instead, go natural with one of these four options - less fructose and more nutritional benefits.

**1. DATE SYRUP** Full of fiber, it also offers inflammation-fighting and mood-lifting health perks. Add a dash of it to ease up spicy dishes.

**2. MAPLE SYRUP** We're talking "100% pure organic" to score essential minerals like thyroid-boosting manganese. Add 1 to 2 tablespoons to balance out any bitterness in a vinegary salad dressing, and sub 3/4 cup for every cup of sugar when baking - just be sure to reduce other liquids by about a quarter too.

**3. COCONUT SUGAR** Sub in one cup of these caramel-colored crystals for one cup white sugar to whip up baked goods that promote a happy tum, courtesy of the good bacteria from coconut's star fiber, inulin.

**4. HONEY** It's heart-healthy antioxidant and antibacterial properties (which make it great for soothing soar throats) are destroyed by too much heat, so skip it in baked goods. Instead, use it in drinks and on fruit.



## .195 SECOND ...

That's how long it takes for you to think about whether that chocolate cake is healthy after your first thought, which is always about taste, according to a study in Psychological Science. Researchers say you can overcome your natural gimme impulse by waiting a second longer to weigh the pros and cons of that cake before throwing it down the hatch.



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- Resource & Referral



The Purple Tube Project assists families in providing important information to share with area first responders when there are concerns about Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. For more information about the FREE Purple Tube Project contact Karen Tennyson at the Aging and Disability Resource Center at 608-921-7165.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Caregiver Conversations; A Dinner Party

Tuesday, November 11th • 5:30-7:30pm

DWRC-1717 Center Ave, Janesville

Participate in a conversation about caregiving for someone with dementia.

Guest speaker: Martin Schreiber

### Memory Café

Monday, November 17th • 10:30am-12pm

Hedberg Public Library-Janesville

Learn the history of the Thanksgiving Holiday.

## SUPPORT GROUPS

### Janesville Evening Support Group

3rd Tuesday of each month 5:30-7pm  
Oak Park Place - 700 Myrtle Way, Janesville

### Sun Valley Support Group

2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month 1-3pm  
1650 Sun Valley Dr, Beloit

### Support Squad

Virtual Support Group  
Every Friday morning 9-10am



**For more information or to make an in-person consultation appointment, please contact  
Karen at 608/921-7165 or [karen.tennyson@co.rock.wi.us](mailto:karen.tennyson@co.rock.wi.us)**



# Remember to Give Thanks By Dave Olson, Realtor®, RE/MAX EXCEL

November brings “Pumpkin Spice everything” to the marketplace, and of course, that yearly feast of turkey and stuffing, cranberry sauce, green bean casserole, and our favorite, pumpkin pie.

As you gather this year, remember the true reason that we were supposed to gather. The entire purpose our forefathers set forth for this great feast was to give thanks for what this year’s harvest brought us. By God’s hand we are provided for, and in pilgrim times that was from the very hard work of the land and probably a lucky shot from the blunderbuss at a very wily wild turkey. In our time we mostly all work or worked jobs, saved and invested and reap the benefits of our hard work in far easier ways than our forefathers. We buy huge frozen butterball turkeys at the store and have modern kitchens with double ovens, microwaves, and air fryers, in which we create our own abundant feasts. Remember that even today, it is STILL by his hand that we are provided for, given our wealth or income and it is his goodness that gives us the luxury we live in and have prospered in.

Our forefathers would be stunned by the beautiful picture produced by that hi def flat screen TV. They’d marvel at the amazing sound coming from the stereo sound bar that we watch the Thanksgiving game on. They’d be amazed at our large warm homes, insulated and protected from the weather. Imagine the pilgrims’ first sight of our



puffy comfortable living room furniture we gather together on, or by modern comforts found in every home that never existed even among royalty in their time. They’d marvel at our nice clothes in a wide variety of styles and colors, sewn so perfectly, that cover, warm and protect us on cold gray November days.

