Montana Lifespan Respite Coalition

Start-Up Process

- A Lifespan Respite Summit was held March 2011 to address respite needs, gaps and current use.
- A group of nonprofit providers, caregivers, government agencies and other stakeholders met to prioritize issues and needs for writing a Lifespan Respite grant.
- Montana’s Senior and Long-term Care Division (SLTC) received a Lifespan Respite Grant in August 2011.
- SLTC contracted with Developmental Educational Assistance Program (DEAP), a nonprofit corporation providing a variety of services to special needs populations including a Lifespan Respite services program, to help implement the grant.

Structure

2011

- A State Workgroup was formed consisting of DEAP and representatives of all the Department of Public Health and Human Services divisions that provide respite and caregivers.
- The Montana Lifespan Respite Coalition (MLRC) was organized and consists of nonprofit providers, caregivers, and other respite providers across the state.

2013

- The State Workgroup merged with the MLRC.
- Four committees were created:
  - Caregiver Education and Training Committee, whose goal is to educate caregivers about the purpose, need for and values of respite.
  - Respite Responders Committee, whose purpose is to educate the people who answer the phones for the 1-800 and 211 phone numbers about respite needs and available services.
  - Website Committee, whose purpose is to develop and maintain a Lifespan Respite website.
  - Executive Committee, whose purpose is to maintain a healthy Lifespan Respite Coalition and oversee all grant activities.

2014

- Committees were restructured:
  - Public Awareness committee replaced the Respite Responders and Website committees. This committee’s purpose is to work on website improvements and coordinate with other committees for marketing needs.
  - Summit Committee was added to work on the planning of the annual summits.
  - Sustainability Committee was added to focus on the sustainability of the program through other grants and/or support from the state.

Staff

- Coalition members chair the committees voluntarily. The ADRC Program Director with the DPHHS Senior & Long Term Care Division acts as the Program Manager for the grant and works closely with DEAP’s Lifespan Respite Director who acts as the Project Director.

Funding

- The MLRC has no funding dedicated to it.

Membership

- The coalition is open to consumers, providers, agency representatives and other interested parties and currently has 103 members.
Meetings and Communication
- Coalition meets every other month, rotating with WebEx meetings and meetings in person.
- Committees meet between MLRC meetings, usually by conference call.
- Communication through email and phone.

Major Activities

2012
- Held caregiver focus groups in four regions of the state.
- March – Aired an Aging Horizons TV show focusing on the Lifespan Respite grant activities as well as highlighting caregiver issues and the importance of having access to respite services.
- June – Distributed a caregiver survey.
- August – Distributed a provider survey.
- October – Completed an Environmental Scan.
- October – Presented at the International Short Break Conference in Canada on Lifespan Respite in rural Montana.

2013
- March – Combined the State Workgroup and MLRC into one organization.
- March – Developed a strategic plan.
- June – Began designing the website with a focus on frequently asked questions, caregiver resources and identification of respite providers.
- July – Wrote a sustainability plan and added to the strategic plan.

2014
- January – Worked with an MSU Graphics Art student to design the statewide branding and logo.
- January – Distributed provider registry forms to 385 providers to collect respite information for website.
- June – Montana Senior and Long-Term Care Division in partnership with the MLRC received a 3-year Sustainability State Lifespan Respite grant.
- August – SLTC contracted with DEAP to implement a statewide voucher program.
- September – A Facebook page was created for the MLRC.
- December – PSA about the definition of respite and the need for it aired. PSA added to website.

2015
- January – Partnered in planning with the Governor’s Conference on Aging and the Montana Gerontology Society to add a Lifespan Respite track to the conference agenda and a Lifespan Respite Summit during the last day of the conference.
- March – Finalized an application process and all the necessary paperwork for a respite voucher program.
- May – Held a Lifespan Respite Summit, co-sponsored by ARCH with Jill Kagan as a keynote speaker.
- July – Launched the Lifespan Respite Voucher Program.
- August – A PSA promoting the Lifespan Respite Voucher Program aired statewide through the Montana Broadcasters Association – Radio and Television.
- November – A voucher utilization map by county was added to the coalition website.
- November – The Voucher program PSA begins a 3-month airing.
- December – A caregiver support group plan is finalized.

2016
- February – An Aging Horizons show promoting the Lifespan Respite Summit aired.
- March – Lifespan Respite Summit, titled: Riding the Respite Wave: Sustaining the Momentum.
- May – A Lifespan Respite training module was added to the ADRC Options Counseling program.
- September – Presented on Lifespan Respite at the Governor’s Conference on Aging.
- September – Presented on the Lifespan Respite Voucher Program at the National Lifespan Respite Conference.
- September – Montana Senior and Long-Term Care Division in partnership with the MLRC received a one-year Expansion Grant that added funding for direct respite care through the voucher program.
- September – Spoke at the Governor’s Press Conference along with a caregiver that told her story; Governor announces that he is putting Lifespan Respite in his budget for the next biennium.
- October – Letter of Support signed by the Governor declaring November as “Family Caregivers Month.”
- November – A voucher utilization map by county was added to the coalition website.
- November – The Voucher program PSA begins a 3-month airing.
- December – A caregiver support group plan is finalized.

2017
- January – The first monthly Big Sky Caregivers Connect support group was held in Helena at the Covenant United Methodist Church.
- February – Visited the Northern Cheyenne reservation to meet with agencies to promote Lifespan Respite.
- February – Organized email campaigns to legislators to advocate for Lifespan Respite funding in the Governor’s budget.
- February – Work began on adding a caregiver blog to our Facebook page.
- April – The Voucher program PSA began a 3-month airing.
May – Lifespan Respite Summit, titled: Refuel and Recharge: Coping with Compassion Fatigue. The keynote speaker and caregiver panel were taped and will be available for viewing on the MLRC website.

Documents/Resources Available
- Website: http://dphhs.mt.gov/respite
- Grant Informational Handout
- Guiding Principles for Coalition
- Coalition: What’s In It for You?
- Mission and Vision Statement
- Caregiver Survey
- Provider Survey
- Environmental Scan
- Strategic Plan/Sustainability Plan
- Website Provider Registry form with letter
- Lifespan Respite Coalition Brochure
- Powerful Tools Respite Voucher Form
- Lifespan Respite Voucher Brochure
- Lifespan Respite Voucher Forms
- Voucher Application
- Voucher Award Letter
- Respite Voucher Reimbursement Form
- Satisfaction Survey
- Voucher Process Checklist
- Request for Additional Funds Form
- Year 2 Voucher Application
- FAQ Information Sheet
- Database for Tracking Application/Caregiver/Care Recipients etc.
- Voucher Award Spreadsheet
- Cost Share Sliding Scale Table
- Cost Share Worksheet
- Monthly Voucher Report
- Coalition Membership Spreadsheet
- Publicity Consent Form
- Coalition Committee Descriptor

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