

THE CHRONICLES OF BUILDING A STATEWIDE VOLUNTEER RESPITE CONSORTIUM

Elaine Whitford
The Center for Volunteer Caregiving
Cary, North Carolina

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- In North Carolina's Lifespan Respite Grant submitted in 2020, the plan included the development of a statewide volunteer caregiver respite consortium.
- Development of the consortium began in 2022.
- This session will cover the steps taken to create the consortium, what the consortium has done to date, and a review of the successes and challenges.

Overview

Welcome and Introductions

- Who is attending this session?
- Why? What do you hope to learn?

Purpose

- **Task**

Build a consortium of organizations across the State of North Carolina that are operating volunteer respite programs for family caregivers.

- **Purpose**

- Facilitate information sharing among programs
- Support the expansion of existing programs
- Support the creation of new programs

Why was CVC selected to lead?

- The Center for Volunteer Caregiving (CVC) has operated programs that support older adults living independently with volunteer services.
 - Volunteer Driver Escorted Transportation
 - Friendly Visits
 - Chore Services
 - Family Caregiver Respite

Why CVC? *(continued)*

- Began as a Faith in Action program funded by the RWJ Foundation in 1992
- Now a community supported program
- Only program in North Carolina providing these services exclusively with volunteers
- Caregiver Respite program is funded by Family Caregiver Support Program and supports all family caregivers in our county.

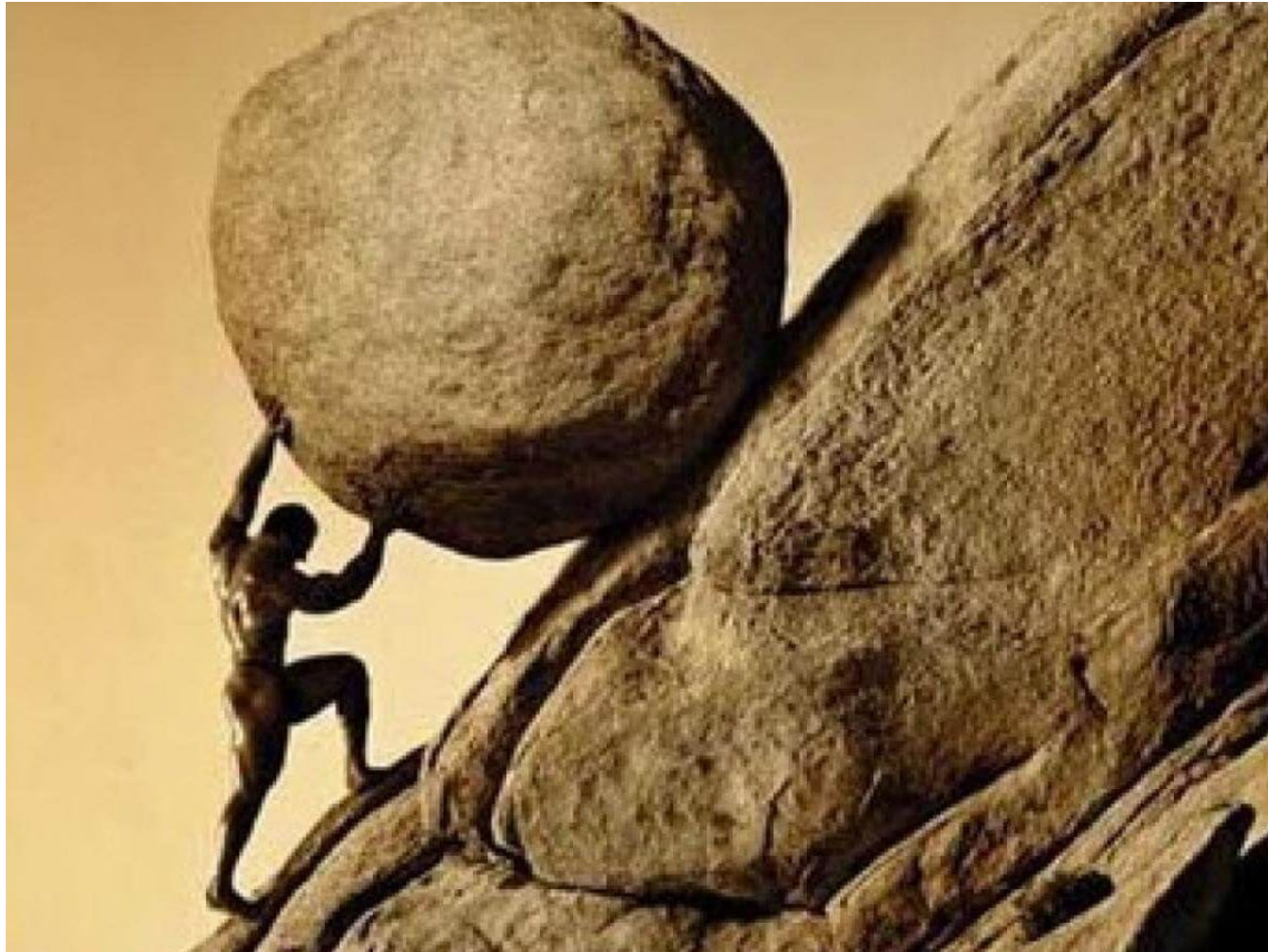
Type of programs to be included

The intent is to be very inclusive and creative about the types of volunteer respite programs represented in the consortium including:

