

Lifespan Respite Care Program Enhancement Grant

PROJECT SUMMARY

Grantee Organization: Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)

State: Virginia

Project Period: July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2026

Contact: Nick Slentz, nick.slentz@dars.virginia.gov

Project Overview:

The **goal** of the Virginia Lifespan Respite Voucher Program (VLRVP) project is to enhance access and reduce barriers to respite care, as well as enhance education and awareness about respite care.

Project objectives: 1) expand and enhance respite care services; 2) improve statewide dissemination and coordination of respite care services; 3) improve access and quality of respite care services; and 4) reduce family caregiver strain.

Proposed interventions: enhance access and reduce barriers to respite care by prioritizing diversity recruitment, enhancing partnership with referral organizations, implementing three new payment policies, developing a program manual, introducing new consumer-directed caregiver training, increasing funding, and adjusting eligibility requirements; enhance education and awareness about respite care by expanding partnership with Virginia Caregiver Coalition, developing marketing plan, creating a public awareness campaign, developing caregiver education materials on effective respite use; creating "Helpful Tips" training videos on caregiving tasks, and piloting and establishing a caregiver support group.

Outcomes and Products:

Anticipated outcomes: 1) increased diversity of caregivers through target populations and increased total number of caregivers served; 2) increased accessibility to the Voucher program; 3) increased efficiency of the program through the addition of automatic referrals on two referral organization websites; 4) increased awareness of respite services through one public awareness campaign; 5) increased consistency of the respite program through the development of a program manual for distribution; 6) strengthened respite care workforce and improved quality of care through Wisconsin KIT caregiver training; 7) reduced financial barriers for caregivers participating in the respite program; 8) improved caregiver experience in the respite program; 9) improved program outcomes credibility through the addition of a third-party evaluator; 10) increased knowledge about utilizing respite effectively; 11) reduced eligibility barriers for non-spousal caregivers; 12) increased confidence for caregivers on their caregiving experience by 50%; and 13) reduced caregiver burden by 50%.

Expected products: partnerships with referral organizations; three new payment policies; new Lifespan Respite Program manual; adjusted eligibility requirements; expanded partnership with Virginia Navigator and the Virginia Caregiver Coalition; marketing plan; public awareness campaign; caregiver education materials on effective respite use; "Helpful Tips" training videos; and a caregiver support group.

