

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Family Caregiver Month

National Family Caregivers Month is observed every November, and the Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) wants to take a moment to recognize and appreciate the family caregivers who are taking care of a loved one with a chronic illness or disability.

“Whether you have been a caregiver in the past, are currently caring for someone, or are preparing to take on this important role in the future, we recognize the immense dedication and love you put into caring for your loved ones,” said Paula Wimer, Respite Coordinator at SWNPHD. “Your commitment is truly inspiring, and we want you to know that your efforts do not go unnoticed. Thank you for the kindness and compassion you show every day.”

Celebrating Family Caregivers during National Family Caregivers Month enables all of us to:

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

Caregiving can be an incredibly challenging role, encompassing around-the-clock care, limited rest, high stress, emotional situations, and often insufficient compensation. Even the most dedicated caregivers can become tired and need to recharge to prevent emotional or psychological burnout.

“It is essential to take care of yourself to provide the best care for your loved ones,” continued Wimer. “Self-care is one of the most important things you can do as a caregiver. Without it, the risk of burnout increases due to stress and compassion fatigue.”

Burnout can show up in several ways, including:

- Feeling drained and overwhelmed.
- Becoming disengaged from those you're caring for.
- Difficulty concentrating and decreased effectiveness.
- Headaches or other stress-related issues.
- Increased frustration over small matters.
- No longer enjoying activities you once did.
- Struggling to see positive outcomes.
- Trouble sleeping or excessive fatigue.

Recognizing these signs early is vital for managing burnout and prioritizing self-care.

The Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network is a program that supplies funding to family caregivers in need of a break. When a caregiver needs aid, a respite provider will supply care for their loved one(s) while the caregiver takes a self-care break. Funding starts at \$125, but with exceptional circumstances, that family also has the potential to receive an added \$1,000, which can be distributed out any way they choose, whether they get one lump sum payment, or evenly split out to \$207 a month. Currently, Southwest Nebraska Respite Network serves ten family caregivers with fifteen respite providers.

If you or someone you know is caring for a loved one and needs a break, contact Paula Wimer at 308-345-4990 or visit respite.ne.gov. The Lifespan Respite Network Southwest Service Area serves Arthur, Chase, Dawson, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Grant, Hayes, Hitchcock, Hooker, Keith, Lincoln, Logan, McPherson, Perkins, Red Willow, and Thomas counties.

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