

Annual Report on Improving Alzheimer's and Related Dementia Services in South Dakota

**Prepared for the House
Health and Human Services Committee**

By the South Dakota Department of Human Services

January 11, 2022

Background Information

The Department of Human Services worked in partnership with Legislators in February of 2021 to come to agreement on a plan to improve Alzheimer's and related dementia services in South Dakota. This agreement was made to move this important issue forward in a collaborative fashion and in lieu of legislation. Efforts already in place at the time of this agreement included:

- The LifeSpan Respite Coalition which is a grant funded project funded through the Administration for Community Living administered by the Division of Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) within the Department of Human Services (DHS). Key priorities of the original project were to develop a Respite website, complete with a database of individuals and agencies willing and available to provide Respite care for Caregivers of all ages.
- The Family Caregiver Program, also administered through LTSS, provides support, both financially and with information and resources, for family members caring for loved ones including individuals over the age of 18, who are the primary caregiver for a person of any age with Alzheimer's or related dementia.
- DHS has several staff members who have undergone specific training and are certified as Dementia Care Practitioners.
- Under the Nursing Home Innovation Grant Program in 2019, DHS funded six projects related to Dementia Care Education and Support.
- DHS provides additional reimbursement through the Add-on Payment program to provide care for individuals with a history of challenging behaviors, including those related to Alzheimer's and related dementias. Services are provided at a special care unit in Avera Sunset Manor in Irene and at approximately 25 nursing facilities across the state, including Good Samaritan Center in Canistota which was the first agency to utilize this program and supports individuals in an integrated fashion rather than in a specialized unit.
- DHS and the Department of Health (DOH) have made funds available from the Civil Monetary Penalty Fund through a grant program for the Music and Memory program in nursing facilities across the state. During Phase I of the Music and Memory project funded in 2018 in South Dakota, 57 facilities were certified as Music and Memory Centers. During Phase II, additional facilities have the opportunity to participate and be certified. Technical assistance is available through the program implementation period which runs until May of 2022. The South Dakota Foundation for Medical Care who is the lead agency funded for this project hopes to have all licensed South Dakota nursing facilities certified in Phase II.

The Department is appreciative of the opportunity to work with stakeholders in the state to improve outcomes for people who are impacted by Alzheimer's and related dementias and their families. To this effort, DHS agreed to:

- Designate a State Alzheimer's Coordinator within the Department of Human Services.
- Collaborate with the Alzheimer's Association in applying for an Alzheimer's grant from the Administration for Community Living at the next availability.
- Seek and apply for other grant opportunities related to Alzheimer's and Brain Health.
- Use the framework of the Alzheimer's State plan created by the Alzheimer's Association sponsored workgroup to update and establish a workplan to address Alzheimer's which ties in future grant activity requirements and state priorities.
- Continue to work with our partners, including the Alzheimer's Association, to plan for and implement strategies to address the impact of Alzheimer's in South Dakota.
- Prepare an annual report to the House Health and Human Services committee each year on the progress of the outlined efforts.

2021 Activities

DHS is pleased to report our efforts in Alzheimer's and dementia related services in South Dakota. Activities include the following:

- A State Dementia Services Coordinator was named and works out of the LTSS office in Sioux Falls. Specific activities of the Coordinator include:
 - Meets regularly with staff from the Alzheimer's Association in Sioux Falls.
 - Meets regularly with staff from Active Generations who administer a contract funded by LTSS to provide Caregiver education, training, and support. Some examples of trainings provided through this contract include Savvy Caregiver and Stressbusters for Caregivers.
 - Submitted two grant applications during calendar year 2021 for the Alzheimer's Disease Program Initiative – Grants to States and Communities. Neither of the applications resulted in an award, however communication from the grant's office indicated that community entities have been more strongly considered over state applications in recent year's grant opportunities.
 - Participated in presentations and outreach events specific to Caregiver Support, Geriatrics and Alzheimer's.