- Programs operated by nonprofit corporate organizations
- Programs operated by unincorporated groups
- Programs operated by government entities
- Programs operated by communities of faith
- Programs serving family caregivers of older adults and adults with chronic or severe health conditions or disease
- Programs serving family caregivers of children and adults with disabilities

Goals and Work Plan

- Form Steering Committee to guide development of consortium
- Build membership of the consortium
- Provide education and support to consortium members
- Create a webpage for consortium
- Develop toolkit for new program creation and operation



Getting
Started

Creating the Steering Committee

- Goals
 - Statewide representation
 - 5-6 members
 - Diversity in programs

Steering Committee result

- 6 members
 - 2 from The Center for Volunteer Caregiving
 - 2 from The Shepherd Center of Greater Winston-Salem
 - 1 from Land of Sky Area Agency on Aging
 - 1 from Lower Cape Fear LifeCare

(All represent older adult services.)

Steering Committee tasks

- ✓ Find organizations and people running volunteer caregiver respite programs in NC
- ✓ Inform them about the consortium
- ✓ Recruit them to join the consortium (or at least attend first meeting)
- ✓ Determine agendas for first consortium meetings

First challenge

- Finding organizations and people running volunteer respite programs
- Finding volunteer respite programs for children or adults with disabilities

Consortium member expectations

- Participate in several educational and information sharing meetings each year
- Receive a listing of other volunteer caregiver respite programs in the State
- Receive information about best practices in operating volunteer programs
- Receive information about funding opportunities for volunteer caregiver respite programs

Before first meeting

- Sent an online survey to all people to learn more about their program and their needs

