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FALL 2021 NEWSLETTER



Respite vouchers at no cost to the caregiver

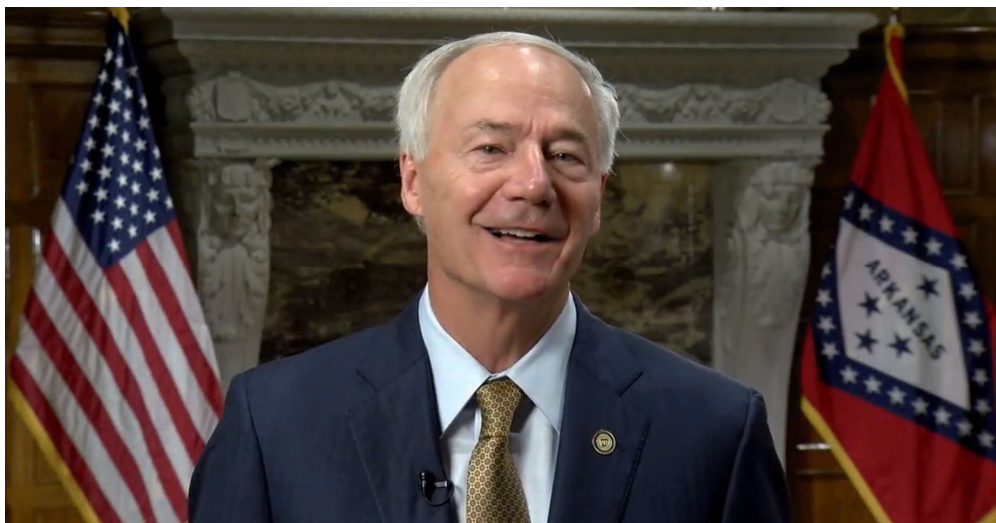
Since 2017, the Arkansas Lifespan Respite Program, funded by the Lifespan Respite Grant awarded to the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS), has been providing no-cost caregiver respite vouchers to family and unpaid caregivers. During 2020 and the beginning of 2021, DHS awarded sub-grants in the amount of \$47,500 to multiple organizations across the state to assist in providing respite assistance.

DHS is also working internally to develop and implement a respite voucher

program overseen by the Division of Provider Services and Quality Assurance (DPSQA). This respite voucher program will allow for both internal and external referrals. Caregivers will be able to call directly into the Choices in Living Resource Center for more information and an application. Also, other divisions across DHS who may interact with caregivers, or may have been denied services through another division, can be internally referred for outreach and assistance. We hope that this DHS voucher program will allow us to identify individuals who may have been denied services based on diagnosis or financial eligibility in one program to still be able to learn about and receive assistance through the Lifespan Respite Program. Expectations for the DHS voucher program are currently set for October 1, 2021.

**Coming soon statewide:
New respite provider
search engine**

DHS has been working to build a robust and user-friendly search engine to assist caregivers in finding a respite care provider according to their needs and their location. This search engine will be located on the DHS website and provide the capability for a caregiver to filter their search by location, payment type/method and eligibility criteria. Production of the search engine is underway and access by the public is anticipated by December 2021.



2021 Arkansas Lifespan Respite Summit

The Arkansas Lifespan Respite Coalition, in partnership with DHS, presented an all-virtual summit from July 27-29. This three-day event hosted over 89 attendees and covered topics including “Understanding What is Respite,” “How to Identify That A Caregiver Needs Respite,” Volunteer Respite Training,” and more.

The event was kicked off by Welcome Messages each day from either Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson or Arkansas DHS Chief of Staff Mark White.

- **Day One** of the event focused heavily on information from a caregiver’s perspective. This included a Caregiver Community Connection event which allowed caregivers an opportunity to break out into separate virtual spaces with professionals and advocates who work and are associated with issues or a diagnosis of interest to the caregiver. These professionals and advocates were able to provide resources and answer questions specific to each individual caregiver. Breakout sessions that afternoon included telehealth, Smart 911 and emergency planning, Medicare fraud prevention, senior health insurance programs, caregivers in the workforce, and self-care techniques.

- **Day Two** of the event concentrated on information from a respite provider’s perspective. This included an afternoon session topic on “Providing Respite in a Creative/Innovative Way.” Arkansas Lifespan Respite Coalition members and other advocates from the Arkansas Autism Foundation, UCA Bears for CARE, Community Connections, and GiGi’s Playhouse in Little Rock demonstrated their unique and innovative respite programs and answered questions from the attendees on building creative programs from scratch. One of the attendees stated that each “and every presenter brought a great story and great ideas! It’s amazing to see how many creative respite programs are out there.”