- Scheduled and facilitated Caregiver Listening Sessions in nine locations across the state, plus one virtual session, designed to gain feedback and input directly from Caregivers. Some of the feedback by participants included:
 - Parents caring for adult children need additional support.
 - There is a need for additional assisted living centers and adult day services in rural communities.
 - Concern of not enough staffing for in-home services.
 - Concern of burdensome eligibility paperwork in some situations.
 - Concern for Native American elders living “at risk” without someone to watch out for their needs.
 - Individual participants expressed appreciation for the opportunity to be heard.
 - Met with a Dementia Care Specialist with the Aging and Disability Resource Center in Wisconsin to gain information on Wisconsin’s achievements and experiences to date which might be considered for implementation in South Dakota.
- Additional efforts completed in 2021 include:
 - Successful application for a Lifespan Respite Enhancement Grant. The Department was awarded \$420,931.55 for a five year grant cycle, July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2026 . A key component of this grant is the creation and maintenance of a Respite Care Registry where Caregivers can gain access to Respite Providers to provide temporary relief of caregiving responsibilities.
 - 103 agency providers have enrolled in the Respite Care Registry.
 - 21 individual providers have enrolled in the Respite Care Registry.
 - 37 Individuals have received training through the Respite Care Certificate Program; the program was developed to provide individuals with the opportunity to become a Certified Respite Provider.
 - Continued support of care for individuals with challenging behaviors, including those influenced by dementia diagnoses through the Add-On Payment process.
 - Implementation of rate tiers in the Medicaid supported Assisted Living setting to ensure that Assisted Livings providing care for individuals with Alzheimer’s and related dementias are reimbursed for additional staff time when caring for these individuals, thereby incentivizing the assisted living setting to delay transfer to a higher level of care and allowing the individual to remain living in a community setting for a longer period of time.
 - Worked with Nursing Homes who were awarded grants through the Nursing Home Innovation Grant program to complete projects, some of which were specifically related to education regarding dementia and how to interact with residents with dementia in a more successful and positive way. Performance metrics provided by the facilities

participating in a dementia education program showed increased employee satisfaction and retention after education about the disease process and how to interact with individuals in a more positive way.

- The South Dakota Long-term care Ombudsman (SDLTCO) program was awarded a two-year grant totaling \$201,184 for dementia care education. The funding comes from the Civil Monetary Penalty Fund, administered by the Department of Health (DOH). When nursing facilities are found out of compliance with conditions of performance during annual recertification or complaint surveys, the federal government may impose upon and collect a civil money penalty from the facility. Those penalties collected are made available to the state for use in improving nursing facility care in South Dakota. The approval of the grant must therefore be approved by both DOH and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) through the Civil Money Penalty Reinvestment Response Act. Activities for this grant are detailed under Next Steps.
- The SDLTCO utilized CARES Act funds directed to the program through the Administration for Community Living to purchase Resident Experience Simulation Kits to utilize when presenting information on Resident Rights to Nursing Facilities and Assisted Living Centers. These simulation kits provide the opportunity for facility staff to experience life through the viewpoint of residents by utilizing tools which simulate the various disabilities experienced by residents including, low vision, impaired hearing, decreased mobility, dementia, and auditory hallucinations, etc.

Next Steps

- Implementation of the Dementia Care Education Grant:
 - The first year of the grant will focus on creating Champions in dementia care in nursing facilities across the state. Utilizing Teepa Snow's Positive Approach to Care Champion Skills Series, designated nursing facility Champions will participate in the Skills series to become skilled in caring for people living with dementia. The program will also be supported by infographics, skills cards, and other tools.
 - The second year will kick off with a webinar by Teepa Snow to introduce informational DVDs and their use; 27 individuals will become certified consultants and certified Positive Approach to Care (PAC) trainers. In addition, the second year of the grant will include purchase of Teepa Snow's Positive Approach to Care, 5-pack DVD set, for each of the certified PAC trainers and for each Nursing Facility in South Dakota. Topics covered include:
 - Contact information for further information or questions: It's All in Your Approach
 - Challenging Behaviors in Dementia

- Progression of Dementia
- Seeing GEMS – not just loss
- The Journey of Dementia

- Implementation of Simulation Exercises in Training to Nursing Facilities to assist staff with better understanding of the life experience of residents.

- The State Dementia Services Coordinator will coordinate with the policy director recently hired by the Alzheimer’s Association to review the State Plan for Alzheimer’s created in 2018 by an Alzheimer’s Association sponsored workgroup and update the Dementia Services workplan and prioritize focus areas.

- Additional efforts under consideration include:
 - Continuation of the Caregiver Listening Sessions.
 - Creation of a commercial for television which outlines the early signs of dementia and provides information on how to reach the State Dementia Services Coordinator.

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