



CAREGIVER NEWSLETTER

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CAREGIVER SPOTLIGHT:

This month caregiver spot-
light is

TARA HIGHTOWER

Tara has been a pleasure to work with. She has a positivity that her consumers and coworkers love. She maintains professionalism while still being caring. She enjoys the work that she does and is very consistent.

We appreciate all you do!
Thank you!

*"Worry never robs tomorrow of its sorrow, it
only robs today of its joy."*

CAREGIVER TIPS: HOW TO BEAT THE WINTER BLUES

Caregiving is tough work, and with the dark winter months weighing down our moods and energy levels, the work can seem even harder. The winter blues describe the sadness and fatigue that many people experience during the coldest, darkest months of the year. Here are some tips to help caregivers beat the winter blues:

1. **Go For A Walk**
2. **Meditate for 10 minutes each morning.**
3. **Write down three things you are grateful for**
4. **Take a daily multivitamin**
5. **Call a friend**
6. **Try an at-home Yoga class**
7. **Seek out nature, fresh air, and sunlight**
8. **Get 7-8 hours of sleep each night**
9. **Practice Self-Compassion**
10. **Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables.**





REMINDER – ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Mandatory Reporting - It is mandatory that employees of PennCares report critical incidents related to individuals who receive home and community-based services and supports from our agency.

Process of Reporting – *It is the responsibility of the person that discovers the critical incident or has knowledge of the critical incident to report it immediately and directly to their supervisor or the Director of In-Home Services.* It is then the responsibility of the supervisor or Director of In-Home Services to ensure the appropriate Service Coordination Agency and MCO is notified to investigate and report the alleged critical incident to OLTL or ODP.

Reporting of Incidents

Any employee or administrator of PENNCARES is **required** to report critical incidents. Prior to reporting the incident, steps must be taken to safeguard the health and welfare of the participant. In addition, a call should be made to 911 if the participant is in a life-threatening situation prior to contacting agencies below.

All employees should first contact the office immediately **within 24 hours** to understand if an incident is reportable. Oral reports must be immediately made to the following agencies and to the Service Coordinator within discovery of a known alleged incident. The Service Coordinator should also be contacted if the participant is in immediate need of an intervention and 911 has not been called.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS FOR REPORTING

Adult Protective Services Hotline (Adults 18-59) 1-800-490-8505 option#3

Older Adult Protective Services Hotline (Adults 60+) 1-800-490-8505 717-265-7887 option#2

How to Handle Loss and Grief as a Caregiver

The grief experienced as a caregiver comes in various forms and at different stages. One, there's the anticipatory grief that a caregiver starts experiencing before the cared-for has even left them. Second, loss as a caregiver is experienced through a plethora of emotions, not just grief alone.

Be Honest About Your Feelings

Relief and hope aren't exactly emotions that our society attaches to mourning. So, it can feel uncomfortable sharing them out loud. Because the nature of this loss is so complicated, caregivers are likely to feel emotions beyond just sadness.

Feelings of relief or independence are common and so is the guilt that follows them. Grief can also manifest as anger or frustration. The first step towards healing is being honest about your feelings. If you feel that people around you might judge you on how you grieve, consider joining a support group.

Join a support group

A support group can provide a safe space where you feel free to express your honest feelings, without fear of judgment. In addition, support groups provide validation, connections, and problem-solving or acceptance strategies. Since others in the group have also been in your position, they will likely under-

stand your situation better than others.

Know that you are enough

When a loved one who you cared for a long time dies, it's also possible that your feelings of guilt make you believe that you didn't do enough. It's important for you to remember that you did absolutely everything you could to serve them in the best way possible, that there's nothing more you could have done.

Seek professional help from a counselor

Dealing with this double-edged sword of a huge life change and a loss can get overwhelming if you are doing it alone. Professional counseling can help you explore how you can meaningfully work through the barrage of conflicting feelings.

As a caregiver, it can be easy to get into a habit of overlooking one's own emotions in favor of the loved one's needs. That makes it all the more important for you to have safety, validation, warmth, and professional support in the aftermath of their death. Take the time you need to process your trauma and chart your life's future course.

Here are some resources below to help you or your loved one through this tough time:

- ☐ **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline /
Línea Nacional de Prevención del Sui-
cidio**
988
- ☐ **Crisis Text Line**
Text "HOME" to 741-741
- ☐ **Safe2Say**
1-844-723-2729
or www.safe2saypa.org
- ☐ **United Way of Pennsylvania**
Text your zip code to 898-211

WHAT'S YOUR MOTIVATION?

KYA JEFFERIES, SCHEDULER

I enjoy doing this job because it gives me the opportunity to give back to my community. I get to meet interesting people and impact lives everyday in a positive way. I enjoy being able to use the skills that I have to make a positive impact.

WELCOME NEW CAREGIVERS

Heather LeMaster

Shannon Moyer-Potts

Vanessa Brooks

Anita Kimball

LizMarie Rivera

Did You Know...?

*Vending machines kill more people per year
than sharks.*

Happy Birthday!

Stephanie Forry Gail Carberry

Yessenia Galbreath

Viquelsha Thomas

HAPPY Anniversary!

DECEMBER

Crystal Brantley - 1 year

Dometta Shindledecker - 10 years

Toni Flasher - 2 years

JANUARY

Fausta Gomez de Puello - 10 years

Arlene Blizzard - 14 years

Reina Zapata - 3 years

Elizabeth Brantley - 1 year

Roy Crist Jr - 6 years



Announcements

IN NEED OF MORE SHIRTS?

Reach out to Missy mchittum@penncares.org with the size and quantity.

To streamline the process for **calling off** for everyone please **call 717-632-5552** and follow the prompts for In-Home Program.

Connect with us on Facebook. We have a group just for caregivers! It is called PennCares VIP. Check us out!

Scan the QR code for access or
search "PENNCARES VIP" on Facebook.



If there is something you would like to see in the newsletter, please do not hesitate to send your ideas to fiscal@penncares.org

