Top Stories

The Polar Vortex, Explained
As you’ve likely experienced, record cold temperatures rocked much of Wisconsin and the Midwest this week. NPR explains the polar vortex and why it is, in their words, "so *&%# cold."

And, if winter’s got you down, the Portage Daily Register speaks with an area mental health professional on how to cope with winter-related mental health challenges.

Read more

As Wisconsin Farmers Struggle, New Effort Aims to Prevent Suicide
In other mental health news, Wisconsin had a record 915 suicides in 2017. The state is seeing a surge in suicides and suicidal thoughts among farmers, who are facing some of the worst economic challenge in years, experts say. The Wisconsin State Journal looks at what one local community is doing to prevent death by suicide in their area.

Read more

Proposal Would Allow Step Therapy Exemptions
A state legislative proposal would allow doctors and patients to override certain protocols to receive the treatment they need, reports The Cap Times.

The proposal would create exemptions that in some situations, would allow doctors and patients to bypass an insurance protocol known as "step therapy."
More News

- State lawmakers are again considering defining direct primary care, which is a healthcare model that involves paying a membership fee directly to your doctor.
- A group of parents in rural south-central Wisconsin plan to build their own apartment complex tailored to the needs of their adult children with disabilities.
- A new CMS rule requires hospitals to post the price of their procedures online. But could other price transparency tools benefit patients better?
- Researchers are asking women in agriculture to take their survey to learn about resiliency to stress. And, a related online webinar series dedicated to the topic.

Funding & Opportunities

- **Grants** to smaller and rural community-based organizations providing care and direct services, education, and/or research related to HIV/AIDS. (Letter of Inquiry Due: Feb. 8th; Deadline: March 1st)
- **Funding** to create, maintain, and expand tribal sexual assault services. (Deadline: Feb. 19th)
- **Loan repayment assistance** for substance use disorder clinicians who agree to serve in Health Professional Shortage Areas. (Deadline: Feb. 21st)
- **Action grants** to communities for education and neighborhood improvement, economic development, assistance to disadvantaged people, and more. (Deadline: Feb. 28th)
- **Funding** to engage with rural stakeholders on national rural health policy issues and to facilitate and maintain rural collaborative projects. (Deadline: Feb. 28th)
- **Funding** to promote dental hygiene research. (Deadline: Feb. 28th)

Events

- Feb 5th: Electronic System for Provider Reimbursement Review
- Feb 7th, Feb 14th: CAH Conditions of Participation (Register one week prior)
- Feb 8th: Building and Maintaining Relationships in Stressful Times for Farmers
- Feb 11th: Buprenorphine 101 (for WHA hospitals and corporate members)
- Feb 12th: Promising Practices for Substance Use Disorder Treatment