Please remember just how very GOOD we all DO have it as you find time to gather this year. Laugh and enjoy your family and friends’ company,

togetherness, great food and drink and warm gathering places, entertaining times and cozy safe homes. Give great thanks for all of that too, maybe more so. Give thanks that we live in a free country, and even though it has much to be improved upon, here even people who disagree still can do so freely, protected by our laws and rights. In our bountiful country, we have been blessed beyond the imaginations of not just our forefathers, but even our own families who also lived in this abundant land a generation or two gone by. I can certainly say that my Norwegian and Swedish grandparents never had it as good as I do, and I dare say that all of you can say the very same thing about your families as well. Let’s never forget how much they gave to enrich us so very much.

I wish a most BLESSED and Happy Thanksgiving to all of you. I’m grateful and thankful for each of YOU.



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To learn more, call (608) 754-2201 or visit [mercyhealthsystem.org/hospice](https://mercyhealthsystem.org/hospice).





# Time to Review Your Medicare Plan

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team

Do you have a Medicare Prescription Drug (Part D) plan? Every year Medicare Part D plans can change the list of prescription medications they will cover. That means even if you are taking the same medications, the amount you pay for your medications may change in 2026! The plans' premiums, deductibles, and co-pays can also change each year.



the best plan for your medications, this is the time to make a switch to a Part D plan that will suit you better.

Make sure you will have appropriate prescription drug coverage in the new year. You can compare plans on the official Medicare website at [Medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov). Medicare beneficiaries in Dunn County can also receive free, unbiased assistance with plan comparisons from the Elder Benefit Specialist at the Dunn County ADRC.

Start preparing early this year. Don't let this opportunity pass you by! Go to [Medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) to compare plans online or for local assistance call the Dunn County ADRC at 715-232-4006.

If our appointments are full, you can get assistance through the following resources:

- 1-800-MEDICARE or [www.medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov)
- Medigap helpline 1-800-242-1060
- Disability Drug Helpline 1-800-926-4862 (if under age 60)
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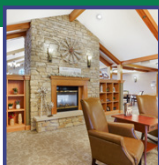
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SMPs are grant-funded projects of the federal U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL).

**Contact Senior Medicare Patrol**

**888-818-2611**

**[www.smpwi.org](http://www.smpwi.org)**

**WisconsinSeniorMedicarePatrol**



# The Many Faces of Caregiving

By Carl A. Trapani, MA, MS, LPC, Chippewa Manor Campus Chaplain

**W**e're all caregivers, whether we realize it or not. Caregiving isn't just a job or a title; it's part of being human. From the moment we enter this world, someone is caring for us — feeding us, teaching us, reminding us of where we left our shoes (and later in life, our glasses). At every age and stage, caregiving changes its shape, but it never disappears. It's the great circle of compassion that keeps families, communities, and friendships alive.



**Birth to Toddlers:** When we were infants, someone got up at 2 a.m. to feed us, rock us, change us, and do everything they could to maintain our comfort. It was non-stop caregiving 24/7 – 365 days a year. And let's be honest, with all our demands, we never said, "Thank you." Not even once!

**Children and Teens:** As we grew, parents, teachers, and neighbors cared for us by guiding, correcting, and occasionally grounding us. Our caregivers often said, "You'll thank me someday," and we thanklessly replied: "No, I won't!" But time passes, and the caring wisdom and skills of our caretakers has proven true. As we get older, we often wish we could thank them and tap into their well of wisdom.

**Adults:** In adulthood, caring transitions into a different perspective - taking care of others. We care for children, spouses, coworkers, and friends. We bring casseroles to the sick, mow an elderly neighbor's lawn, or listen to someone's worries over a cup of coffee. We no longer regard caregiving as "heroic sacrifice" but more like simply showing up and being available.

**The Elderly Years:** As we age, caregiving often comes full circle. We may find ourselves truly entering a "second childhood", depending on the kindness, patience, and care of others. It can be humbling to need help — but it's also beautiful to see love returned in new ways. One senior joked, "I used to call my daughter ten times a day to check on her while I was at work. Now she calls ten times a day to make sure I took my pills!"

## The Heart of the Matter

Caregiving isn't just something we do; it's who we are. It's humanity at its best — people helping people, giving love in practical ways. When we're young, we receive care. When we're strong, we give it. When we're older, we learn to accept it again — sometimes reluctantly, sometimes with grace. That's wisdom. It's the rhythm of life God designed.

