

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 325, Bismarck, N.D. 58505**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Stakeholders to meet July 31 to review efforts to increase respite, training and support for family caregivers

BISMARCK, N.D. – AARP and the North Dakota Department of Human Services are co-hosting a stakeholder meeting July 31 to provide updates on grant-funded efforts to develop an emergency respite voucher program and increase access to training and support for family caregivers. Interested individuals are welcome to attend the meeting from 10 a.m. to noon at AARP North Dakota's office at 107 W. Main Ave., Suite 125 in Bismarck.

The department's Aging Services Division Director Nancy Nikolas Maier will provide an update on the *Caregiving Across the Lifespan* project, including first-year benchmarks. Stakeholders will discuss efforts to raise awareness about respite care services, and a Veterans Administration representative will share information about expanding caregiver supports for veterans.

Individuals can participate in the meeting by phone at 866-215-3402, passcode 3553649 or by webinar at <https://aarp.webex.com/aarp/j.php?MTID=m2dafa69ab72e127e60f06acebd800c9>.

In North Dakota, an estimated 64,400 informal caregivers help loved ones of all ages with chores, transportation, food preparation, bathing, medication administration, supervision and other care needs. Periodic, temporary breaks from caregiving responsibilities can help caregivers address stress and exhaustion.

“By supporting families and especially caregivers, individuals receiving care have a lower risk of having to move from their homes to institutions,” Maier said.

The federal Administration for Community Living awarded the North Dakota Department of Human Services a \$200,000 Lifespan Respite Care grant in 2017 to strengthen community respite care and support services for family caregivers of individuals of all ages with special needs. The department administers the grant in partnership with the North Dakota Respite Care Coalition and AARP.

Families seeking respite and other supportive services to care for adult family members can contact the Aging and Disability Resource Link at 855-462-5465, Relay ND TTY 800-366-6888 or www.carechoice.nd.gov for help finding services and resources.

Individuals with disabilities who need accommodation to participate in the meeting can contact Mary Weltz, Department of Human Services' Aging Services Division, 1237 W. Divide Ave., Suite 6, Bismarck, N.D. 58501, 701-328-4643, toll-free 855-462-5465, Relay ND TTY 800-366-6888 or mweltz@nd.gov.

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