

SESSION LAW 2010- 31, SECTION 10.35B

**SENIOR SERVICES: PROJECT C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternatives to
Running on Empy)**



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES**

October 1, 2015

Project C.A.R.E SFY 2014-15

Over 5 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease and as many as 16 million will have the disease by 2050. According to the National Alzheimer's Association there are currently 437,000 caregivers in North Carolina providing care for loved-ones with Alzheimer's disease. By 2020, an estimated 190,000 North Carolinians age 65 and older are projected to have Alzheimer's disease.

Pursuant to Section 10.35B of Session Law 2010-31 (Senate Bill 897), the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS), was directed to develop and implement a plan for use of the \$200,000 in recurring funds to support Alzheimer's-related activities consistent with the goals of Project C.A.R.E (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empy). The session law called for this report to be submitted to the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, the North Carolina Study Commission on Aging (no longer in existence), and the Fiscal Research Division by October 1st annually.

Statewide Caregiver Support

Project C.A.R.E. expanded in the fall of 2013 from providing support in 36 counties to all 100 counties. DAAS recognized the importance of reaching individuals with Alzheimer's disease and their family caregivers as an essential step to meeting the long-term program objective of providing support for the significant increase in the number of caregivers of those with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. DAAS believes that Project C.A.R.E., including the use of respite when available, helps individuals and families avoid or delay the use of more costly formal interventions, including placement in long-term care facilities.

Through existing state funds, Project C.A.R.E. established three Dementia Capable Specialist contractual positions. Each Specialist is affiliated with dementia-specific host agencies in the western, central and eastern areas of North Carolina who are available to all 100 counties (building on Project C.A.R.E.'s effective Family Consultant Model). Each Specialist is linked to the 16 Area Agencies on Aging and their Family Caregiver Support Program through formal memoranda of agreement so that all available resources are well coordinated and leveraged for maximum effect. Through this partnership, caregivers are referred to available respite care in their county of residence (public funds for respite are currently quite limited).

Dementia Capable Specialists provide support directly to caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias by:

1. Providing persons with dementia and their caregivers phone and face-to-face counseling, care consultation, dementia-specific information, caregiver assessments, caregiver education and connections to strong social support networks;
2. Partnering with each Area Agency on Aging (AAA) through its Family Caregiver Support Program to provide outreach, training and education;

3. Offering individual caregivers evidence-based and evidence-informed programs, as appropriate, such as REACH (Resources for Enhancing Alzheimer's Caregiver Health), and referring families to other resources;
4. Providing training and assistance to AAAs and the community-at-large to increase capacity to assist persons with dementia and their families; and
5. Enhancing partnerships with and among the various entities serving persons with Alzheimer's disease and assisting their caregivers.

Description of Partnering Agencies

1. Land of Sky Regional Council Area Agency on Aging (Western Office): The Area Agency on Aging is a leader and catalyst in helping a four-county region (Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania) develop a comprehensive system of programs and opportunities that provide older adults with the information and support needed to age optimally in the setting of their choice through coordination of home and community-based services, advocacy, outreach, training and education. The AAA administers the Family Caregiver Support Program for this four-county region and previously served as the Project C.A.R.E. host agency for 19 western counties.
2. Duke Family Support (Central Office): Duke University's Aging Center Family Support Program established the first support groups in NC for families of adults with memory disorders in 1980 with Duke Hospital Auxiliary and NC Foundation grants. Currently those original organizations sponsor support groups of the Alzheimer's Association and Alzheimer's NC in almost all 100 counties. Staff members at Duke are recognized as national experts on issues related to the caring of loved ones with Alzheimer's and related dementias. Staff of the Duke Family Support Program has served as a resource for both the Family Caregiver Support Program and Project C.A.R.E. since the inception of these services.
3. Alzheimer's North Carolina (Eastern Office): Since 1985, Alzheimers North Carolina, Inc. (formerly the Eastern Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association) has provided family support, community education, public awareness, and support for research pertaining to the prevention, cure and treatment of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders. This organization serves 51 of North Carolina's counties (from the Triangle to the coast) with offices in Raleigh, Greenville and Wilmington. Alzheimer's North Carolina has a strong working relationship with the AAAs, the Duke Family Support Program and DAAS. (This program is subcontracted through Triangle J Council of Governments AAA).

When additional funding for caregivers of those with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias becomes available, the DAAS is clearly positioned to provide this support statewide.