

THE ARIZONA GWEP MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2025



ABOUT

The mission of the Arizona Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (AZ-GWEP) is to provide the best possible care through an interprofessional approach to individual, system, community and population level education, training and models of care innovations.

The AZ-GWEP Newsletter is an important forum to share AZ-GWEP activities and highlight your valuable work. Please use this form by the 10th of each month to be featured in the next issue:

[SUBMIT INFO FOR
OUR NEXT ISSUE](#)



Families are often the primary source of support for older adults. That's why every November we celebrate National Family Caregivers Month. While family caregivers should be celebrated every day, this is a time to recognize and honor caregivers nationally, raise awareness around caregiving issues, educate communities, and work to increase support for our nation's caregivers.

Family caregivers frequently take on the role of organizing pill boxes, tracking refills, scheduling medications, and ensuring their loved ones take medicines correctly. On [Page 3](#), learn more about how Medication is one of the foundational 4Ms that make up an Age-Friendly Health System.

For more caregiver resources, visit the National Institute on Aging's [Frequently Asked Questions about Caregiving](#) or download a copy of their [Caregiver's Handbook](#). Learn more about Caregiver Stress and Caregiver Respite on [Page 4](#) and [Page 6](#). These information sheets, along with others, are available for download on the Arizona Center on Aging's [Care Partner Information Sheets](#) site.

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PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

MEET DARLENE FROM THE AZ-GWEP LEAD TEAM

<https://healthsciences.arizona.edu/person/darlene-cw-lopez-ma>

Darlene Lopez is a Program Evaluator for the University of Arizona Health Sciences Office of Student Engagement and Career Advancement. In this role, she manages the evaluation and reporting for the AZ-GWEP grant and various other programs across the Health Sciences colleges. Darlene is also dedicated to instruction, teaching a pre-health experiential learning course that prepares undergraduates for health professional programs, in addition to her prior experience teaching undergraduate statistics. She brings over 30 years of experience in academic and for-profit research, evaluation, and instruction, primarily in the fields of education and health. Her educational foundation is from the University of Arizona in mathematics, educational psychology, and epidemiology. Outside of her professional work, Darlene is currently experiencing the role of caregiving for someone with dementia, which continues to inform her understanding of the challenges in healthcare. Her hobbies include reading, baking, playing board games, and knitting/crocheting.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS



ADVANCES IN AGING LECTURE SERIES

November 10th
12 - 1 pm (MST)

Non-Medical Behavioral
Management
Interventions in Dementia
Lori Nisson, MSW, LCSW

[VIEW PRESENTATION](#)

View archived presentations [here](#)

Download the event flyer

Lori Nisson, MSW, LCSW
Family & Community Services Director
Banner Alzheimer's Institute, Banner Sun Health Research Institute

ADVANCES IN AGING LECTURE SERIES

Non-Medical Behavioral Management Interventions in Dementia

LIVESTREAM
<https://streamingroom.arizona.edu/2511c4hmsj2y00j4v1ent>

November 10, 2025 12-1 pm (MST)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify neurocognitive changes that may affect behavior.
- Identify common behavioral changes and their triggers/causes.
- Recognize opportunities for non-medical behavioral interventions.
- Recommend/employ effective non-pharmacological strategies for effective management.

CME Credit Provided by the University of Arizona College of Medicine - Tucson

Accreditation Statement:
The University of Arizona College of Medicine - Tucson is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

The University of Arizona College of Medicine - Tucson designates this live activity for a maximum of 1.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Disclosure Statement(s):
All faculty, CME planning committee members, and the CME office reviewers have disclosed that they have no financial relationships with commercial interests that would constitute a conflict of interest concerning this CME activity.

