



**NEWS COLUMN – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.**

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Contact: Jenni Lewis, Communications

1 Acy Avenue, Jackson, OH 45640

Phone: 1.800.582.7277, ext. 224

E-Mail: [jlewis@aaa7.org](mailto:jlewis@aaa7.org)

Website: [www.aaa7.org](http://www.aaa7.org)

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**November is National Family Caregiver Month**

**by Debbie Gulley, AAA7 Interim Executive Director**

**November 2023 Monthly Column**

National Family Caregiver Month is celebrated each year in November and is a time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country. It offers an opportunity to raise awareness of caregiving issues, educate communities, and increase support for caregivers.

Today, an estimated 53 million Americans, or 20 percent of the general population, provide care for an older adult, or someone living with illness or disability. Families are the major provider of long-term care for their older loved ones and these unpaid caregivers represent the largest source of long-term services and supports in the nation. Recent estimates indicate the value of unpaid caregiving has now reached \$470 billion annually.



Research shows that nearly 90 percent of those age 65 and older want to age in place in their homes and communities for as long as possible. In order to do so, many older adults rely on family or friend caregivers for necessary support. The wide range of services provided by unpaid caregivers, including transportation, food preparation, housekeeping and personal care, enable older adults to live in their homes and communities with dignity and independence. Although most caregivers do not identify themselves as one as the care they provide is “what you do for someone you care about or love”, their care is invaluable in providing the support needed for the person they care for to age in place at home. We thank caregivers each and every day for the love and support they provide on a daily basis!

The Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) provides help to caregivers through the Caregiver Support Program, which is designed to assist caregivers with finding answers about how their caregiving role impacts their life and where to find resources and services to decrease caregiver stress. Caregivers may be caring for an older adult, their adult child with a disability, or the caregiver may be a grandparent caring for their grandchildren or non-relative child. Services include assessments, training, information and assistance, supplemental services, respite, as well as counseling.

Our Agency continues to provide the services of Trualta, an online platform for family caregivers that provides education through a person’s computer or mobile device. Modules on the Trualta platform teach caregivers how to safely provide hands-on care, connect families with reliable support agencies, and offer information and video training from experienced professionals in a quick and easy format.

Some of the support featured on the Trualta platform covers topics such as personal care, safety and injury prevention, caring for a person with dementia, caregiver wellness, grandparents raising grandchildren, brain health, and music therapy. Lessons are available online through video, audio, printable pages, tip sheets, and interactive e-learning.

To sign-up for the free assistance, log on to [aaa7.trulata.com](http://aaa7.trulata.com) or access the AAA7’s website at [www.aaa7.org](http://www.aaa7.org) and click on the “Trualta” ad on the main page. For more information and to learn more about the services and supports offered through the AAA7 Caregiver Support Program, contact the AAA7 at 1-800-582-7277 or e-mail [info@aaa7.org](mailto:info@aaa7.org).

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