

LIFESPAN RESPITE FUNDING ALERT



URGE Your Representative to Sign Dear Colleague Letter. DEADLINE: March 12, 2018

The Lifespan Respite Care Program (LRCP): The U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL) provides competitive grants to state agencies working with Aging and Disability Resource Center/No Wrong Door Systems and state respite coalitions. The program's purpose is to make quality respite accessible to family caregivers regardless of age or disability through coordinated State Lifespan Respite Systems.

Funding: LRCP was funded at \$3.36 million in FY17. Congress has not enacted a final FY18 funding bill. The LRCP currently is operating at this level under a Continuing Resolution.

Program Status: Thirty-seven states and DC have received LRCP grants from the U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL) since 2009 (see www.archrespite.org).

→ **FY 19 Funding Request:** Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI) and Rep. Gregg Harper (R-MS) are asking Congressional appropriators to fund the LRCP at \$5 million in FY 2019.

→ **ACTION:**

- Call your Representatives at 202-225-3121 and ask for your Member's office. Ask for appropriations or health staff. If you don't reach them, leave a message!
- Ask your Representative to sign the [Dear Colleague Letter](#) to Congressional appropriators requesting \$5 million for the Lifespan Respite Care Program in FY 2019. Deadline for Members to sign is March 12, 2018.
- Phone calls or personal visits are best. For contact information or to send an email to your Member of Congress, visit www.house.gov/representatives.

Lifespan Respite Grants Make a Difference

- This small amount of funding allows grantees to coordinate respite services to reach family caregivers more efficiently and make it more available to underserved families.

- Grantees are delivering services and helping families pay for respite, especially for those caring for someone between the ages of 18-60, including adults with MS, ALS or I/DD; older adults with Alzheimer's disease; children, adults, and the aging on Medicaid waiver waiting lists; grandparents raising grandchildren; rural family caregivers; culturally diverse groups and others identified as having unmet needs in the state.
- Grantees are building respite capacity through provider training and recruitment. Others have issued small grants to community-based organizations to start new respite programs or initiate unique volunteer and faith-based initiatives to provide respite.

Respite – A Critically Necessary and Beneficial Family Support Service

- The nation's 43 million family caregivers provide the vast majority of long-term services and supports to individuals of all ages living at home, yet 85% of those caring for adults have not received respite services (*National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) and AARP Public Policy Institute, Caregiving in the US, 2015*).
- Family caregivers have higher rates of acute and chronic conditions and depression than noncaregivers. Respite, the most requested service by family caregivers, has been shown to help maintain caregiver health, bolster family stability, keep marriages intact, and help avoid or delay more costly out-of-home placements.
- Caregiving is a lifespan issue. Providing care for older adults is a growing concern, but currently more than half of adult care recipients (53%) are between the ages of 18 and 75 (*NAC and AARP, 2015*). More than 14 million children under age 18 have special health care needs (*Health Resources and Services Administration, 2016*).

Respite Reaps Cost Savings

- In these times of serious budget constraints, the economic value of respite is exceptional. Delaying nursing home care of just one individual with a chronic condition for several months can save Medicaid, private insurance, or the family tens of thousands of dollars.
- The estimated value of family caregiving of adults is \$470 billion annually -- more than total Medicaid spending in 2013, and as much as the total sales of the world's largest company, Wal-Mart (*AARP Public Policy Institute, Valuing the Invaluable, 2015*).
- Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania studied the records of over 28,000 children with autism ages 5 to 21 who were enrolled in Medicaid in 2004. They concluded that for every \$1,000 states spent on respite services in the previous 60 days, there was an 8 percent drop in the odds of hospitalization (*Mandell, David S., et al, 2012*).
- American businesses lose \$17.1 to \$33.6 billion annually in lost productivity costs related to employees' caregiving responsibilities (*MetLife Mature Market Institute, 2006*).