**2022 National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers
*Key Messages***

***How are these messages used?***

Developing and agreeing upon a set of brief, core points is an essential aspect of “getting the message right” for an effective communications strategy.

The messages that follow enable anyone to immediately see the key points that need to be made in any communication to further your goal. For colleagues and partners working in communications, the messages serve as a foundational guide for drafting materials. They remind the communicators of the key points (not *every* point…) you want to make *now,* in order to achieve the outcomes you desire. They are intended to be timely and updated as needed.

This message document is not a script and should not be read like a narrative brochure. It is intentionally formatted in bulleted, single sentences—not paragraphs. Each stands alone.

The message document provides a handful of key points that can help your messengers cut through the clutter and tell your story using the same vocabulary.

Why? **Because many messengers repeating the same messages maximizes impact**.

***MESSAGES IN ~125 WORDS:***

***Family caregivers are not adequately supported by the government or the public and private sectors.***

*Support is fragmented, siloed or inaccessible.*

***The 2022 National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers is a whole-of-society approach to assist family caregivers.***

*The federal government released a report of more than 300 actions agencies may take and includes corresponding actions for states, employers and community-based organizations.*

***The*** ***Strategy addresses caregivers’ foremost needs and will be updated regularly.***

*The strategy improves access to respite care, includes family caregivers as part of a person’s care team, strengthens the direct care workforce and helps ensure caregiver’s financial security.*

***You can support the Strategy now.***

*Every person and organization has a role to play in improving support for family caregivers by publicly promoting the Strategy and adopting its suggested actions.*

**FAMILY CAREGIVERS ARE NOT ADEQUATELY SUPPORTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OR THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS.**

*National, state and community support for family caregivers is* [*fragmented, siloed or inaccessible*](https://acl.gov/RAISE/report)*.*

* There has not been a cohesive, national strategy to help stakeholders at all levels of government and throughout the public and private sectors support family caregivers, including grandparents raising children and caregiving youth.
	+ Family caregivers include people of all ages, people with and without disabilities, people providing care from a distance and many others.
	+ With the COVID-19 pandemic and the critical shortage of direct care workers, there is now a heightened reliance on family caregivers. This crisis of care is falling on states, employers and community-based organizations to address.
* **Many people will be a family caregiver and need a family caregiver in their lifetime.**
	+ Each year, around 53 million people provide a broad range of assistance to support the health, quality of life and independence of someone close to them.
	+ An estimated one in six individuals is a family caregiver, and more than two-thirds of people will need assistance with tasks as they age.
* **Caregiving can be costly and challenging.**
	+ Caregivers say providing support is rewarding but challenging mentally, physically and financially.
		- Family caregivers report poorer health outcomes because they often prioritize the needs of others before themselves and face chronic stress associated with their caregiving duties.
		- Grandparents raising children experience a higher level of distress, emotional problems, clinical depression and insomnia than grandparents not raising children.
	+ Lost income due to family caregiving is estimated at $522 billion each year.
	+ Family caregivers, on average, spend one-quarter of their annual income on caregiving expenses.
		- Three-quarters of caregivers spend $7,200 annually on caregiving-related out-of-pocket expenses.
	+ Approximately 50% of grandparents raising children remain in the workforce, including 25% of those aged 60 or older.
		- In Los Angeles, a grandparent raising a child requires an estimated $40,497 in yearly income ($20,000 more than the median Social Security payment).
	+ Many caregivers do not know where to turn for help or information, especially when assistance is urgently needed and not anticipated.
* **Replacing family caregiving with paid services would cost an estimated $470 billion each year.**
	+ The nation’s system of long-term supports and services, which includes both community-based services and institutional care, cannot function without the contributions of family members.
	+ Paid caregivers, otherwise known as direct care workers, are underpaid and under-supported leading to high turnover that negatively impacts family caregivers who often must step in to cover gaps in care.
		- According to research published in *Health Affairs*, one in eight direct care workers live in poverty, and three-quarters earn less than the average living wage in their states.
			* Foreign-born workers, who are constantly confronted with institutional and acute racism, account for about one-quarter of all direct care workers.
* **Caregivers are diverse in background, needs and experiences.**
	+ Family caregivers reflect the diversity of the nation, yet services are often not designed to meet their specific cultural and language needs.
		- According to AARP, 30%of family caregivers self-identify as a racial or ethnic minority.
	+ A growing number of teens and children have family caregiving responsibilities.

