

# THE CHRONICLES OF BUILDING A STATEWIDE VOLUNTEER RESPITE CONSORTIUM

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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

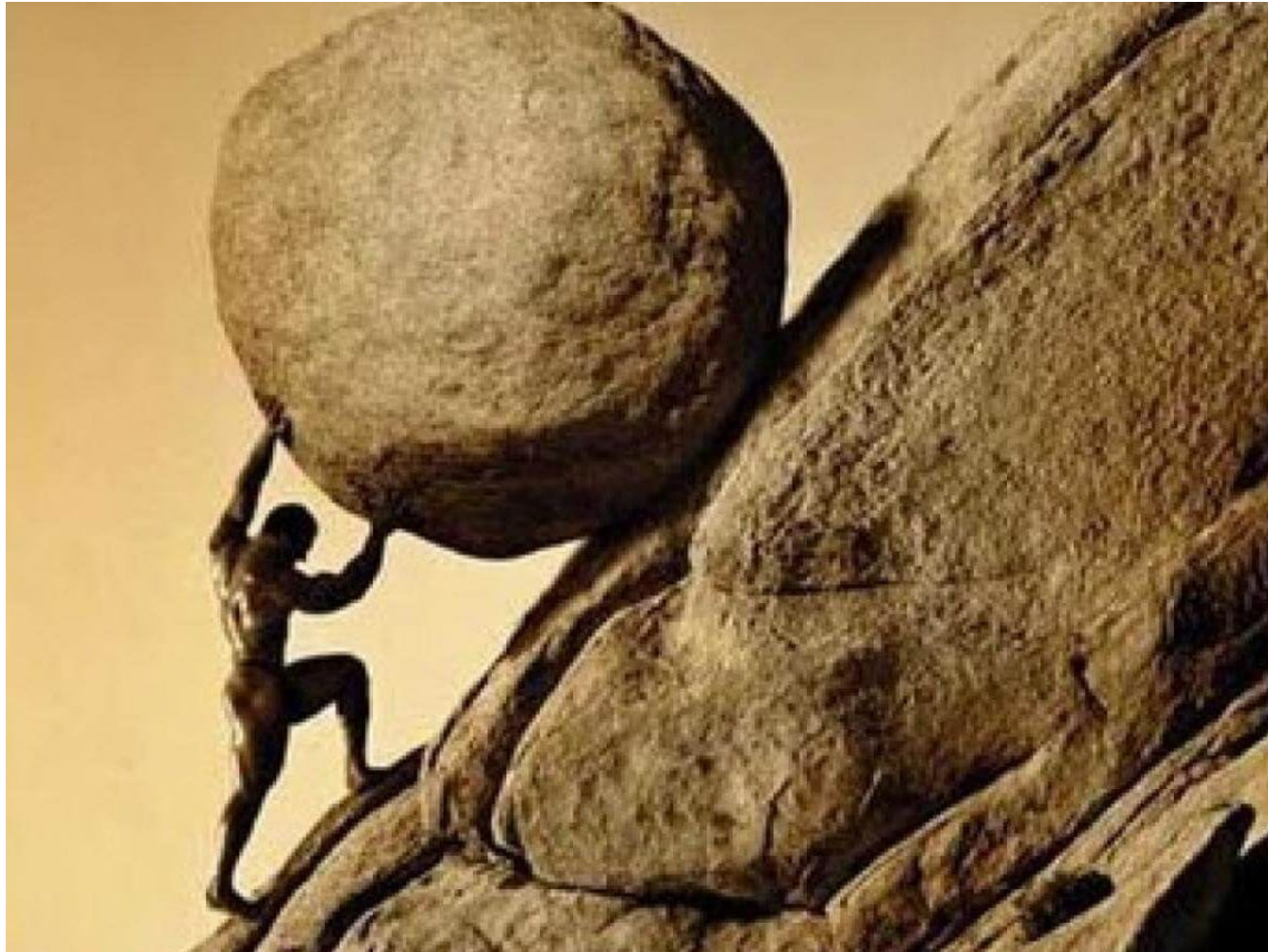
The intent is to be very inclusive and creative about the types of volunteer respite programs represented in the consortium including:

