

Resources for Family Caregivers

National Family Caregivers Month November 1-30

According to the AARP Public Policy Institute's new report, *Valuing the Invaluable: 2015 Update*, in 2013, North Dakota had 62,100 family caregivers who provided 58 million hours of unpaid care valued at \$860 million. These caregivers are spouses, partners, adult children, other family members, neighbors and friends. These family caregivers provide a range of daily activities, such as transportation, personal care, managing finances grocery shopping and much more. The typical North Dakota caregivers is 63 years of age, working full or part-time, has 2+ years of college, is married, and has a household income less than \$100,000.

Family members have long been the mainstay for providing care to aging and other friends or relatives who need help with day-to-day living. They take on this role willingly and find it a rewarding experience. However, many caregivers have no idea what to do, how to do it, or where to get help. This dilemma makes family caregivers vulnerable themselves.

So, where can a person find reliable information on caregiving? Here are a few options:

- Visit the eXtension's Family Caregiving Resource area for research-based knowledge on family caregiving from land-grant universities.

http://www.extension.org/family_caregiving

At this web site you can access information and resources when answers are needed, regardless of the time of day or your location. It offers answers to frequently asked questions, articles on caregiving topics, learning opportunities through online learning activities and state-specific family caregiver demographic fact sheets.

- The AARP's Caregiver Resource Center has checklists, worksheets, tips, tools, articles, blogs, Ask the Experts and more. <http://www.aarp.org/home-family/caregiving/>
- The Family Caregiver Alliance has an extensive collection of updated fact sheets on caregiving issues, from hands-on skills for caregivers to caring for adults with cognitive and memory impairment. <https://www.caregiver.org/>

Where can I find services and supports targeted for family caregivers?

- The North Dakota Aging & Disability Resource – LINK connects older adults and people with disabilities to care options that can help them live as independently as possible and maintain their quality of life. Caregivers, family members, professionals and others are encouraged to explore this website or contact the Resource-LINK to see what services and supports are available in their community. The website is:

<http://carechoice.nd.assistguide.net>

You can contact the Resource-LINK by phone Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Central Time Zone at 1-855-462-5465. The Resource-LINK services are free and confidential and provided by the North Dakota Department of Human Services.

- A new resource in North Dakota is the *Powerful Tools for Caregivers* (PTC) program. This is an evidence-based 6-week workshop offered by the NDSU Extension Service designed to help family caregivers take better care of themselves and to feel more confident in their ability to care for their family member. For more information on the PTC or upcoming workshops, contact Jane Strommen at jane.strommen@ndsu.edu

- Another great opportunity is to attend the 1st Family Caregiver Resource Fair scheduled for November 16th, 2:00-5:30 p.m. at Dakota Medical Foundation in Fargo, ND. Experts from over 20 community-based organizations will host information booths and provide education on services and products available to assist caregivers, including mini health talks on topics important to caregivers.

For more information on caregiving, contact me at jane.strommen@ndsu.edu or 701-231-5948.