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# News Release

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**July 14, 2011**

### **Department of Veterans Affairs Issuing First Payments to Caregivers**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will send out more than \$430,000 in stipend payments to nearly 200 Family Caregivers of Veterans in July. These Family Caregivers were the first to complete their Caregiver training under the program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

VA Black Hills Health Care System offers a Caregiver Support Program to Veterans within our own service area. To date the program has received eight formal applications for Stipend and Champva Medical Insurance and two Caregiver applications that have already been approved. VA Black Hills Health Care System Caregiver Coordinator, Danielle Dunn has received several other inquiries about the New Comprehensive Benefits and Caregiver Benefits Program from Veteran Caregivers of all eras and continues to outreach to Veteran Service Organizations and Community Agencies to educate everyone about VA benefits to Caregivers.

"This is a long-awaited day for many Family Caregivers who diligently worked to achieve this landmark legislation to enhance services for Family Caregivers," said VA Secretary Eric K. Shinseki. "I am proud VA can now offer direct support to the loved ones who give the Veterans we serve a greater quality of life by allowing them to remain at home surrounded by family and friends." Family Caregivers will receive an average \$1,600 in monthly stipend payments. The initial payments will average \$2,500 because the first stipend checks are retroactive to the date of application. The amount of the stipend is based on the condition of the Veteran and the amount of care they require as well as the geographic location where the Veteran resides. An additional 80 stipend payments will be released from the U.S. Treasury on July 8 bringing the total to 176 Family Caregivers receiving the stipend in July.

Veterans may review the criteria for eligibility and download the Family Caregiver program application (VA CG 10-10) at [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov), [www.blackhills.va.gov](http://www.blackhills.va.gov), the National Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274 or contact Danielle Dunn, Caregiver Support Coordinator for VA Black Hills Health System at 605-720-7036.

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