



**FAMILY
CAREGIVER
SUPPORT**



**RESPITE &
RESOURCES**

Our mission is to connect family caregivers of older adults to resources and respite that empower them to be the best caregivers they can be.

Dear Supporters of Caregiver Connections,

On behalf of all of us with Caregiver Connections, I would like to thank our generous donors and dedicated volunteers and community partners for helping us impact more families than ever in 2023. The need is growing and without your support we would not be so well positioned to meet it.

It was a group of caregivers who formed the organization (originally called Eagle Valley Senior Life) in 2011 to fill the void of services available to them. Over the past 12 years, we have seen the services available to older adults and their caregivers grow making our community a place where everyone, young and old, can achieve a high quality of life.

As a caregiver myself for the past 7 ½ years, I am passionate about family caregivers being able to maintain a quality of life that is at least close to what they've known, which for me isn't possible without the support of my community. I am not alone. One of 41.8 million caregivers provide care for someone over the age of 50, which represents a 7.6 million increase in the past five years. With 6.7 million Americans aged 65 and older living with Alzheimer's in 2023, many families are and will continue to be impacted including here in Eagle County.

As a caregiver and as the Executive Director of Caregiver Connections, thank you! We look forward to working with you all to make Eagle County a great place in which to live . . . and to age.

With gratitude, Wendy Miller, Executive Director



Wendy Miller, Executive Director with her 100-year-old mom who lives with her

2023 IMPACT REPORT

2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In the past few years, we have experienced exponential increases in the number of people who need our services. Fortunately, we have been able to grow our capacity to meet the needs of the community. There are several reasons for the increased demand. The 65+ population is the fastest growing in Eagle County with projections showing this trend to continue. More referrals are coming to us from the extensive network of providers in the community. We collaborate with Vail Health, Eagle Valley Behavioral Health, Eagle County Public Health, Eagle County Paramedic Services, the Eagle Valley Community Foundation, Colorado Mountain Medical, Eagle Valley Family Practice and others to identify people in need. Finally, we are seeing an increase in the number of people seeking an earlier diagnosis of dementia and other complex diseases and we are a comforting place to turn for help.

Our relationships begin with a Care Consultation, a one-to-one meeting with an Aging Life Professional to understand the family's needs, provide solutions and connect them with appropriate resources and support. This consultation covers topics such as home readiness, how to find in-home care, meeting financial needs and guidance on dealing with family differences of opinion about the care of a loved one. Mostly, we provide a friendly and safe place to share their apprehension and fear for what the future may bring after a difficult diagnosis. Our goal is to show them that there is help in Eagle County and give them the courage to move forward.

Senior Spot, our adult day program gives caregivers a break while providing a positive experience and socialization for their loved one. It remains the only program in Eagle County and one of a kind throughout the Western Slope. 2023 brought an increase in those who participated as well as the number of volunteers who make it possible. With community support we are able to offer fun filled field trips to places like Betty Ford Gardens, Dewey Dabble to paint pottery, a Sylvan Lake picnic and lunch out to local restaurants. When at the Golden Eagle Center, participants enjoy light exercise, music, crafts, storytelling and a delicious lunch. Volunteer Activity Buddies also provide needed respite for caregivers by spending up to three hours a week with a loved one in their home, out for coffee, lunch or just a nice walk. All together, this resulted in a record number of respite hours provided for family caregivers.

Eagle County Caregiver Classifieds

Eagle County faces a shortage of in-home caregivers who can assist families in keeping their loved one at home. This year we created a private Facebook group that helps family caregivers connect with paid in-home caregivers looking for work. We hope more and more people will consider being an in-home caregiver as it offers them greater flexibility, extra income and sometimes housing.

Parkinson's Support Group

We have offered a dementia support group two times each month for several years. This year, we added a monthly Parkinson's support group to meet the growing need of people suffering from this disease in Eagle County.

257

Eagle County
Residents Served
2x 2022

150

Care Consultations
4x 2022

>1,500

Hours of Respite
Provided

2

New
Programs



2023 IMPACT REPORT



FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT



RESPIRE & RESOURCES

WHO WE SERVE

- **65+** fasted growing Eagle County population
- **65%** cognitive impairment, Alzheimer's or another dementia
- **50%** have some financial need or concern

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Funding from Vail Health Behavioral Health makes much of our work possible.



Collaboration with regional organizations strengthens the support available to caregivers and their loved ones. Partners include:

- Vail Health
- Eagle County Healthy Aging
- Eagle County Paramedics
- Visiting Angels
- Colorado Mountain Medical
- Eagle Valley Family Practice
- Mountain Family
- Physical & Occupational Therapists
- Faith Based Organizations

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Brad Esty, President
- Robert Mann, Treasurer
- Celynn McClarrinon, Secretary
- Monica McCarroll
- Stephanie Giangulio

WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT US

"Caregiver Connections has been invaluable in taking time to find out what needs we have surrounding Dad's care and actively seeking out resources to help us. I sincerely don't think we would have been able to function as well as we have as a family, if not for the care and resources provided by Caregiver Connections."

"The thing I love most about Caregiver Connections is the Activity Buddy they set up for my mom. I work a very full time job and am not home as much as I would like. Her visits to the Senior Spot and the time with her volunteer Activity Buddy gives her socialization and the opportunity to get to know other local seniors."

"Monty really loves the people in Senior Spot and although he does not communicate very well these days, he is very social and says he likes the food too. It gives me time to do some errands on my own, which goes so much faster. Sometimes I just go back home and take care of business. Since we are together 24/7 it gives us both time to take a break from each other. The people at Caregiver Connections are great resources for me because my life is changing so much."

"I think I get more out of Activity Buddies than the people I volunteer to spend time with. It lifts me up!"

A VIEW TOWARDS 2024

Dear Caregiver Connections Supporters, I have been involved with Caregiver Connections since 2020 and Board President since 2021 and have never been more excited about the future of this organization than I am now. My mother had Alzheimer's and my wife's mother is currently struggling with dementia so the challenges of caring for an older loved one is near and dear to my heart. Being a part of our Board, has provided me a wonderful opportunity to pursue a passion for helping families like mine.

The growth of our organization in 2023 as resulted in our becoming an integral part of the community providers here in Eagle County. We are well positioned to meet the predicted increase in need but we need your help. There is much that still needs to be done, particularly in the area of early stage dementia. For those diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment or those of us who simply worry about memory loss and want to do everything we can to keep our brain healthy and functioning. We are excited about a plan to launch a new program specifically for these people in 2024. The project is designed to help the community and to provide people with education and support, as well as engaging brain stimulating activities.

More is needed to also meet the growing demand for home-based care. To address the shortage of paid, in-home caregivers, we have been working in collaboration with other organizations in Eagle County to encourage more individuals to enter into the field of home-based care. To further address the need, we launched Eagle County Caregiver Classifieds, a private Facebook group where family caregivers can connect with paid caregivers.

Working together, I know we can continue to enhance the lives of older adults and make Eagle County a preferred place to live.

With gratitude, Brad Esty, Board President

