



Executive Office of Elder Affairs

Massachusetts Family Caregiver Support Program (MFCSP)

August 2019

CAREGIVING IN THE NEWS

[Spousal Caregivers are Caregiving Alone in the Last Years of Life](#)

Spouses are not the only family members involved in caregiving, but they may experience **more burden and depression** than other family members. This *Health Affairs* article discusses the unique role of being a supportive spouse while also handling the challenges and stress of being a caregiver.

[At 75, Taking Care of Mom, 99](#)

This *New York Times* article highlights the growing phenomenon of children in their 60s and 70s spending their retirement years caring for parents in their 90s and beyond. The article describes how many adult children and their parents are now **“aging together”** and the unique challenges they face.

[The Daughterhood Circle: Where Family Caregivers Come Together to Find Community](#)

This *Washington Post* article describes the concept of a Daughterhood Circle, a form of a **caregiving support group**, that was first started as a passion project by Ann Tumlinson who is national expert in the field of aging and healthcare.

[Caregiving for a Loved One? How to Get the Help You Need](#)

For many caregivers, **it is hard to ask for help**. Additionally, though friends and family may want to help when there is a crisis, it can be overwhelming to manage and respond to their offers of support. This *NPR* article provides advice for caregivers on how to best utilize those offers to assist.

RESEARCH AND POLICY UPDATES

[Oregon Passes Family Leave Law](#)

On June 20th, Oregon became the **eighth state in the United States** to pass a new family leave bill that allows new parents, victims of domestic violence, and caregivers of individuals with an illness up to **12 weeks of paid leave**. The state will be the first to pay low-income workers 100% of their wages when on leave.

[Amy Klobuchar Reveals Plan to Address the Medical Needs of Aging Americans](#)

Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) has just revealed a comprehensive plan to **support America’s older Americans and their caregivers**. Her proposal calls to assist people living with Alzheimer’s and other chronic medical conditions, strengthen Medicare and Social Security, reduce drug prices, and ensure paid family leave for all.

[Caregiver Depression Tied to More ER visits for Patients Living with Dementia](#)

Caregiver depression is associated with a **73% increase in emergency room use among patients living with dementia**. This *Reuters* article describes the importance of having health care systems that are alert to the signs of depression and other mental health systems among caregivers and ways that care providers can offer support.

IMPORTANT PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS

We would love your feedback!

We know that many of you expressed interest in refining the **caregiver assessment tool** to better meet the needs of the caregivers you serve. This summer, EOEA has been very fortunate to have **Caroline Collins-Pisano**, a student at Dartmouth College and EOEA’s summer intern, take lead on drafting the new assessment.

The new assessment was emailed to all MFCSP Caregiver Specialists on Monday, July 29. We are asking for your input and feedback by no later than **Friday, August 9**. Please send your comments to both [Kathryn Downes](#) and [Caroline Collins-Pisano](#).

THIS MONTH’S CAREGIVING MANTRA



Sometimes asking for help is the most meaningful example of self-reliance.

From the poem “Sometimes”
written by
Senator Cory Booker



MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT

2018 Healthy Aging Data Report Informs Local Aging Services and Supports

HEALTHYAGING DATAREPORTS.ORG

Since 2014, **Tufts Health Plan Foundation** has funded the creation of the [Massachusetts Healthy Aging Data Report](#). Led by researchers at the **UMass Boston Gerontology Institute**, the Healthy Aging Data Report includes information to help residents, agencies, providers and governments shape policies, programs and services.

The 2018 report includes **379 Community Profiles**: 351 for each of the Commonwealth's 351 cities and towns plus neighborhoods in Boston, Springfield, and Worcester. Each Community Profile includes **179 indicators of individual and community health** listed alongside state averages.

For the Massachusetts Family Caregiver Support Program, potentially helpful data points include the **number of memory cafés, dementia-related support groups, and grandparents raising or living with grandchildren**. To find these variables for your city or town, visit the [State Maps page](#) on the Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative website.

For more information, visit healthyagingdatareports.org or generate your community profile on this [webpage](#).

HELPFUL RESOURCES

[Caregiving and Low Vision](#)

The BrightFocus Foundation provides helpful resources for individuals caring for someone living with **Alzheimer's, age-related macular degeneration, or glaucoma**. Resources include guides and toolkits, facts and data, and tips specific to family caregivers.

[Resources for Grandparents or Other Kinship Relatives Raising Grandchildren](#)

The Commission on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren connects grandparents and other kinship relatives to services and supports. Resources include [support groups](#) and [Family Resource Centers](#), which are community-based providers offering multi-cultural parenting programs, early childhood services, and other supports.

[New SHINE Program Website](#)

The SHINE (**Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone**) program provides free unbiased **health insurance counseling**, information and assistance to Massachusetts residents with Medicare, their caregivers and those approaching Medicare eligibility.

[Updated Memory Café Toolkit](#)

An updated version of the **Memory Café Toolkit** is now available in English and Spanish on the **Jewish Family & Children's Service** website. The updated version emphasizes inclusivity and provides examples of what various cafés are doing to serve diverse populations and guests with specific needs, including guests living with early onset dementia, hearing loss, and intellectual or developmental disabilities.

EVENTS AND WEBINARS

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

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

Part of the National Alzheimer's and Dementia Resource Center web seminar series, this webinar will discuss the key aspects of **financial, legal, and healthcare planning** to help create a more stable future for individuals living with dementia as well as their caregivers.

[Dementia Friendly Massachusetts \(DFM\) Idea Exchanges](#)

(September 11-27, various locations)

Idea Exchanges are 2-hour long, quarterly regional meetings held throughout the state. They provide a networking opportunity for people in the area to come together to learn about the age- and dementia-friendly movement, share resources and tips, and delve into a challenging topic identified prior to the meeting. This September, five Idea Exchanges will take place in select Councils on Aging throughout Massachusetts.

[CareGiving.com: Fourth Annual National Caregiving Conference](#)

(November 7-10, Marriott O'Hare, Chicago, Illinois)

This year's conference theme, **Our Amazing Difference**, shares the stories of family caregivers and their experiences caring for family members living with a **chronic illness, disease or disability**. The conference will feature a special track that empowers participants to make a difference as advocates for change in their communities.