

**Project C.A.R.E.  
(Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty)**

**Session Law 2010-31, Section 10.35B**



**Report to**

**The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging**

**and**

**The Fiscal Research Division**

**by**

**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services**

**September 28, 2018**

## **Project C.A.R.E 2017-2018**

Over five million Americans are living with Alzheimer's Disease nationally and as many as 16 million will have the disease by 2050. According to the National Alzheimer's Association, there are approximately 466,000 caregivers in North Carolina providing care for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease at a value of \$6.7 billion of unpaid care. By 2025, an estimated 210,000 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 North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) implemented a plan for use of \$200,000 in recurring state appropriations to support Alzheimer's-related activities consistent with the goals of Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty). The session law called for an annual report to be submitted to the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, the North Carolina Study Commission on Aging, and the Fiscal Research Division by October 1<sup>st</sup> each year.

### Statewide Caregiver Support

Project C.A.R.E. is a state-funded, dementia-specific support program for individuals who directly care for persons with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias. Project C.A.R.E. is a coordinated delivery system that is responsive to the needs, values and preferences of unpaid family caregivers and is administered by the DHHS Division of Aging and Adult Services.

Project C.A.R.E. expanded in the fall of 2013 and again in October 2016 from providing support in 36 counties with the goal of serving all 100 counties in the state. Given the significant increase in the number of individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and the even greater increase in the number of their unpaid caregivers, DAAS recognizes the continued importance of outreach and service to these families as an essential step to meeting long-term program objectives. The key goal of Project C.A.R.E. is to provide supports for unpaid caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias to support community living and to delay or avoid unnecessary placement in long-term care facilities.

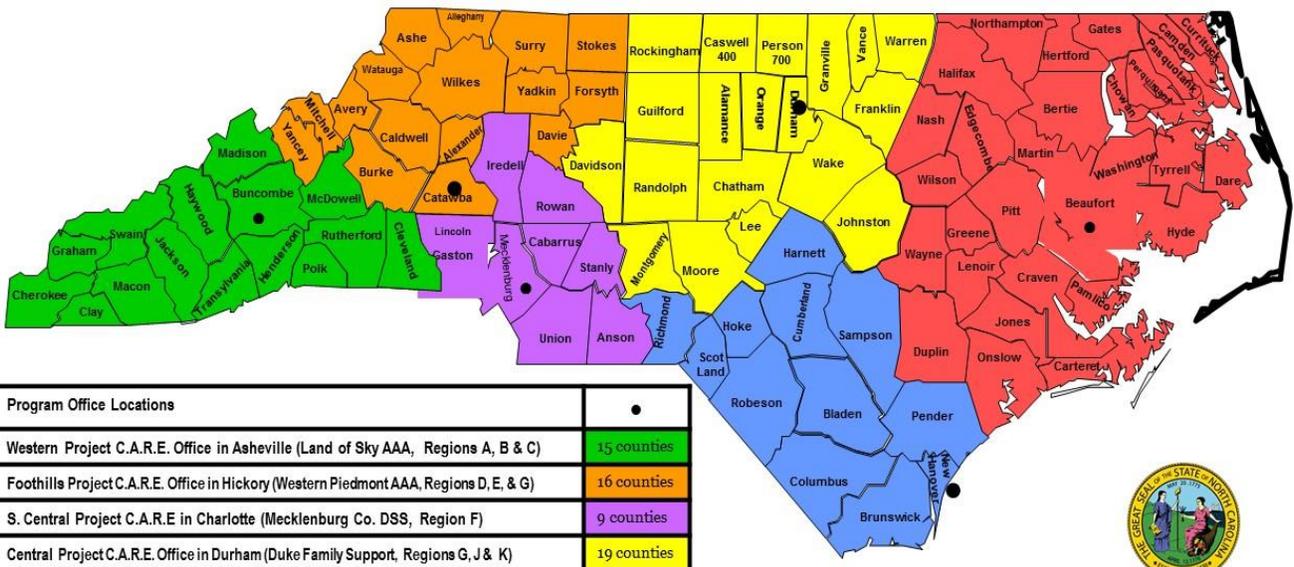
Project C.A.R.E. contracts with six community organizations to provide Family Consultant services in all 100 counties. Family Consultants are linked to the sixteen Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and their Family Caregiver Support Programs. This allows for available resources to be coordinated and leveraged for maximum impact. Family Consultants provide support directly to caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias by:

1. Offering persons with dementia and their caregivers care consultation, dementia-specific information, caregiver assessments and care plans, caregiver education and connections to social support networks;
2. Linking families with available community resources to address unmet needs including local support groups, supportive services, entitlement programs and other community resources;
3. Partnering with each Area Agency on Aging through its Family Caregiver Support Program to provide outreach, training and education;

4. Providing caregivers consumer-directed respite care vouchers (\$500 each) whereby the caregiver decides who, when and where to hire help;
5. Providing training and assistance to AAAs and the community-at-large to increase capacity to assist persons with dementia and their families; and
6. Enhancing partnerships with and among the various entities serving persons with Alzheimer’s disease and assisting their caregivers.

## NC Project C.A.R.E.

(Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empy)



NC Division of Aging and Adult Services  
July, 2017

### Service Expansion

The NC General Assembly, in 2014, required the NC Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Aging and Adult Services to develop the state’s first strategic plan addressing Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias (Senate Bill 744 / S.L. 2014-100). In response, the Division, in partnership with the NC Institute of Medicine, along with a 47-member task force, completed a plan in March 2016 entitled “Dementia Capable NC” which included the recommendation for increased support of Project C.A.R.E. The Governor and the General Assembly approved the appropriation of additional funds through Session Law 2016-94 (House Bill 1030). Effective October 1, 2016, \$550,000 was appropriated to support three additional Project C.A.R.E. Family Consultants and to provide funding for respite care vouchers for unpaid family caregivers, currently annualized to \$733,333.

In State Fiscal Year 2017-18, Project C.A.R.E. provided care consultation services to 818 non-Medicaid eligible family caregivers, of which 630 received respite care vouchers. Of those receiving vouchers, 422 or 67% were new to the program this year. A caregiver may receive up to three \$500 vouchers annually,

however, 72% of the 630 caregivers were awarded a single voucher, enabling the program to serve more caregivers. Consumer-directed respite services were performed based upon the needs and wishes of the unpaid caregiver with service options including in-home respite services, group respite (Adult Day Care/Adult Day Health Care), or in special cases, overnight facility-based care. Project C.A.R.E. reached caregivers in 99 counties in FY 2018, up from 94 counties in FY 2017 and 51 counties in FY 2016. As of June 30, 2018, approximately 255 unpaid family caregivers were waiting to be enrolled into Project C.A.R.E. and many enrolled caregivers were requesting additional respite. Project C.A.R.E. effectively used 98% of its state appropriation with staff working at maximum capacity.

<b>Number of Family Caregivers Served</b>					
	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
<b>Total Appropriation</b>	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$850,000	\$1,033,333
<b>Care Consultation</b>	107	203	220	774	818
<b>Respite Care</b> (care consultation clients who also received respite)	n/a	n/a	n/a	569	630