VIEW ARCHIVED PRESENTATIONS
<https://streamingroom.arizona.edu/2511c4hmsj2y00j4v1ent>

Arizona Center on Aging | **Arizona Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program** | **Arizona Geriatrics, General Internal Medicine & Palliative Medicine**

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AGE-FRIENDLY HEALTH SYSTEMS: EXPLORE THE 4Ms

A Closer Look at Medication

Taking Medicines Safely as You Age

Adults 65 and older take more medications than any other age group, often because they're managing several health conditions simultaneously. This practice, called polypharmacy, creates challenges that go beyond just keeping track of multiple pills. If a medication is necessary, make sure your doctor prescribes an Age-Friendly medication that does not interfere with What matters to you, your Mobility, or your Mentation.



The Challenges

Managing multiple medications can be expensive and difficult to track, especially for people who are homebound or live in rural areas. More importantly, taking many medications increases the risk of side effects and unintended problems. Researchers are now studying “deprescribing”—safely reducing or stopping medications that may be unnecessary.

Types of Medications

Prescription drugs require a doctor's order, while over-the-counter (OTC) medications like aspirin can be purchased without one. Dietary supplements are different—they're meant to maintain or improve health, like calcium and vitamin D for strong bones, rather than treat diseases.

Dangerous Combinations

Mixing certain prescription drugs, OTC medicines, dietary supplements, or other remedies can be dangerous. Before starting a new medication, find out if you need to change or stop taking anything else. For example, combining a sleep aid with an allergy medicine can slow your reactions and make driving unsafe.

Staying Safe

When starting a new medication, write down its name, dose, why it's prescribed, and any special instructions. Your doctor or pharmacist can answer questions and help you understand potential interactions.

The key to safe medication management is staying informed, keeping good records, and maintaining open communication with your healthcare providers. This helps you get the benefits of necessary medications while minimizing risks.

You may also be interested in

- Ordering or downloading [tips for taking medicines safely as you age](#)
- Learning about [managing medicines for a person with Alzheimer's disease](#)
- Downloading a [worksheet for managing medications and supplements](#)

Reference: National Institute of Aging [Taking Medications Safely While You Age](#)



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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE TUCSON

Center on Aging

Care Partner Information

Tips for Providing Older Adult Care

Caregiver Stress

Care Giving Causes Stress

Taking care of an older adult can be stressful. Adults can live many years with a chronic disease. Over time, these diseases can make it hard for older adults to do things for themselves. It is a lot of work to help someone with basic care and disease care when they are not able to take care of them self.

Caregivers can feel frustrated. They can get angry with the person they take care of, then feel guilty. It is normal to have different feelings about care giving at different times. But, some of these feelings can be signs of stress. Stress can lower health, and make it harder to care for another person.

Below is a list of several feelings that can be signs of stress.

10 Common Signs of Caregiver Stress	
Denial	Feeling stressed, but not saying it or getting help for it.
Anger	Getting angry at anyone or anything.
Isolation	Feeling alone. Not seeing friends or family.
Anxiety	Worrying all the time, even when there is nothing to worry about.
Depression	Feeling sad or hopeless, or crying often.
Exhaustion	Feeling so tired that it seems hard to go on.
Sleep problems	Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep.
Irritability	Feeling bothered by everything or everyone.
Concentration	Finding it hard to pay attention.
Health problems	New medical problems, or problems that get worse.

This Care Partner Information page is part of a series on older adult caregiving tips. They are written to help family and community caregivers, direct care workers and community health representatives care for older adults. Available in English and Spanish at www.aging.arizona.edu

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Care Partner Information

Many caregivers think it is selfish to take time for themselves. Many do not take care of their own health and well being. Everyone needs time to take care and reduce stress. It is easier to be a good caregiver when stress is lower.

Below are tips to help lower stress.

