

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | May 30, 2019

Human Services hosts planning summit on family caregivers' needs and improving access to respite services

BISMARCK, N.D. – According to AARP, 62,100 unpaid caregivers in North Dakota provided an estimated 58 million hours of care last year.¹ While that care has an estimated economic value of \$860 million, it is priceless to the individuals who were able to remain living in their homes and communities because of that care. Caregiving also offers both rewards and challenges to caregivers.

The North Dakota Department of Human Services, the Lifespan Respite Coalition and the ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center are hosting a planning summit June 18, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Pioneer Room of the Capitol in Bismarck. The summit will highlight the impact of family caregivers, the availability and benefits of support services for caregivers, including respite services, which offer a short-term break from caregiving responsibilities; and strategies addressing barriers to access and usage of respite and related services.

Event sponsors encourage family caregivers of both children with special needs and adults, respite service providers, representatives of government and nonprofit agencies serving individuals of all ages who have care needs, advocates, community groups, social workers, other interested professionals and members of the public to attend.

Participants will be able to listen and learn from panel discussion groups involving caregivers and program administrators, and national expert Jill Kagan, director of ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center. They can also participate in facilitated planning sessions to identify ways of improving access and usage of services for unpaid caregivers. A complete agenda is available online at www.nd.gov/dhs/services/adultsaging/.

"Our goal is to learn how we can improve the quality of life of caregivers and care recipients. We hope to engage caregivers and other family members, partner agencies, policymakers and others in a discussion on respite across North Dakota, including strategies to address unmet needs and ways to strengthen and sustain services and supports in rural and urban areas," said Aging Services Division Director Nancy Nikolas Maier.

Registration Details

Individuals should pre-register at <https://arch.wildapricot.org/event-3397335> by June 7. There is no registration fee. Coffee and a box lunch will be provided, courtesy of members of the North Dakota's Lifespan Respite Coalition. The public entrance to the Capitol is on the south side facing the large looped drive.

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Lifespan Respite Summit is June 18 in Bismarck – page 2

The summit has been approved to offer five Continuing Education Units (CEU) for North Dakota licensed social workers.

The department administers various programs that can pay for respite services for qualifying individuals who have physical disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, developmental disabilities and other special needs. For more information about respite services and other long-term support services, contact North Dakota's resource link toll-free at 1-855-462-5465, by email at carechoice@nd.gov or online at <https://carechoice.nd.assistguide.net>.

For more information about the summit, contact Mary Weltz at the North Dakota Department of Human Services' Aging Services Division at 701.328.4643, 711 (TTY) or mweltz@nd.gov, or call the toll-free Aging and Disability Resource LINK at 1-855-462-5465.

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¹ Source: AARP Public Policy Institute "Across the States 2018: "Profile of Long-Term Services and Support

CONTACT:

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

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