NEW GRANT! As many of you know, we had been operating with the uncertain news that our grant would likely expire on 8/31/17. However, we can now rejoice because we now have a new, three-year federal Administration for Community Living Lifespan Respite Care Integration and Sustainability grant!

"You did that!" Please join with me in sincere appreciation to Washington State/DSHS' Aging & Long Term Support Administration (ALTSA) for their success in securing this grant. Special thanks go to Hilarie Hauptman, Marietta Bobba, Karen Fitzharris, Anna Glas, Scott Bloom, Dana Allard-Webb, and so many others on their dedicated team. Thanks, too, to Homage Senior Services (our host agency’s new name) for agreeing to partner in getting this new grant started.

There are many other partners as well, which is what is so very exciting about this Coalition. We look forward to continued relationships with the Washington State Department of Health, Brain Injury Council, Developmental Disabilities Administration, Many Lights Foundation, and so many more. I also wish to highlight the Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery, which operates without any government funding at all. They have graciously allowed us to use their program as partial match for this grant. Finally, thanks to all of you who wrote letters and emails of support or expressed your appreciation for our vital program. Envision the words of one family caregiver:

“When I applied for the grant, my husband was still able to get around in his power wheel chair, to take three steps into the shower so I could bathe him, and to feed himself with the aid of weighted spoons. Now, his cancer has progressed significantly... Just the single task of rolling him over to clean him is incredibly exhausting...

The paid caregiver is a lovely young woman who comes every Wednesday afternoon. It gives me a few hours to get away. Even if the time is taken up with running errands, at least I’m able to be out of the house for a while and that does wonders for my spirits. Today, I actually had lunch with a friend and went to a movie...all in three hours! It was a treat that won’t happen again for a while but it was a real blessing today.

You did that! You did that for me just as you have for so many other caregivers in the area over the past years. So I want to say thank you. I want you to know you are appreciated. Please know you will be in my thoughts for a very long time to come.”

This new grant allows us to continue to operate for an additional three years, as described in the attached Grant Announcement/Abstract from Hilarie Hauptman, Kinship and Lifespan Respite Program Manager, DSHS/Aging and Long Term Care Administration. I am absolutely thrilled to be part of this wonderful program and coalition, having seen forward movement in terms for caregivers through respite over the years. We have come a long way since 2002 with our statewide respite coalition, and then beginning in 2010 with the first federal grant received related to Lifespan Respite. I look forward to continued work with YOU as we advance respite even further in the years ahead.
Important Announcements (10.5.17), continued

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE RESPITE VOUCHER PROGRAM. You may be interested in knowing that since our pilot project began when hosted by Easter Seals Washington and then transferred to its current host site at Homage Senior Services, we have awarded nearly 500 applications for respite from individuals from across the lifespan and the state. Of those, 281 unpaid family caregivers received respite. That is great news!

However, it is also important to figure out what happened to the 44% of families that did not use their vouchers. We realize family circumstances can change quickly, but we hope to ferret out what causes people to begin but not complete the process. Toward the end of this month, we will be working with DSHS on a voucher process improvement activity*. This will allow us to scrutinize how our respite voucher program has been working so we can streamline it toward efficiency to remain a viable program.

Please advise your clients or other interested individuals to fill out the respite application already online at www.lifespanrespitewa.org (right sidebar on each page). Applications will be date-stamped and filled in the order they are received once the revised voucher system is in place. We will also keep the website updated to reflect up-to-date timelines. There are other caregivers on the list already the last grant period who will have first priority. Please bear in mind we spread out the vouchers to geographic regions across the State of Washington.

Before we can start scheduling respite with provider agencies, we need to get our inter-agency agreements back in operation. I will be sending those out next week for signature by the 40 agencies we have used in the past. If you know of others not listed on our website that you feel would be important to add to our list, please let us know.

NEXT COALITION MEETING. We will be holding our Respite Coalition Meeting in Lacey at the ALTSA office in Lacey on Tuesday, November 7th, 1:00 to 2:30 PM. Please let me know by Monday, October 30th, if you wish to join the meeting by phone or in person. At that time, you will be sent a meeting agenda. If you have an agenda item(s) and/or would like a little time on that agenda, also make that known by that date.

YOUR OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT. With limited staffing, it is even important as a coalition to share in the successes and responsibilities of our program. Please let me know how you may wish to support our LRW activities with the limited staffing we have in place. Our wish list will be highlighted on our website, but following are some possible areas where you can participate:

- **Monday, October 23rd, 9M to 3PM, in Lacey, we will be meeting** to evaluate the program and come up with a more streamlined approach. It will be important to have representation by a few Respite Provider Agency representatives, constituents, service providers and administrators, don’t you agree?

- Use your expertise and/or energy to **plan for program sustainability**, a critical component of this new grant. If you know of someone with expertise in this area, or if you just want to be part of the process, please let us know. Your time can even be used to support matching requirements for this grant.

- Rolling out a **Respite Summit** sometime next spring involves planning and implementation. If you have connections to a site, or ideas for making it successful for all types of unpaid family caregivers and agencies, we can use you. Again, your time can contribute to the matching requirements.

- If you have some writing ability/interest, we will have a "how to" manual due by next summer, and we will be working with Many Lights Foundation on a **training manual** for respite caregivers. Why not join us?

It seems there is so much to tell you. Please join our Coalition group in November for more news or for updates on those mentioned in this email.

CONCLUSION. I hope you are as excited about what is happening in Washington as I am. We have gained national recognition for our programs. It is indeed a rare opportunity to receive this final federal grant. (We thought the last one was final.) This is testament, I believe, to the great work we are all doing as partners in our state. Let us continue to make peaceful pathways for our unpaid family caregivers and those to whom they dedicate their lives.

Linda

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