

Alaska Commission on Aging

National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP)

DHSS Division of Senior & Disabilities Services

Senior Community-Based Grants Component

Recommended FY2014 Budget Increment: \$450,000



Recommendation: The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) recommends \$450,000 increment to the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP), an existing grant program administered by the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services Senior Grants Unit, to provide multi-year grants to providers serving (1) unpaid caregivers caring for elderly individuals (age 60+) with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia (ADRD) and other debilitating health conditions and (2) unpaid elderly caregivers serving children by providing respite, case management, training, counseling and legal assistance. In FY2011, the NFCSP served 1,309 unpaid caregivers of which 1,234 caregivers served elderly persons and 75 elderly caregivers served children. The requested funding will strengthen caregiver support to delay nursing home placement (\$247,760 annual cost) and reduce the number of displaced children at-risk for foster care (\$27.67 daily rate). The increment will also add a total of 211 “new” unpaid caregivers receiving NFCSP support services. Requested funding will add \$450,000 (\$250,000 GF/MH and \$200,000) to the current \$1,026,575 baseline (\$764,933 federal/\$261,642 State GF).

Problem Statement: Unpaid family caregivers provide the foundation of long-term supports for older Alaskans living at home with progressive disease conditions (such as ADRD) and children without parental care. These vulnerable Alaskans are dependent on their unpaid family caregivers for their safety and care to delay early nursing home placement (in the case of elderly persons) and state custody (children at-risk for foster care). Persons with ADRD require increasing levels of supervision and personal care as they transition from having simple forgetfulness to a need for round-the-clock care. ADRD caregivers often become “secondary patients” from the negative impact of caregiving on their physical and psychological well-being. They face increase work/home demands and legal entanglements on behalf of their loved ones. Unpaid caregivers deliver 80% of

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the home care for ADRD persons. Fewer than 10% of these older adults receive all of their care from paid caregivers.

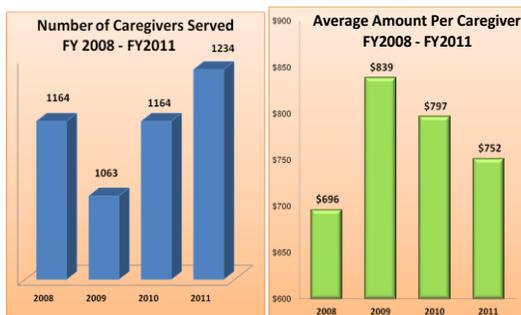
In addition, a growing number of retired Alaskans are being called upon to raise their grandchildren. These grandparents are often isolated, lack resources, and face daily challenges including food scarcity, adequate housing, and health care for their grandchildren who may have/or at-risk for mental illness, alcohol/drug addictions, and prenatal alcohol exposure.

Unpaid caregivers require support and training to be successful. Vulnerable Alaskans cared for by untrained/exhausted caregivers face an increased likelihood of harm that poses a cost burden on the State leading to early nursing home placement for the elderly and state custody (foster care) for displaced children. Research shows that unpaid caregivers with supports are able to provide care longer at home which helps care recipients who desire to be home and is cost effective for the State in reducing Medicaid costs.

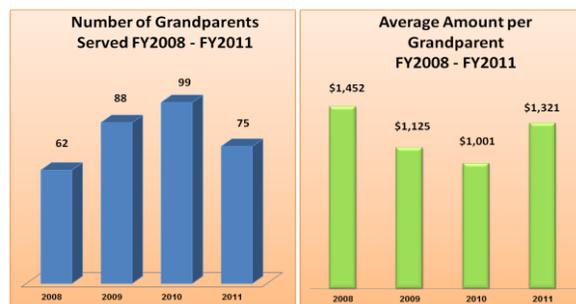
Proposal: The proposed funding increment will strengthen supports for unpaid family caregivers through NFCSP services targeting caregivers who are older individuals with greatest social/economic need; caregivers of elderly with ADRD and other disease conditions; and elderly individuals caring for children with/at-risk for behavioral health conditions or disabilities. Below are proposed applications for the funding increment.

- **Respite, Case Management, Counseling, & Training (\$225,000):** Provide additional in-home respite, counseling, caregiver training and supplemental services for unpaid caregivers caring for vulnerable elderly Alaskans. Research shows that these services help to reduce caregiver depression, stress and physical illness which postpones early nursing home placement. Recommended funding will serve an additional 139 unpaid caregivers providing \$900 annually of NFCSP caregiver assistance per caregiver (Current assistance is \$752 annually per unpaid caregiver.)
- **Grandparents Serving Children (\$75,000):** Serve an additional 57 unpaid elderly caregivers caring for children with case management, peer support groups, counseling, information/referral and supplemental services at current levels of assistance (\$1,321 annually per unpaid elderly caregiver).
- **Legal Assistance (\$50,000):** Provide additional legal support for unpaid caregivers addressing the legal system on behalf of their loved ones, community education and outreach activities. Funding will serve an additional 15 unpaid caregivers providing 62 hours of direct legal advice and six additional community training events.

National Family Caregiver Support Program
Caregivers Serving Elderly Individuals



National Family Caregiver Support Program
Grandparents or Other Elderly Caregivers Serving Children



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