

Healthier Boynton gets \$200k to help caregivers

OCTOBER 3, 2017

Healthier **Boynton Beach** received a \$200,000 grant from the Palm Healthcare Foundation to continue an initiative to improve family caregiving in the city.

The group is one of foundation's multi-year Healthier Together neighborhood initiatives focusing on family caregiving. This is the second year of a five-year funding commitment by Palm Healthcare.

In a news release, the foundation said it awarded almost \$2 million to local nonprofits in fiscal 2017, which ended Sept. 30, to "support the increased health and well-being of **Palm Beach County** residents." The caregiver program seeks to make the lives of family care providers easier through education, resources, home visits and respite care, according to Palm Healthcare's announcement.

"Healthier Boynton Beach has done a great job pulling together local leadership, Bethesda Hospital as well as working with residents themselves in this, their network building phase of their development," said Patrick McNamara, president and CEO of Palm Healthcare. "There has been a cumulative impact each year in their finding people who can make a difference in dealing with caregiver issues."

Steering committees and work groups made up of Boynton Beach community members provide their input on plans to promote awareness, educate for improved access to services, and support the health and wellness of family caregivers, said Ricky Petty, project director for Healthier Boynton Beach.



Rick Petty, project director, Healthier Boynton Beach (Jim Fairman/Courtesy)

He said there are about 10,000 family caregivers in Boynton Beach.

"We want healthy outcomes. Many caregivers don't realize they are caregivers and can get help," Petty said. "We don't provide the actual service, but direct caregivers to services according to what they need and help them to get to the right place for the service."

Petty said an example of a recent program that came out of teenage caregiver discussion sessions was a Summer Youth Institute, which taught high-school-aged teens about family caregiving and how to juggle school, a job and caring for a loved one.

Healthier Boynton Beach will have a mental health first aid workshop for those who want to learn how to help someone who may be experiencing a mental health crisis or concern. The workshop is set for Oct. 10 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Boynton Beach City Library, 208 S. Seacrest Blvd. To register, call 561-806-6825.