



Executive Office of Elder Affairs

Massachusetts Family Caregiver Support Program (MFCSP) Newsletter

July 2018

CAREGIVING IN THE NEWS

[Double Duty: Caregivers Take on a Second Shift in an Aging America](#)

The *Minneapolis Star Tribune* describes the challenges that some workers have **balancing caregiving with their careers**. The article states that informal caregiving costs businesses as much as **\$33 billion in lost productivity per year** in the United States.

[Loneliness Comes with Caregiving Territory. But It Doesn't Have To](#)

Beth Kassab, from the *Orlando Sentinel*, describes the feelings of **loneliness and isolation** that often come with caregiving. Her article also outlines potential resources and strategies to find support.

[Should You Uproot Your Life to Be Closer to Aging Parents?](#)

This *Market Watch* article describes the challenges that many Baby Boomers and Gen Xers face in **deciding if they should move closer to aging parents**. The article is part of NextAvenue.org's [Transforming Life As We Age Special Report](#).

[Aging in Place vs. Assisted Living... It's Complicated](#)

While many older adults wish to age at home, they have not fully considered the financial implications associated with home modifications or home care services. CNBC recommends that individuals consider the **financial, social and health implications** of various scenarios when weighing aging in place versus assisted living.

RESEARCH AND POLICY UPDATES

[FINDS Community Report: Understanding Caregiving for Individuals Living with Intellectual and Other Developmental Disabilities \(IDD\)](#)

The Arc of the United States recently released the Family & Individual Needs for Disability Supports (FINDS) Community Report 2017. The purpose of the survey was to **understand the experiences of families who provide support to a family member living with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (IDD)**.

[Senate Hearing on the BOLD Alzheimer's Act](#)

In June, the US Senate Special Committee on Aging held a hearing entitled "Changing the Trajectory of Alzheimer's: Reducing Risk, Detecting Early Symptoms, and Improving Data." Committee members and advocates discussed the **Building Our Largest Dementia (BOLD) Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act** ([S. 2076/H.R. 4256](#)). The BOLD Act would recognize Alzheimer's disease and related dementias as public health issues and develop the infrastructure necessary to combat these diseases.

[Report: Taking Care of Caregivers](#)

This newly released white paper from Cariloop, Facebook, and Chicken Soup for the Soul examines the **unique set of challenges caregiving poses for employees and employers** alike. The paper highlights some of the programs and policies companies have implemented to better serve caregivers.



IMPORTANT PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

Please be on the lookout for information regarding the first round of Regional Caregiver Meetings, planned for this fall. Amanda and Kathryn look forward to collaborating with you to pilot this new initiative!

We hope that everyone had a safe and happy July 4th!





MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT

*Focusing on Self-Care at
Springwell in Partnership with
Perfectly Balanced Life*



Self-care is an important and necessary part of maintaining one's own health and wellbeing. Only when we first help ourselves can we support others around us.

Last month, Springwell teamed up with wellness professionals at Perfectly Balanced Life to provide local family caregivers with free relaxation services. Perfectly Balanced Life's symbolic logo, a starfish, tells you everything that the company stands for. Starfish have the ability to heal, grow, and evolve in challenging situations – just like family caregivers!

During Springwell's self-care event, caregivers received a variety of services, including massages, paraffin hand treatment, and pet therapy. One of Springwell's large conference rooms was transformed into a temporary spa with natural light and soothing music. Caregivers were also encouraged to bring their care recipients, many of whom are living with Alzheimer's or dementia, to receive dementia-friendly self-care services nearby.

According to pre/post survey results, participants noted that their stress levels were noticeably reduced. Many also planned to share the self-care tips they learned with their support groups and other caregivers.

Thank you Rebecca Sommer-Petersen and Kristen Letourneau for hosting this incredible event!

HELPFUL RESOURCES

[Taking "Me Time" with Caregiver Mondays](#)

The Monday Campaigns is a non-profit public health initiative that dedicates the first day of the week to health. **Caregiver Monday encourages caregivers to set aside time every Monday to focus on their own health and wellness.** The Monday Campaigns' website offers free weekly tips, social media tools, and resources.

[Are You a Caregiver?](#)

Many people do not identify with the word "caregiver", assuming that the term applies to professionals, such as home health aides or nurses. This section on the Caregiving MetroWest website **helps individuals self-identify by outlining typical caregiving tasks.**

[Hot Weather Tips for Older Adults](#)

The Family Caregiver Alliance has published a short blog piece that outlines summer weather dangers for older adults. It also explains **how to mitigate the risks of heat fatigue, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke.**

[Caring for the Caregiver: A Guide for Physicians](#)

The American Medical Association published a **brief guide on caregiver burnout**, describing causes, symptoms, effects, and steps to take to help.

EVENTS AND WEBINARS

[ASA Webinar: Disaster Preparedness for Community-Dwelling Older Adults with Dementia & Caregivers](#)

(July 10, 1:00 – 2:00 PM, online)

This webinar will help family caregivers **prepare and respond to a natural disaster.** A majority of the presentation will focus on a pilot by the VA Palo Alto Healthcare System that targeted disaster-preparedness of Veterans living with dementia and their caregivers.

[ASA Webinar: Medication Management](#)

(July 11, 1:00 – 2:00 PM, online)

This webinar will help family caregivers learn about medication challenges for older adults and **signs to watch out for**, as well as provide **tips for family members** in reducing the potential for medication risks.

[AARP CAREversations Workshop](#)

(July 18, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, Wakefield)

AARP regularly hosts CAREversations workshops, lightly facilitated conversations among family caregivers, in various communities. The upcoming workshop in Wakefield will discuss **key steps to aid individuals in their caregiving journey and explore local resources.**

[Family Caregiver "Explorer" Opportunity](#)

(On-going)

For the last two years, a group of older adults – the **Longevity Explorers** – has been providing hands-on help to companies developing products to improve the lives of older adults. Now, the community is expanding to include caregivers. [Sign up online](#) to take part in some of their 1-2 hour explorations and **offer insights as a caregiver.**