

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Respite Caregiver Month

National Family Caregivers Month is celebrated each November. This month is a time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) would like to recognize those that have been a caregiver, are currently caregiving, or will be caregiving in the future. We recognize the dedication, commitment, and devotion you have when caring for your loved one or neighbor.

There are many ways to celebrate the family caregivers in your community:

- Raise awareness of family caregiver issues
- Celebrate the efforts of family caregivers
- Educate family caregivers about self-identification
- Increase support for family caregivers

Many people do not think of themselves as a caregiver, because their care is informal and usually unpaid. A family caregiver is any relative, partner or friend who provides a broad range of assistance for a loved one with an illness or disability, either mental or physical. Caregiving can be a difficult job, often requiring around-the-clock care with little rest, stress, emotional situations, and inadequate compensation. According to AARP, about 240,000 unpaid family caregivers in Nebraska provided an estimated 119 million hours of care — worth \$2.9 billion — to their parents, spouses, partners, and friends in 2017.

Even the most dedicated caregivers will become tired and need to recharge to avoid emotional or psychological burnout. Self-care is one of the most important things any person can do; caregivers must take care of themselves to give the best care to their loved ones. Without self-care, there are greater chances of burnout resulting from stress and compassion fatigue.

It can be hard to find time for self-care, but there is help available. Respite care provides temporary relief for family caregivers by having a respite provider care for their loved one while they take a break. The Lifespan Respite Network is a program that provides funding to those in need of assistance paying for respite care, as well as referrals to qualified respite services in Nebraska.

Visit respite.ne.gov for information on respite. The Lifespan Respite Network Southwest Service Area serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, Red Willow, Gosper, Dawson, Lincoln, Arthur, McPherson, Logan, Hooker, Thomas, and Grant counties and can be reached by calling 308-345-4990.

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