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SURVIVAL COALITION RECOGNIZES CAREGIVERS DURING NOVEMBER AWARENESS MONTH

(MADISON) -- The Survival Coalition of more than 30 disability organizations recognizes the contributions of Wisconsin's caregivers as today kicks off National Family Caregiver Month.

"A majority of Survival members tell us that the direct care workforce crisis and the stress that puts on family caregivers is their top concern," says Beth Swedeen, Survival Co-Chair. "This month is not only a great time to thank caregivers, but to commit to solutions that will address this crisis."

Members of the Survival Coalition are represented on the Governor's Task Force on Caregiving which was appointed this year to address the growing shortage of direct care providers, both paid and unpaid, as well as the impact and needs of family caregivers.

"Family caregivers provide an estimated 80% of all care and although they are supporting loved ones, it can have a negative impact on their lives," says Lisa Pugh, Survival Coalition Co-Chair. "We must ask family caregivers what supports they need to stay healthy."

A recent survey of family caregivers for people with disabilities and older adults by the Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance (WFACSA) found 90% report their physical or emotional health has worsened and nearly a quarter have changed or quit jobs due to their caregiving responsibilities.

Family caregivers go to medical appointments, provide medications, help with bathing and dressing and do a variety of other daily tasks. The demands on family caregivers is expected to worsen as Wisconsin's population ages.

"Survival's own survey of people with disabilities shows that 95% of people with disabilities and their families had trouble finding caregivers, and 45% reported being unable to fill 7 or more shifts each month," says Swedeen.

Survival Coalition is comprised of more than 30 statewide disability organizations that advocate and support policies and practices that lead to the full inclusion, participation, and contribution of people living with disability.

For information about work being done by the Governor's Task Force on Caregiving, visit <https://gtfc.wisconsin.gov>. To find resources to support families and provide care for a loved one, visit <http://wisconsin-caregiver.org/alliance>.

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