



Executive Office of Elder Affairs

Massachusetts Family Caregiver Support Program (MFCSP)

July 2019

CAREGIVING IN THE NEWS

[Compassion Fatigue and the Importance of Self-Care](#)

This *Washington Post* article highlights the importance of **self-care** for caregivers to manage **compassion fatigue**. The article describes how caregivers should create a **"Self-Care Plan"** to identify personal ways to release stress and improve overall health.

[Inclusive Care at the End of Life: The LGBTQ+ Experience](#)

On May 21, a Kaiser Health News Senior Correspondent, JoNel Aleccia, hosted an expert panel discussing the factors that influence caring for older adults in the **LGBTQ+ community**. The panel covered the threats of **neglect, abuse, and discrimination** in the aging LGBTQ+ community.

[A New Caregiving Audience](#)

10 million millennials are caring for family or friends, but only recently have millennial-focused publications on caregiving been released. This *Well Good* article discusses the unique burdens of millennial caregivers and provides profiles on four young women caregivers.

RESEARCH AND POLICY UPDATES

[New Paid Leave Law in Maine](#)

On May 27, Maine Governor Janet Mills signed into law a bill that will make **Maine the first state to allow paid sick time to be used for something other than personal illness, such as a family emergency**. The law will cover about 85 percent of Maine's workforce and will provide workers in companies with 10 or more employees an hour of sick time for every 40 hours of work.

[Aging Advocacy Day Draws More than 300 Wisconsinites](#)

Members of the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) and citizens from around the state gathered in Madison to support the **fourth annual Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Day**. More than 300 advocates spoke with lawmakers on some of the important issues facing Wisconsin's older adults and caregivers, including creating a Caregiver Tax Credit.

[Federal Credit for Caring Act](#)

The **bipartisan Credit for Caring Act** was introduced in the U. S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives on May 14. The Credit for Caring Act provides some **financial relief to caregivers by helping with the cost of in-home care, adult day care, and other services**. The bill would give eligible family caregivers the opportunity to receive an annual tax credit of up to \$3,000 for 30% of the cost of long-term care expenses that exceed \$2,000.

[Supporting Family Caregivers at the State Level](#)

Johns Hopkins University researchers have authored a **new report, "In Support of Family Caregivers: A Snapshot of Five States,"** that analyzes five states and their programs designed to support family caregivers. The report captures lessons that can inform other state and national efforts to assist caregivers of older adults.

IMPORTANT PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

We are excited to share several plans and updates with you in this newsletter!

First, **Amanda Bernardo** has been promoted to **Director of Policy at EOEA**, and Kathryn Downes has been hired to fill her role. Many of you already know Kathryn from her experience interning at EOEA, and you can read more about her background in this month's spotlight. **Congratulations to Amanda and Kathryn!**

Second, EOEA is diligently working on a draft of a **new caregiver assessment and operations manual**. EOEA is very fortunate to have **Caroline Collins-Pisano**, a sophomore at Dartmouth College and EOEA's summer intern, take lead on drafting the new assessment. More information about the assessment will be coming next month!



THIS MONTH'S CAREGIVING MANTRA



Healthy caregivers make better caregivers.

Peter W. Rosenberger



MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT

Introducing Kathryn Downes, the new Program Manager for the Massachusetts Family Caregiver Support Program!



Starting June 10, Kathryn Downes began her role as **Program and Policy Manager** at the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. In addition to managing the Family Caregiver Support Program, Kathryn is also responsible for several other policy areas, including **technology and innovation and older adult mental health**.

Prior to joining EOEA, Kathryn interned at the agency for over a year, supporting Amanda Bernardo with the operations and management of the **Family Caregiver Support Program**, as well as staffing the **Governor's Council to Address Aging and the Age-Friendly State Plan**. During her internship, Kathryn completed her **Master of Public Health** at Boston University, specializing in Healthcare Management.

Kathryn was **inspired by her grandmother** to pursue a career in the field of aging and pivoted from a career in management consulting to achieve her MPH.

Please join us in welcoming Kathryn and feel free to [email her with any questions or comments!](#)

HELPFUL RESOURCES

[Home Maintenance Guide and Resources](#)

The AARP Foundation and The Hartford have created a **new website** and **tool kit** with resources regarding home maintenance. The website and tool kit offer an **interactive home assessment tool** and a directory of **local resources** for needs such as repairs, utility bills, and other home costs. To access the tool kit publication, click [here](#).

[Toolkit: "What Matters" to Older Adults](#)

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) has published a new toolkit, **"What Matters" to Older Adults: A Toolkit for Health Systems to Design Better Care with Older Adults**. The toolkit provides a step-by-step guide to ensure every older adult's health outcome goals and preferences are understood, documented, and integrated into their care by the entire health care team. To access the toolkit, click [here](#).

[June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month!](#)

Currently, **50 million people across the globe are living with Alzheimer's and other related dementias**. The Alzheimer's Association **"Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month"** publication provides information on how to spread awareness, show support, and provides resources for caregivers.

[Caregiver Action Network: A Resource for Family Caregivers](#)

The Caregiver Action Network's **Family Caregiver Toolbox** offers a variety of resources for family caregivers. The Caregiver Action Network (CAN) provides a platform for caregivers to connect and hosts support forums that cover general caregiving issues and disease-specific topics.

EVENTS AND WEBINARS

[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. Please contact [Brenda Labbe](#) if interested.

[Caregivers: A Key Focus of Care](#)

(July 11, 2:00 - 3:00 PM, Online)

This webinar, offered by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and presented by the National Alliance for Caregiving staff Grace Whiting and Pat Heinz, will introduce data on caregivers and provide a framework for the experiences and emotions of family caregivers participating in hospice care for their loved one.

[ASA Webinar: National Alzheimer's and Dementia Resource Center](#)

(August 6, 2:00 - 3:00 PM, Online)

The American Society on Aging is sponsoring a webinar discussing the key aspects of **financial, legal, and healthcare planning** that can help to ensure a more stable future for persons living with dementia, and their caregivers.