



Executive Office of Elder Affairs

Massachusetts Family Caregiver Support Program (MFCSP) Newsletter

February 2019

CAREGIVING IN THE NEWS

Celebrity Caregivers: [Britney Spears](#) and [Rob Lowe](#) Bring National Attention to Family Caregiving

Celebrities are caregivers too! Recent stories of singer Britney Spears' and actor Rob Lowe's caregiving responsibilities **will help elevate the importance of family caregiving** with articles published by CNN and USA Today respectively.

[The Changing Face of Family Caregiving](#)

This *Stria News* article highlights the **growing number of male caregivers and caregivers of care recipients who identify as LGBT**, as well as the need to customize services and supports to these populations.

[Aging 2.0 OPTIMIZE Conference Focused on Caregiving](#)

Caregiving was one of two focus areas for **Aging 2.0's 2018 OPTIMIZE conference** in San Francisco. Their 2-minute video recaps the issues and opportunities discussed throughout the multi-day conference.

RESEARCH AND POLICY UPDATES

[BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act Becomes Law](#)

On January 9, 2019, the Building Our Largest Dementia (BOLD) Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act was signed into law. The federal legislation **strengthens the public health infrastructure** around Alzheimer's and dementia by establishing centers of excellence, providing funding to state, local, and tribal public health departments, and increasing data analysis and reporting.

[Family Caregivers: A Community In Crisis](#)

United Way of Northern New Jersey and Atlantic Health System Center for Population Health Sciences recently released a report assessing the **demographics and needs of nearly 1,000 caregivers**. The report revealed that caregivers across the lifespan are at **greater mental and physical health risk** compared to the general population.

[Legislation Filed to Establish a Family Caregiver Tax Credit in Massachusetts](#)

AARP Massachusetts has filed legislation with the state legislature that will provide a tax credit for certain expenses incurred by family caregivers. The bill, *An Act to Establish the Family Caregiver Tax Credit* ([HD.1405/SD.786](#)), would **offer a tax credit on a portion of eligible expenses including home modifications, medical equipment, and respite and direct care services**.

[Winners Announced for Innovations in Alzheimer's Caregiving Award](#)

The winners of the 11th annual Innovations in Alzheimer's Caregiving Award were announced in January. **Three organizations** – the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra (Charlotte, NC), Down Syndrome Network, Inc. (Tempe, AZ), and Mental Health American of the MidSouth (Nashville, TN) – were awarded \$20,000 each for their **innovations in creativity, diversity, and public policy**.



IMPORTANT PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

For those who participated in the **ADSSP Part B extension for technology**, please remember that the extension ends on February 28, 2019.

Please contact [Amanda Bernardo](#) (FCSP) or [Melissa Enos](#) (Home Care) if you have any questions or concerns.

The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren is offering a new grant opportunity for support groups called the **Grand-Families FUND**. The initial focus of the scholarship is intergenerational group activities. **The application deadline is March 1.** [Click here](#) to learn how to apply.

THIS MONTH'S CAREGIVING MANTRA



"Caregiving often calls us to lean into love we didn't know possible."

Tia Walker

MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT

Harvard Business School's "The Caring Company" Report Shines a Light on Working Caregivers



Harvard Business School's (HBS) newest report – [The Caring Company](#) – describes how employers can help employees manage their caregiving responsibilities while simultaneously reducing costs and increasing productivity.

The report reinforces the recommendations related to working caregivers in the [Governor's Council to Address Aging blueprint](#). Key takeaways reflected in the report and Governor's Council to Address Aging recommendations include:

- Family caregiving is an opportunity to revolutionize a company's talent management strategy; **it is not as simple as adding a few new benefits**. Employers must design supports to assist their employees' **career and life paths**.
- Many employers do not measure and thus **do not realize the extent to which employees are impacted** by caregiving responsibilities. This aligns to the Governor's Council to Address Aging recommendation to deploy a **toolkit to help employers survey** their workforce as a first step in support caregivers.

EOEA is looking forward to engaging with businesses. Please be on the lookout for further updates as the Governor's Council to Address Aging recommendations are implemented!

HELPFUL RESOURCES

[Exploration of the Senses: Providing Families Tools for Interactions with Loved Ones](#)

This blog post by Hebrew SeniorLife offers tips for family caregivers on how to **connect with their loved ones who struggle to communicate** due to cognitive decline. The tips center on **using the five senses** – sight, sound, touch, smell and taste - to enhance or maintain communication.

[Family Caregiver Alliance: Online Support Group for Caregivers Within the LGBT Community](#)

The **LGBT Community Support: Caregiving for Our Family and Friends** is an online support group for caregivers within the LGBT community. The support group is **email-based** and run by the Family Caregiver Alliance. Online support groups can be a convenient option for busy caregivers.

[CDC: New Tool for Mobility Planning](#)

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) released a new tool called **MyMobility Plan**, which helps individuals **proactively plan to stay physically active, safe at home, and able to get around their communities**. The tool was developed using scientific evidence as a way to decrease the risk of motor vehicle crashes and falls.

[ACL: Fact Sheet for Bereaved Caregivers](#)

Between 2013 and 2018, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) undertook the first evaluation of the National Family Caregiver Support Program. The evaluation shed a light on the **needs of bereaved caregivers**, resulting in the creation of a fact sheet for managing bereavement that includes advice gathered from family caregivers across the country.

EVENTS AND WEBINARS

[FCA Webinar: Discharge Planning is a Family Affair](#)

(February 27, online)

This webinar will describe **hospital discharge planning**—who does it, what it is intended to accomplish, and what a family caregiver should know to be fully prepared for the transition.

[Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: Statewide Resource Network Meeting Dates for 2019](#)

The Commission on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren's Statewide Resource Network is an opportunity for support group facilitators to participate in trainings, workshops, and more. **It is a "support group for support group facilitators"**. The Commission schedules five meetings a year in different locations throughout the state.

[2019 Global Carework Summit](#)

(June 9-11, Toronto, Ontario)

The **Carework Network**, an international organization of scholars and advocates, is organizing its second three-day conference to bring together researchers from across disciplines and across the globe. Conference topics are broad and include how identities and inequalities influence caregiving, how caregiving is recognized and compensated, and how state policies influence the distribution of care.