November: National Family Caregiver Month

Center for Persons With Disabilities

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The true strength of the American family finds its roots in an unwavering commitment to care for one another (President Barack Obama).

Each year since 1944, our nation has shown their appreciation for family caregivers by honoring them during the month of November. This year's National Family Caregivers' theme is Identifying Family Caregivers.

There are over 65 million family caregivers in this country. Family caregivers are an important part of a loved one's medical team. They are the ones most familiar with their family member's medicine schedule; they know the most about the treatment(s) received, both past and present; and they are the only people consistently present across all of their loved ones' care settings.

Despite the huge role family caregivers' play in the care of their loved ones, family caregivers are often invisible in American healthcare. Medical intake forms do not note whether someone has a family caregiver. Family caregiver's needs are not discussed during office visits.

Celebrating family caregivers during this month helps to acknowledge their efforts and raise awareness of family caregiver issues.

In order to understand the challenges that caregivers face and to increase support for them, there will be a blog posted each week during the month of November.