**THE 2022 NATIONAL STRATEGY TO SUPPORT FAMILY CAREGIVERS IS A WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACH TO ASSIST FAMILY CAREGIVERS.**

*The federal government released a report of more than 300 actions agencies may take and includes corresponding actions for states, employers and community-based organizations.*

* **This historic effort by the federal government provides an important roadmap to all those working to increase recognition for the critical role of family caregivers in our healthcare system and for those seeking policies and strategies to support them.**
* **The 2022 National Family Caregiving Strategy was developed by the Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Act Family Caregiving Advisory Council and The Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Children.**
	+ The strategy strengthens support for family caregivers by committing to more than 300 actions across 15 agencies.
	+ Federal lawmakers might get further involved as the nation more fully recognizes the challenges faced by family caregivers and looks for policies to support them.
	+ The strategy is meant to be flexible and will be revised and evolved on a biennial basis.

**THE STRATEGY ADDRESSES CAREGIVERS’ FOREMOST NEEDS AND WILL BE UPDATED REGULARLY.**

*The strategy improves access to respite care, includes family caregivers as part of a person’s care team, strengthens the direct care workforce and helps ensure caregivers’ financial security.*

* **The National Strategy aims to improve the lives of family caregivers.**
	+ The entire strategy prioritizes and spreads person- and family-centered care principles.
	+ The federal government has tentatively committed more than 300 actions to support family caregivers, including:
		- **Access to respite**
			* The federal government is taking steps to improve access to respite services, or professional short-term care, so overworked family caregivers can take a break, including empowering AmeriCorps Seniors to offer free respite care and other services to caregivers and their families.
		- **Professional support with day-to-day responsibilities and complex medical tasks**
			* Offices throughout the government will coordinate with states and direct care workers to grow and strengthen the direct care workforce including through compensation, making more support available to family caregivers.
		- **Inclusion of caregivers as part of the care team**
			* The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services will update rules to include family caregivers in the hospital discharge planning process.
		- **Financial education on costs of caregiving**
			* The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau will increase the availability and use of financial education tools on the costs of long-term care and how to prepare for them.
		- **Better identification of family caregivers**
			* Departments across the government will pilot identifying family caregivers in electronic health records and state information systems and conduct localized outreach to family caregivers sharing information about the support available to them. This can help with understanding the number of family in the United States, their needs and the total economic impact of family caregiving.
		- **Research on the needs of family caregivers**
			* Interdepartmental efforts across the federal government will prioritize research on family caregiving to inform evidence-based policies that meet their needs, including by providing grants to colleges and universities with gerontology programs and family services.

**YOU CAN SUPPORT THE STRATEGY NOW**

*Every person and organization has a role to play in improving support for family caregivers by publicly promoting the Strategy and adopting its suggested actions.*

* **The National Strategy lays out specific ways any organization with a vested interest in supporting family caregivers can act.**
	+ Supportive actions include:
		- Reading the report and publicly committing to suggested actions and ways your organization will support the National Strategy.
		- Providing comments during the 60-day public comment period for the National Strategy.
		- Using publicly available resources like social media posts, template emails to your networks and prewritten press releases to publicize and express support for the National Strategy.
* **Every person and organization has a role to play in improving support for family caregivers.**
	+ The National Strategy lays out ways for specific groups to act including academic institutions and researchers, business leaders and employers, communities of faith and faith-based organizations, health care and child welfare systems, medical and long-term service and support providers, community-based organizations, philanthropic organizations, states, tribes and local communities, caregivers, advocates and other members of the public.

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