- 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

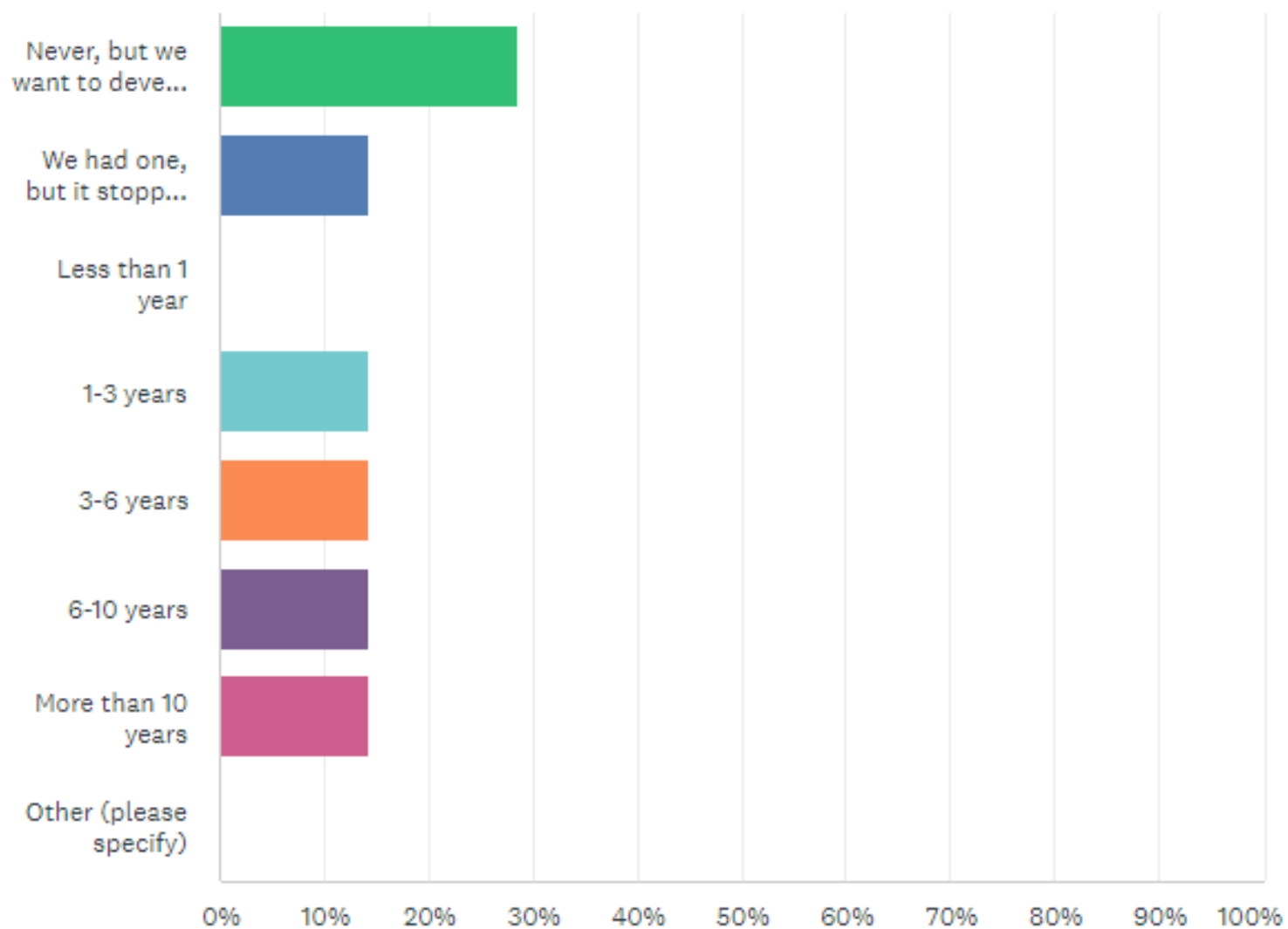
7 people responded

- 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?

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