Caregiving is the story of us all — from cradle to cane. We all take turns holding and being held, helping and being helped. It's not about perfection, but participation in the great cycle of love that God set in motion. So, whether you're rocking a baby, checking on a friend, or caring for someone who once cared for you — smile. You're part of the divine heartbeat of humanity — all part of the many faces of caring that God intended us all to experience together.

*Carl Trapani, MA, MS, LPC serves as campus Chaplain at Chippewa Manor. He has more than 50 years of pastoral service and professional counseling experience. For more information please call (715) 723-4437 or email him at [carl.trapani@chippewamanor.com](mailto:carl.trapani@chippewamanor.com).*

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# Honoring Heroes: Ways to Celebrate Military Veterans at Funerals

By Stokes, Prock & Mundt Funeral Chapel

For families saying goodbye to a loved one who served, a funeral is more than a farewell — it’s a tribute to a life marked by sacrifice, courage, and dedication. Veterans deserve ceremonies that reflect not only their personal legacy but also the gratitude of the nation they defended. While traditional military honors such as the playing of Taps or the folding of the flag remain timeless, many families seek unique, meaningful ways to personalize the service.



## Music and Words with Meaning

Music is often the heart of remembrance. Beyond Taps, families may include branch anthems, era-specific favorites, or hymns that resonated with their loved one. Selected poetry, letters written home, or excerpts from military speeches can add emotional depth. Perhaps the most

moving tribute of all is hearing the veteran’s own words — shared from journals, letters, or recorded interviews — reminding those present of their unique voice and spirit.

## Personalized Military Displays

Creating a memorial display is one of the most powerful ways to tell a veteran’s story. Families often showcase medals, insignia, uniforms, letters, and photographs that trace a veteran’s service journey. A shadow box or memory table allows guests to engage with tangible pieces of a loved one’s life. Some families even include maps marking deployments or journal entries from the field. For those who served decades ago, digitizing old photos or projecting vintage video clips can help bring the past into vivid focus.

## Involving Fellow Service Members

Few tributes carry more weight than one delivered by those who served alongside the deceased. Inviting fellow veterans to share stories, read passages, or perform a final salute provides a deeply personal connection. Some families choose to incorporate a final “roll call,” where comrades call out the veteran’s name — a poignant ritual that symbolizes their absence yet keeps their memory alive.

## Enhanced Honor Guard Ceremonies

While many veterans are entitled to a standard honor guard detail, families can add meaningful details. Incorporating branch-specific colors into floral arrangements, printing mottos on service programs, or including a branch creed reading can create a more personalized ceremony. Local veterans’ organizations often provide additional elements such as a rifle salute, motorcycle escort, or flag procession, ensuring the farewell feels distinctive and heartfelt.

## Symbolic Rituals of Remembrance

Symbolism allows emotions to be expressed when words fall short. Lighting a “candle of service,” or planting a memorial tree can serve as lasting reminders of a veteran’s legacy. Another unique tradition is displaying a “battlefield cross” — a helmet, rifle, and boots — as a symbolic representation of sacrifice. These visual elements bring both reverence and reflection to the service.

## Creating Lasting Memorials

The impact of service extends beyond the funeral. Many families honor their veteran by initiating ongoing tributes, such as establishing a scholarship for veterans or military families, organizing annual service projects, or donating to causes that mattered to their loved one. Memorial benches, engraved pavers, or plaques in local veterans’ parks also provide enduring public reminders of their contribution.

## Final Rest with Dignity

For those eligible, burial in a national or state veterans’ cemetery offers perpetual recognition of service. Families choosing private burial can still incorporate military elements such as a flag-draped casket, ceremonial rifle salute, or final salute from attendees. These small but profound gestures reflect both personal pride and collective gratitude.

Honoring a veteran means more than acknowledging their service record — it’s about celebrating the character, courage, and values that defined their life. By blending traditional military honors with creative, personal touches, families can craft a tribute that is both solemn and deeply meaningful. In doing so, they ensure that the legacy of service continues to inspire future generations — a final salute to a life lived with honor.

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# Remember When?

By Ken Anderson, [themayberryguru@gmail.com](mailto:themayberryguru@gmail.com)

I was listening to country music the other night when I heard Alan Jackson singing "Remember When". As I listened to the lyrics, I could not help but think about all the "Remember When's" that often creep into my thoughts.



