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.