

January 2026 Caregiver Newsletter

Durham Center for Senior Life Family Caregiver Support Program

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DCSLNC 

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Greetings Caregiver Community,

As we welcome the start of 2026, the new year offers caregivers a fresh opportunity to pause, reflect, and reset. Caregiving continues to evolve alongside changes in healthcare, technology, and community resources, and the new year invites us to adapt with intention. Whether you are supporting a loved one full-time or balancing caregiving with work and family, this is a meaningful time to acknowledge your resilience and recommit to caring for yourself as well as others.

The year ahead may bring new routines, tools, or expectations, and flexibility will be key. From learning to use new digital health platforms to navigating updated policies or services, adapting does not mean doing everything at once. Small, thoughtful changes, such as organizing important documents, exploring respite options, or setting clearer boundaries, can make a significant difference. Staying informed and connected to trusted resources can help caregivers feel more confident and less overwhelmed as change arises.

As we move into 2026 together, remember that caregiving is not meant to be done alone. Seeking support, sharing experiences, and asking for help are signs of strength, not weakness. This year, caregivers may consider focusing on the following to strengthen their caregiving journey:

- Schedule regular self-check-ins to assess stress levels and emotional well-being.
- Stay organized by keeping medical, financial, and care-related documents in one accessible place.
- Build or revisit a support network, including family, friends, and community programs.
- Take advantage of respite opportunities to rest and recharge without guilt.
- Set realistic goals and boundaries to prevent burnout and maintain balance.

In addition, the new year is a great time to reassess care plans and communication strategies. Needs can change quickly, and reviewing routines, medications, emergency contacts, and care preferences can help ensure everyone is on the same page. Open and honest conversations with loved ones and care partners can reduce misunderstandings and create a more supportive environment for both caregivers and care recipients.

By embracing adaptability and compassion, for both those you care for and yourself, you can move into 2026 with renewed purpose, confidence, and hope. Remember that progress does not have to be perfect to be meaningful; even small steps toward balance and self-care can have a lasting impact. As this new year unfolds, give yourself grace, recognize the value of the care you provide, and know that your efforts truly make a difference in the lives of those you support.



**Cheers to the New Year,
Niya Carrington, Support Services Director**

"Although no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending." – **Carl Bard**



Upcoming Events

Stroke Peer Support Group

Meets every 1st Monday of the month

January 5, 2026 at 1:00PM

Onsite in the Volunteer Room

Family Caregiver Support Group

Meets every 2nd Thursday of the month.

January 8, 2026 at 12:30PM

Onsite in the Boardroom

Grief Support Group

Join this peer support group to learn about how to help process your grief.

Jan. 6 & 20 2026 at 1:00PM

Onsite in the DCSL classroom

Living While Dying: A Support Group for Terminally Ill People

This group will offer a safe space to share with and hear from others who are navigating a terminal illness.

January 28, 2026 at 10:00AM

Onsite in the Volunteer Room

Upcoming Community Activities:

Jewels Feeding Friends

On **Saturday January 10, 2026 from 9:30am – 11:30am** on 1701 Sherman Avenue, Durham, NC 27707 there will be a free produce giveaway for the community.

Nasher Museum: Virtual Art Tours

The Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University offers reflection tours to explore works of art for people with dementia and their care partners. These free virtual tours are facilitated by trained guides and are designed to be accessible and engaging for the memory loss community.

These sessions are held on the second Friday of every month from 2-3pm online via zoom. The next tour will be held on **Friday January 9, 2026**. Registration is required. You can email reflections@duke.edu to sign-up for a tour or join their mailing list.

Medicare Basics: Comprehensive Introduction to Medicare

Join Senior PharmAssist for a free and comprehensive introduction to Medicare. Whether you are turning 65 years old or are just new to Medicare these sessions are one hour and allow time for Q&A. This will occur on **Tuesday January 13, 2026 at 6:00pm** virtually. To register go to SeniorPharmAssist.org/events or call 919-688-4772.

Heritage for Health with Eatwell Exchange

This 12-week culturally rooted program includes virtual nutrition education classes paired with in-person, hands-on cooking classes, designed to support sustainable, healthy lifestyle changes while honoring cultural food traditions of African descent.

Participants are accepted on a scholarship basis, with each scholarship valued at \$1,000, eliminating financial barriers to participation.

Heritage for Health is ideal for adults and families seeking culturally relevant nutrition guidance, practical cooking skills, and sustainable habits that support long-term health and chronic disease prevention.

For program details, referrals, or registration information, please click the link www.eatwellexchange.org/prediabetes. This program will start on **Tuesday January 13, 2026** in Durham and **Thursday January 15, 2026** in Raleigh from 6:00pm – 7:30pm.

Real Estate Essentials Workshop

Are you thinking about buying or selling a home? Do you want to know how real estate can help you build wealth? Learn the essentials at this free educational workshop. The workshop will be hosted by licensed real estate agent Larry Thomas. This will occur on **Wednesday January 14, 2026, 6-7pm**, at the Main Library on 300 N. Roxboro Street. To register for this workshop please click on this link: <https://durhamcountylibrary.libcal.com/event/15771568>

For questions or more information contact Austin Daniels at ausdaniels@dconc.gov

Men on the Move Community Health Walks

Join the Men's Health Council of Durham County Dept. of Public Health for its monthly walk at a local community park. Walking and fellowship help improve your health. Each Walk features discussions and chats with local experts. These walks are open to all ages and are held on the third Saturday of the month at local Durham parks. The next walk will be held on **Saturday January 17 at 9:00am** at Weaver Street Park, 3000 E. Weaver Street. For more information contact Joyce Page at jpage@dconc.gov.

Welcoming Wellness: Empowering Mental Health Caregivers

This offering provides monthly hybrid presentations by professionals on all topics related to mental health. Topics to be discussed consist of:

- Preserving self-esteem and family
- Focus on home, health, purpose and community
- Planning for the future and still greeting each day as a new day

The next offering will occur on **Sunday January 25th at 2:00pm**. To learn more and register please visit <https://welcomingwellnessnc.com/>.

Our Mission

"To enrich the lives of Durham seniors 55+ by promoting healthy, active, and independent lifestyles."

External Resources:

DCo LIEAP Program

Starting on December 10, the Durham Co. Department of Social Services will begin accepting applications to assist with paying energy payments. Applicants aged 60+ who receive services through DCoDSS Aging and Adult services are eligible to apply. Along with those with disabilities or received SNAP benefits.

Starting January 2, 2026 all other residents can apply.

Call 919-560-8192 to make a virtual appointment with a specialist. The program ends on March 31, 2026.

Durham Low-Income Homeowners Relief Program (LIHR)

The LIHR program will provide property tax help on current taxes for eligible homeowners.

Tax assistance is based upon a 3-tier income model.

Apply now on the DCONC website at DCONC.gov/DSS or call 919-560-8000 for an appointment.

Strong Steps: How Exercise Empowers Diabetes Control

Join in on Wednesday January 14, 2026 from 1-2pm on 414 E. Main Street Durham, NC to learn easy movements, how physical activity regulates blood sugars, and how to build an activity routine that fits your lifestyle.

Contact Yvonne Reza at 919-560-7223 or yreza@dconc.gov.

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