Remember when childhood was a time of innocence and carefree days? Children did not spend their summer months at day care or participating in endless activities that left little free time. They didn't carry a heavy, burdensome backpack

filled with electronic devices and other school supplies. And when they got to school, they never had to think about the possibility of school shooters. Expectations and pressures on our children are so high today that it leaves little time for just being a child.

Remember when using a telephone was a simple task? You did not carry it around with you everywhere. It was most likely hanging on your kitchen wall. We used our phone primarily to talk with friends and relatives, and long-distance calls were reserved for times when rates were lower. Robocalls and spam calls were unheard of. Phones did not consume every minute of our free time, and they were certainly never used for taking photos of everything we were doing.

Remember when going to the bank to do a transaction was also a simple task. I recall being greeted by name, handing over a deposit slip, and then getting a receipt. The entire transaction took less than five minutes to complete. I recently went to our bank to



deposit a check. The teller told me to tap my debit card. When I told him I didn't have a debit card, he told me he would send me a text. I laughed and asked why he needed to send me a text when I was sitting right next to him. I told him I didn't have my phone with me. I then had to answer some security questions and finally give him my security pass number—all this to give them some of my money.

Remember when you went grocery shopping at a store that only sold groceries? Chances are, you knew the owner, and they waited on you personally. The selections were simple. If you wanted a box of Cheerios, you picked up a box with little thought. There are now at least 23 varieties of Cheerios. In all, there are now around 5000 different varieties of breakfast cereals, and today's supermarkets carry an average of 31,795 items.

In short, remember when life was much simpler? I sure do.

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Douglas Ley - Attorney, Elder Law Advisors  
Karen Tennyson - ADRC, dementia care specialist

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# Commemorating the Power of Caring by Christine Eggers

I didn't set out to become a nurse. But here I am, 30 years in, with no intention of stopping. I've worked in other settings and as an instructor, but home health and hospice are where I find my heart. When I was teaching, I went back to work as a nurse on weekends because I missed it.

Every day in my line of work looks different. Today I am providing respite to a farmer whose wife has dementia because he needs to harvest his crops. Tomorrow I will set up medications for one client, perform wound care on another, and chaperone a clinic appointment for a third. For some, I coordinate and supervise a team of care providers. For others, I complete weekly health assessments to keep them out of the hospital. My clients wish to remain at home, and I solve the problems that might prevent them from doing so. My best day is when I solve a problem before it has even begun.

Home health is something of a calling. Years ago, I saw it as a means of changing the world for one person at a time. When I do my job well, it doesn't look like I'm doing a thing. If I prevent a client's illness or injury, those things never happen, and that is a pleasure all its own. We have to be the kind of people who take great joy in being the only person who knows we accomplished anything at all. That's fundamental to all nursing, but it's particularly so for home health.

When I was in nursing school, people would ask if I was going on to medical school. Intelligent women were supposed to become doctors--we were liberated and free to pursue more prestigious occupations than



nursing. That just wasn't the path for me. Doing a job that looks like you're not doing anything isn't for the faint of heart. Most people want others to see something great in themselves--we want credit or a title. There are no accolades if the illness or injury never happens in the first place. There might even be complaints about the things we do to make sure nothing happens.

This Home Health and Hospice Month, we are commemorating the power of caring. Often these appreciation days, weeks, and months focus on dramatic moments or great sacrifice. I'd like to recognize the absence of drama as the great event it is--like appreciating getting home from work without a car accident. We need to acknowledge and appreciate not falling and breaking a hip, not developing a sacral ulcer, or contracting pneumonia, and living another day at home with control over our lives because we are there. So, if you have home health and it doesn't seem like they are doing anything because since they've been providing your care nothing has happened, treat that nothing like the wonderful service it is.

**Happy Home Health and Hospice Month!**

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*It's About Living Fully*

**Beloit Regional  
HOSPICE**


Member of Beloit Health System



For over 40 years, Beloit Regional Hospice has helped patients live fully in their final months—wherever they call home.

We partner with families to create personalized care plans that prioritize comfort, independence, and emotional well-being—at no cost to those who qualify. No physician referral is needed.

It's never too early to call. The words we hear most from families: "I wish we would have called sooner."

 Reach out today and learn how hospice can help.

**Call 24/7**

**608.363.7421**



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