Tips for Managing Stress

- **Take care.**
Get some rest. Find time to exercise. Eat healthy. Take time alone. Make and keep health care appointments.
- **Ask for help.**
It is good to ask others for help. Care giving is too hard to do alone.
- **Use local resources.**
Find out about adult day care, in-home help, respite care, and other local resources.
- **Learn care giving skills.**
Local classes can teach skills that will make care giving easier.
- **Find ways to connect with others**
Look for caregiver support groups. Participate in a faith community or social clubs.
- **Try relaxation methods.**
Deep breathing, meditation, massage, yoga and other practices can reduce the signs of stress.
- **Positive thinking.**
Every day, think of at least one good thing that happened. Use humor when things are hard. Try to enjoy being with the person.
- **Self kindness.**
Take time to notice small wins. Feel good about providing help and care to the older adult. It is okay if it is not perfect.

Useful Websites About Caregiver Stress

American Association of Retired Persons: <http://www.aarp.org/home-family/caregiving/>
Medicare: <https://www.medicare.gov/>

Written By: Deborah B. Schaus, MSW, Alzheimer's Association - Desert Southwest Chapter

Care Partner Information ~ Tips for Providing Older Adult Care

Edited by an interprofessional team from the University of Arizona Center on Aging

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Center on Aging

Care Partner Information

Tips for Providing Older Adult Care

Caregiver Respite

Respite is a break from caregiving while someone else cares for the older adult. Respite is an important part of caregiving. This break gives the caregiver a chance to visit with friends, run errands, sleep, see their own doctor, or other types of self care.

Types of Respite

Private Duty Caregivers

Private duty caregivers come to the home. They can help watch the person so the caregiver can do other tasks in the home. Private duty caregivers can help with things such as dressing or bathing the person. They cannot give medications or help with other medical care. They are usually paid “out-of-pocket” by the family, and are not paid by health insurance.

Adult Day Health Programs

Adult day health programs provide supervision, activities, personal care, and meals. They can also give medications and help with other basic health needs in a group setting. Some programs provide transportation. Programs in health centers usually have a nurse, but programs at recreation centers usually do not.

Assisted Living Centers, Memory Care, or Rehab-Skilled Care Facilities

Some of these places offer respite for one day only. Others can provide respite for up to 2 weeks. Staff are available throughout the day and night. They can provide personal help, medical help, meals, and some recreational activities.

Volunteer Visits

Volunteers can be a “friendly visitor” that can sit with and talk to the person. Some volunteers can help with shopping or paying bills. They cannot provide any personal care, such as dressing or bathing. They also cannot provide medical care, such as giving medications.

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Care Partner Information

Finding Services

Respite services are not “health care,” so they are not covered by Medicare or other health insurance. But, if the older adult has long-term care insurance, Veterans Aid & Attendance benefit, or Medicaid long-term care, respite might be paid. If families have to pay “out of pocket,” there are vouchers that can reduce the cost, or free volunteers are sometimes available.

Area Agencies on Aging

Every region in the U.S. has an Area Agency on Aging that can provide a list of adult day health programs, caregiving agencies, and volunteer organizations that visit seniors. Many Area Agencies on Aging also offer classes to support caregivers, and vouchers to reduce the cost of respite services.

Alzheimer’s Association

The Alzheimer’s Association’s “Community Resource Finder” is an online tool to find services in the local community (see resources below). The Alzheimer’s Association also has tip sheets, family care consult services, a 24/7 helpline, and respite vouchers.

Caregiver Coalitions

State or regional caregiver coalitions raise awareness about caregiver needs, and provide education for caregivers. Some also have programs that can help pay for the cost of caregiving.

Other organizations

Each state or region has different services available from different places. The Eldercare Locator (see resources below) can help people find local volunteer organizations, hospice providers, social services and in-home care associations.

Resources:

Alzheimer’s Association: www.alz.org; 1-800-272-3900

Community Resource Finder: www.communityresourcefinder.org

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging: www.n4a.org

Eldercare Locator: <https://eldercare.acl.gov>

Family Caregiver Alliance National Center on Caregiving: www.caregiver.org

Written By: Christie Kramer, LMSW, Hospice of the Valley

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