



# Executive Office of Elder Affairs

Massachusetts Family Caregiver Support Program (MFCSP)

June 2019

## CAREGIVING IN THE NEWS

### [How Family Caregivers Make Career and Elder Care Work](#)

This *Next Avenue* article highlights the **challenges of balancing a career with caring for an aging loved one**. The article describes how family caregivers have adapted to their caregiving demands, which includes reducing their work hours or using personal time off to care for their care recipient.

### [Overcoming the Stigma of Dementia and Isolation of Caregiving](#)

Stigma surrounding Alzheimer's and dementia is discussed in detail in this article by the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. The article describes **what stigma is, how it subconsciously affects us, and tips for caregivers** to overcome stigma experienced among friends and family members.

### [A Tool That Helps Family Caregivers Map Their Support Systems](#)

This *Forbes* article describes a tool, [Atlas CareMaps](#) that **helps caregivers see who is in their support circle** and can be called upon to assist with caregiving responsibilities. The maps may include family members, friends, healthcare professionals and even pets.

## RESEARCH AND POLICY UPDATES

### [President and CEO of National Alliance on Caregiving \(NAC\) Testifies at Congressional Hearing on the Older Americans Act](#)

On May 10, **C. Grace Whiting**, President and CEO of NAC, testified at a congressional hearing on the Older Americans Act and caregiving. She spoke to members of the Committee on Education and Labor about the **importance of congressional action to ensure older Americans can lead a life of dignity**. Click on the above link to watch the full testimony.

### [New Study: Caring for the Caregivers, Ensuring the Well-Being of Caregivers](#)

A new study found that when caregivers of individuals living with dementia focused on **positive events and expressing gratitude**, they reported lower levels of depression and anxiety compared to a control group. Refer to the NPR article on page two of this newsletter titled *From Gloom to Gratitude: Eight Skills to Cultivate Joy* to learn how to bring these techniques to caregivers in your community.

### [Older Americans Month: It's Time to Support Family Caregivers](#)

This opinion piece in *The Hill* celebrates Older Americans Month and **summarizes federal and state policies** that support family caregivers, including the [RAISE Family Caregivers Act](#), the [CARE Act](#), and the [Lifespan Respite Act](#). The article also discusses the six members of the US House of Representatives featured in the report, [Congressional Stories of Family Caregiving](#), as a major contributor to the momentum on Capitol Hill.



### IMPORTANT PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS



**Thank you to everyone** for providing input and guidance into the Operations Manual, Caregiver Guide, and many other topics related to the MFCSP!

Based on your feedback, EOEA will be prioritizing the creation of the Operations Manual and evaluating the assessment tool over the summer. We will continue to engage the Directors and Caregiver Specialists as this work progresses.

Special thank you to **Barbara Friedman**, who spoke with each of the MFCSP programs over the past few months!

### THIS MONTH'S CAREGIVING MANTRA



**Self-care is not selfish.**

**You cannot serve from an empty vessel.**

Eleanor Brownn



## MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT

**Elizabeth Chen Appointed  
Secretary of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Elder Affairs**



Elizabeth Chen, PhD, MBA, MPH has been named Secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs effective **June 3<sup>rd</sup>**.

Dr. Chen previously served as an **Assistant Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH)** where she was responsible for the safety and quality of health care for residents of the Commonwealth seeking services in acute and long-term care settings. At DPH, she oversaw the licensing of over 300,000 health care professionals and over 4,500 fixed and mobile care delivery settings. Additionally, she led the Determination of Need Program.

Prior to DPH, Dr. Chen served as **President and Trustee of the New England College of Optometry and New England Eye Institute**. She has also served as President and CEO of **biotech** companies, Circe Biomedical and Marathon Biopharmaceuticals.

***Please join us in welcoming  
Secretary Chen!***

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

### [New Training Videos for Caregivers](#)

The Home Alone Alliance, a collaborative of partners led by AARP, has updated its video series for caregivers. New videos include topics of **Special Diets** and **Managing Incontinence**. Both video series can be viewed by clicking on the above link, selecting “Watch” and typing in “Diet” or “Incontinence” in the search field.

### [From Gloom to Gratitude: Eight Skills to Cultivate Joy](#)

This article by NPR describes **eight techniques that may help caregivers boost their positive thinking**. Techniques include reflecting on positive events, practicing gratitude, and doing something kind for others.

### [What You Need to Know About Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse](#)

This [webinar](#) and associated [presentation](#) by the Family Caregiver Alliance and San Mateo County Health Department discusses **types of elder abuse, trends related to adult abuse, common signs and symptoms, and ways that caregivers can report abuse**. In Massachusetts, there are two ways to report abuse: by calling the hotline (800-922-2275) or filing a report [online](#).

### [Eldercare Locator: A Resource for Older Adults and Their Families](#)

The Eldercare Locator is a public service of the US Administration on Aging that **connects caregivers to services and resources**. Topics include supportive services, housing, insurance and benefits, and transportation. Their website also includes the [Caregiver Corner](#), which provides additional resources and information.

### [Caregiving in the LGBT Community](#)

June is **Pride Month!** This resource from SAGE describes caregiving in the LGBT community and provides a guide for professionals to better engage and support LGBT caregivers. The guide provides **specific ideas, lessons learned, and best practices** to help LGBT caregivers and those caregiving for an older adult who identifies as LGBT.

## EVENTS AND WEBINARS

### [Conference: A Positive Approach to Dementia Care with Teepa Snow](#) **(June 26, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM, Barnstable Performing Arts Center)**

This professional conference, hosted by the Alzheimer’s Family Support Center of Cape Cod, will explore **four topics related to dementia care**: creating a safe and friendly environment, building a dementia-aware community, coping with challenging behaviors, and communicating with someone who has dementia. **Teepa Snow**, a nationally recognized dementia care education specialist will lead the training. **Click on the link above to learn more about the agenda and register.**

### [Savvy Caregiver Training Opportunity](#)

#### **(July 10-12, 2:00 – 4:30 PM, Greater Springfield Senior Services)**

The Savvy Caregiver program is a six-week training program for caregivers to help them develop the knowledge, skills, and attitude to effectively care for their loved one. **Springfield is offering a three-day training for staff** who are interested in providing Savvy Caregiver in their local community. Registration is \$50 per person. Please contact [Brenda Labbe](#) if interested.