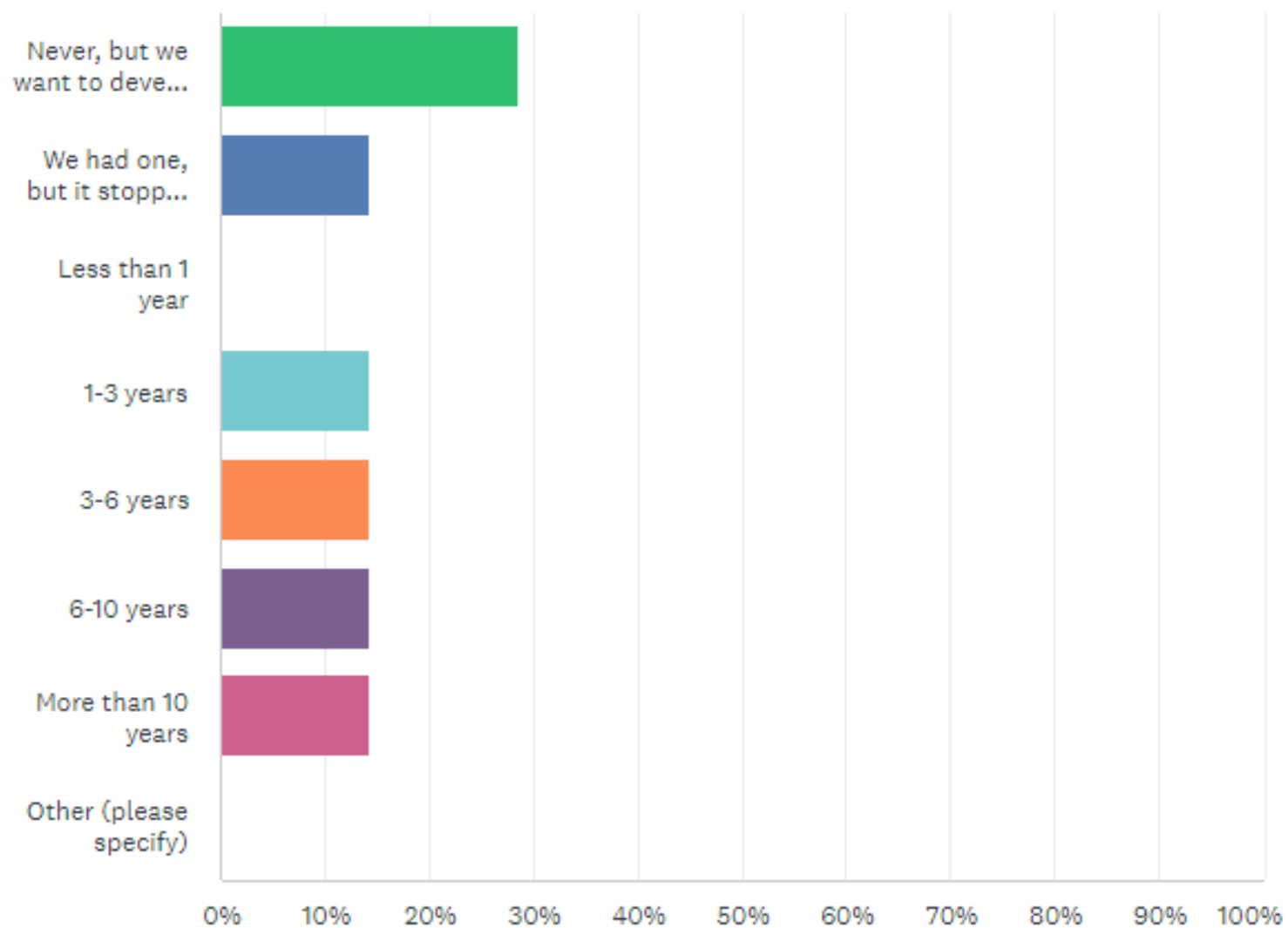
Survey responses

7 people responded

- How many family caregivers served in previous year?
 - 5
 - 5-7
 - 13
 - 70
- How many volunteers for the respite program?
 - 5
 - 10
 - 30
 - 60

How long has your organization or group operated a volunteer caregiver respite program?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0



Survey responses – program needs

- Challenges in running the program or current needs
 - Finding participants
 - Narrow scope of program (only 1 hour per week)
 - Need more volunteers
 - Need to develop program materials
 - Liability concerns
 - Is financial compensation appropriate for volunteers (e.g. reimburse for mileage)
 - Resources for background checks
 - Guidelines for volunteers
 - Participants needs exceed what untrained volunteer can do in 1-2 hrs/week

Survey responses – other needs

- Information/Resources Needed
 - How to determine eligibility for volunteer respite vs. agency respite staffing
 - Funding and program sustainability
 - How to handle when participant's needs exceed scope of volunteer service
 - Training and supporting volunteers

First meeting (virtual) – January 2023

- Introductions
- Review of consortium purpose
- Review of survey results
- Brainstorming session on volunteer recruitment and retention
- Discussion on getting back to normal after COVID
- Asked for input on what they wanted from member meetings

Topics covered in member meetings

- More on volunteer recruitment
- Volunteer training
- Liability and insurance for volunteer programs
- How to keep volunteers within the program parameters
- Member presentation on their new respite day program
- Respite voucher programs available in NC
- Music and Memory program for people with dementia

Meeting format

- All virtual, except one in-person in November 2023 (which was not well attended)
- Every meeting begins with introductions of new members and program updates/sharing
- Have a presentation or discussion topic for each meeting
- Began with monthly meetings, now every other month (but skip the summer)

Check-ins with consortium members (Summer 2023)

- Steering Committee members called each consortium member to check-in and get feedback to:
 - Develop personal relationship
 - Solidify engagement
 - Ensure their expectations/needs were being met
 - Identify issues for meeting attendance

Consortium membership today (May 2024)

16 members representing 14 programs

- 3 local area agency on aging gov't programs
- 1 AmeriCorps program (housed in county aging department)
- 4 local “villages” or neighborhood programs
- 1 hospice program
- 1 church program
- 4 community-based nonprofit organizations

(About 2/3 have active volunteer respite programs operating.)

Dedicated webpage for consortium members

- Includes:
 - Membership list
 - Meeting agendas and list of upcoming meetings
 - Recordings of previous virtual meetings
 - Resources and information
 - Funding opportunities for volunteer respite programs

In process – Toolkit for Program Creation

- Will be available to all consortium members and anyone who is interested in creating a volunteer respite program
- Will include:
 - Best practices on volunteer recruitment and management, liability and insurance information, respite best practices, and program examples
- Will include input from all consortium members

Consortium success stories

- Two groups interested in creating volunteer respite programs met with me to discuss program set-up
- A member program liked the new respite day program model presented and will be applying for funding through a source they learned about through the consortium.
- A program that lost its insurance coverage received guidance on where to go to find new coverage.

Managing the consortium

- Does not take a lot of time (now 2-4 hours per month)
- Steering Committee largely not active now
- Always looking for potential new members

Continuing after LifeSpan support

- LifeSpan funding guaranteed through 2026
- Tasks that required a lot of time or funding have been completed
- CVC has committed continuing support for the consortium *ad infinitum*
- Could easily include other volunteer programs serving older adults and people with disabilities beyond respite

Questions?

Elaine Whitford, Executive Director
The Center for Volunteer Caregiving
Cary, North Carolina
919-460-0567
ewhitford@ctrvolcare.org

www.volunteercaregiving.org