

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | February 19, 2020

Coalition working to connect family caregivers to respite services and other support is meeting Feb. 27 in Jamestown

BISMARCK, N.D. – An estimated 68,000 North Dakotans regularly provide unpaid care and support to loved ones with disabilities and special needs who range in age from the very young to the very old. A coalition of stakeholders dedicated to supporting these unpaid caregivers is meeting Thursday, Feb. 27, 9 a.m. to noon Central Time at the Legacy Center in Jamestown.

The North Dakota Lifespan Respite Care Coalition will discuss outreach and public relations opportunities and progress connecting unpaid family caregivers to resources and support through North Dakota's Lifespan Respite Care grant.

Representatives from the North Dakota Department of Human Services will give a progress report on the federal grant utilization and the amount of funding that remains available to pay for in-home care and supervision so caregivers can have a short break. The \$200,000, three-year federal grant is helping North Dakota to raise awareness about the needs of family members and friends who are unpaid caregivers, and to connect caregivers to support services, including respite care.

"Planned, unplanned and emergency situations happen where a caregiver needs someone else to step in short-term and continue caring for their loved one. This grant can help with those situations," said Mary Weltz, program administrator with the department's Aging Services Division.

The agenda for the public meeting is online at www.nd.gov/dhs/info/publicnotice/2020/2-27-lifespan-respite-grant-stakeholder-meeting-notice.pdf.

North Dakotans looking for services that can help individuals with disabilities maintain or improve their quality of life can explore options by contacting the state's Aging and Disability Resource Link toll-free at 1-855-462-5465 or 711 (TTY), by email at CareChoice@nd.gov, or by searching resources online at <https://carechoice.nd.assistguide.net>.

AARP, which supports community-based services, is a partner with the department and facilitates the Lifespan Respite Grant stakeholder coalition.

Individuals with disabilities who need accommodation to participate in the meeting can contact Mary Weltz, North Dakota Department of Human Services' Aging Services Division, at 701-328-4643, toll-free 855-462-5465, 711 (TTY) or mweltz@nd.gov.

###

CONTACT:

Heather Steffl | 701-328-4933
hsteffl@nd.gov

LuWanna Lawrence | 701-328-1892
lklawrence@nd.gov