



Celebrating Caregivers During National Senior Independence Month

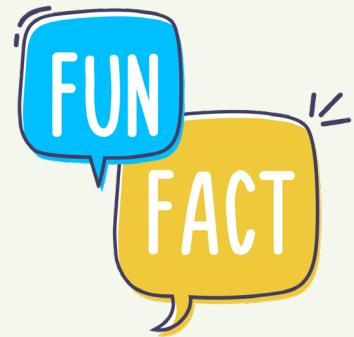
February is National Senior Independence Month, a time to recognize the support that helps older adults stay active, connected, and in the homes they choose. Many seniors want to age in place, and caregivers make that possible every day.

Caregivers provide the steady support that independence requires — from personal care and meals to mobility help, appointments, and companionship. Because of you, seniors can remain in familiar spaces, maintain dignity, and live life on their own terms.

This month honors older adults, but it also shines a light on the essential role caregivers play in helping them stay safe, confident, and independent at home.

Thank you for the care that makes independence possible.

“The simple act of caring is heroic.
— Edward Albert



American Heart Month and Random Acts of Kindness Week (Feb. 9–15)



Laughter is good for the heart. Studies show it can improve blood flow and reduce stress, something caregivers bring to clients every day.

.....
Play a favorite song. Music can lift mood, spark memories, or calm anxiety.

.....
Caregivers already practice kindness daily. Helping someone feel safe, seen, or supported counts as a “random act” every time.

.....
Small actions make a big difference. Even 10 minutes of walking can help lower stress and support heart health.



Caregiver Advisory Members Nominations Due by Feb. 27, 2026

The DSHS Direct Care Workforce Collaborative is seeking new caregiver members for its 2026 advisory group. This volunteer group provides input on programs and policies that support recruiting, retaining, and strengthening Washington's caregiving workforce.

We are seeking caregivers:

- Caregivers with long-term experience in rural group care settings (assisted living, adult family homes, skilled nursing, or enhanced services facilities), or
- Unpaid caregivers providing in-home care to a family member.

What to expect:

- Six virtual meetings in 2026 (2–4 p.m. on Feb. 19, Apr. 16, Jun. 18, Aug. 20, Oct. 15, and Dec. 17)
- Call-in option available
- Compensation may be offered, depending on budget

How to apply:

Nominate yourself or someone else using [this short form](#) by Feb. 27, 2026.

For more information, visit the [DSHS Direct Care Workforce Collaborative website](#) or contact Jennifer Phillips at jennifer.phillips3@dshs.wa.gov, or 564-669-4729.



Transportation Pilot Launches to Support Caregivers

The DSHS Workforce Development Team and Consumer Direct Care Network Washington have launched a Transportation Pilot to help individual providers get to and from client homes. The pilot uses Lyft to take caregivers directly to their clients. The goal is to reduce transportation barriers, lower costs, and support more reliable in-home care.

The program is active in Spokane, Everett, Vancouver, Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, Kent, Auburn, Renton, and Federal Way. Eligible individual providers [can apply through their employer CDWA](#).

This pilot is funded by Money Follows the Person, a program that helps people move out of institutions and live independently at home. The funding supports services that make it easier for people to stay with support in their own communities.

