10/10/2023 Supporting Older Adults and their Family

Sub-Group: **Caregiver Support**

**Lead #1:** Linda Atack

**Lead #2:**  Melissa Swartz

**Participants**:

 Brook T. Blanton, Kristen Brannock, Heather Carter, Kay Castillo, Lee Covington, Sue Deaton, Steve Hahn, Catherine Johnson, Erin Kent, Brett Moraes, P. Renee Myatt, Neal Shah, Ellen Whitlock, Elizabeth Williams, Vanessa Real Williams

*Area of Focus: Develop programs and resources specifically designed to assist family and friend caregivers, including grandparents raising grandchildren, by providing guidance, training, and respite care.*

***Existing Efforts and Recommendations:***

* *Age-friendly initiative: Use data to analyze lifestyle factors that may lead to Alzheimer’s, develop public health actions, address social determinants of health, and support caregivers.*
* [*BOLD ACT Grant:*](https://www.cdc.gov/aging/pdf/2018-2023-Road-Map-508.pdf) *Use data to set priorities, to develop public health actions, to address social determinants of health, and to provide support for caregivers who take care of people with dementias.*
* *BOLD ACT Grant: funding for the BOLD Public Health Programs to Address Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias; Funded health departments will promote a strong public health approach to Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias (ADRD); Enabled NC to pursue the federal CDC BOLD – Healthy Brain Initiative and to build a NC public health infrastructure that addressed Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias with objectives including: increasing early detection and diagnosis, risk reduction, prevention of avoidable hospitalizations, and supporting dementia caregiving.*
* *NCCOA recommendations: 2. Support Economic Self-Sufficiency for Older Adults and Their Caregivers: Expand access to health care by eliminating the health insurance coverage gap, especially for seniors who are not yet eligible.*

*NCCOA recommendations: Enhance support for caregivers of older adults.*

**Greatest Challenges:**

* #1 issue was financial aspects of caregiving including restricted insurance support, limited paid family assistance programs, limits on employers allowing paid time off to care for elders, resistance from person needing support;
* #2 was difficulty with learning about/accessing/qualifying for community resources (especially in rural areas);
* Other issues included limited local agency funding to meet both general and specific needs (e.g., transportation), and
* Unrealistic limits on post hospital support
* Paid Post Hospital Support

**Greatest Actual/Potential Resources/Supports**

* PACE was identified as a primary comprehensive support service; other programs cited included Meals on Wheels, Project Care (dementia), Home Care Independence (?);
* Expansion of in-home services connected to a hospitalization as well as general in-home services to support independent living and avoid/postpone early admission to senior care facilities;
* Additional private/public arrangements that include community volunteers (e.g. friendly visitors, transportation, Meals on Wheels, insurance counseling) working under the direction/guidance of professional staff;
* Additional topics included tax credits for caregivers and access to unemployment benefits (either full or partial), SNAP and Medicaid (review of “spend-down” stipulations)
* Family Caregiver Task Force, Project Care and Project Independence, Caregivers Living with Dementia

**General Notes/Comments:**

* How will we approach research?
* Research = Interviewing caregivers
* What other states are doing
* Resources by region
* Caregiver tax credits
* Care Act
* “Aging is not a bad thing…”