



NC Coalition on Aging

Agencies, organizations, groups, and individuals that represent and support our state's aging population coming together to give voice to issues that affect older North Carolinians.

2017 Legislative Priorities

Increase the recurring state funding for the **Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) by \$7 million.**

- The Block Grant, which is the primary funding source for non-Medicaid funded services to help older adults remain independent and living in the community, combines federal and state dollars and local matching funds.
- The state is losing ground in its efforts to help frail older adults in the community through the Block Grant with waiting lists growing and fewer individuals being served each year. In January of 2017, there were 9,997 seniors on waiting lists for services such as home-delivered meals and in-home aide services.
- Without legislative action, \$969,549 in non-recurring funding will be cut from the Block Grant.
- An appropriation of \$7 million would make a huge impact: It would reduce the waiting list by more than 50% or by almost 5,500 persons across high demand services. If \$7 million was directed to specific services, an additional 9,000 home-bound seniors (cost of \$777/person) could receive home delivered meals for a year or the waiting list for in-home aide services could be reduced by 2,441 frail older adults (cost of \$2,868/person).

Establish a **joint legislative committee to examine issues pertaining to the state's growing older adult population, including health care and financial security, and to make recommendations on how the state can better support North Carolinians to age with dignity.**

- Today, 1 in 5 – over 2 million people in the state – are age 60 and over. By 2033, about 1 in 4 will be over 60, and people over 85 will be the fastest growing population group.
- By 2018, there will be more people in the state over the age of 60 than there will be under 18.
- The state's older population is growing faster than the national average – 38.1% from 2003 to 2013 compared to a national average of 27.7%.
- The aging of our state's population has major implications for the state as a whole and proactive attention is needed to plan for this demographic change.

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Increase state funding and support for **adult protective services (APS) and public guardianship services and conduct a comprehensive evaluation of these services.**

- APS and guardianship services are mandated core services provided by county departments of social services to some of our state's most vulnerable citizens.
- In recent years, there has been a major increase in the need for APS and guardianship services. APS reports increased by 52% over the past seven years, reaching 25,980 in SFY 15-16. The need for publically funded guardians has more than doubled over the past decade, with 6,705 adults having publically funded guardians during SFY 15-16.
- In SFY 16, approximately \$22 million was expended on APS. Funding was 3% state, 78% county, and 19% federal. In SFY 16, approximately \$21.1 million was spent on public guardianship - 4% state funds, 59% county, and 37% federal.
- There are growing challenges as the number of APS and guardianship cases increase and many counties are struggling to find the money to provide needed services.

In order to better support direct care workers and help reduce worker turnover, invest in **Medicaid Personal Care Services (PCS) and the Community Alternatives Program for Disabled Adults(CAP-DA) programs by increasing the reimbursement rate over a two year period from \$13.88 per hour to the national average of \$18.82.**

- The Medicaid reimbursement rate for PCS and CAP-DA is the same today as it was in 2001.
- Most of the reimbursement rate goes to pay for personal care aides who provide direct care such as bathing, dressing, and preparing meals to those receiving PCS and CAP-DA services. Wages for aides are low and getting lower with the average wage for an aide in the state being \$9.18 per hour.
- A stagnant reimbursement rate presents significant challenges in aide recruitment and retention which compromises the stability of our long-term care system.

Pass legislation that will support **working family caregivers and help to keep them in the workforce.**

- There are over 1.28 million family caregivers in the state providing care to an adult with limitations in daily activities.
- Families provide at least 80% of all care services needed to help older relatives live in their homes. They are the backbone of our long-term care system.
- More than 60% of family caregivers work and of this number, approximately 70% report making work accommodations because of caregiving. Over 10% say they have to give up work entirely in order to care for their relative.

To see a list of the Coalition on Aging's agency, organization, and group members in support of these priorities, go to <http://www.nccoalitiononaging.org/members.html>.