- **Day Three** was a collaboration day of both perspectives where we started the day with a panel discussion on “Surviving the Caregiving Experience.” Panelists consisted of various professionals in different fields related to caregiving, service provision, and legal support -- many with their own caregiving experience. The afternoon session focused on the sustainability and long-term needs and assessments when it comes to respite needs and supports within the state.

The Arkansas Lifespan Respite Coalition is currently reviewing the 2022 calendar to schedule next year’s event. Save the Date information will be provided through the DHS- Lifespan Respite website and future newsletters.

Arkansas receives new 5 year federal funding total \$1.3M for respite and caregiver support

DHS applied for and recently received a \$1.3 million grant from the federal Administration for Community Living to fund respite care for full-time caregivers through the Arkansas Lifespan Respite Care program.

The need for respite is great. When family caregivers experience a decline in their own physical or emotional health, the person they have been caring for is at increased risk for hospitalization and institutionalization. Approximately 20 percent of caregivers reported they “never got help or information” that they needed to support themselves or their loved one.

“This grant funding allows us to continue to meet the critical needs of caregivers in Arkansas through respite services.”

- Martina Smith, DPSQA Director

Funding to hire respite caregivers or pay for specialized respite programs for clients is made available statewide through a network of community organizations who partner with DHS and the Lifespan Respite program. Other opportunities available to caregivers and respite volunteers through the federal funding include no-cost training offerings through a partnership with DHS and the UAMS Schmieding Caregiver Home Care Program.

The respite program has been in place for several years. In 2013, DHS and other respite community providers and advocates across the state began meeting to form the Arkansas Lifespan Respite Coalition. DHS, in partnership with the Arkansas Lifespan Respite Coalition, was awarded its first federal Lifespan Respite Grant in 2014 and then again in 2018. Arkansas received supplemental funding in 2019 to enhance respite services. This new grant will continue these critical services and include the development of a centralized, robust provider search engine on the DHS website for caregivers to easily search for and filter information to find respite services in their area. Grant funding will also allow Arkansas to conduct a statewide census analysis on caregiving status and needs specific to our state and our Arkansans.



Free volunteer respite training courses

For the past six years, the UAMS Schmieding Home Caregiver Training Program has partnered with the Arkansas Lifespan Respite Coalition and Arkansas Department of Human Services to provide free volunteer respite training courses statewide. Training for volunteer respite providers, caregivers and community and faith-based groups.

The REST (Respite Education and Support Tools) method is an evidence-based training providing education directly to those who serve as caregivers and provide respite support to caregivers. Training topics include communication techniques, respite activities, precautions, crisis intervention, understanding behaviors and more.

Each year, UAMS provides trainings at each of their seven Schmieding Caregiver Centers located in El Dorado, Fort Smith, Jonesboro, Little Rock, Springdale and Texarkana.

For more caregiver resources and trainings, you can visit go.UAMS.edu/respite or UAMScaregiving.org.

Coalition Membership Application
Arkansas Lifespan Respite Coalition

Name of Organization: _____

Address of Organization: _____

Name of Organization's Representative: _____
(Note: Arkansas Representatives must agree to these actions on behalf of the organization which it comes to work with the coalition and actively participate in coalition activities)

Representative's Title/Credentials: _____

Email Address: _____

Representative Phone - Work: _____ **Cell:** _____

Alternate Contact: _____
(Note: Alternate Contact must be an alternate representative representative who can make decisions on behalf of the organization when it comes to work with the organization and actively participate in the coalition's operations)

Alternate Email: _____ **Alternate Phone:** _____

Organization's Website: _____

Organization's Mission Statement: _____

Please select a designation for type of organization applying for coalition membership:

Advisory Group Medicaid/Medicare Provider Academic Organization
 Non-Profit Other Healthcare Organization State Government Office/Division
 Arkansas PASS Other, please specify: _____

Please indicate a Regional Designation or a State-wide Designation for your Organization's Involvement:

I am with Designation Organization but alternate primary Regional Designation Organization has no regional presence

Select below one or more Arkansas Regions as appropriate for your participation. (See attached map of Arkansas regions.)

Northwest White River East Southeast
 Central West Central Southwest West

How much time per month can your organization or your organization's representative dedication to coalition work? _____

How did you hear about the Arkansas Lifespan Respite Coalition? _____

What is your organization looking to gain from participating in the coalition? _____

New look to the Arkansas Lifespan Respite Coalition membership application

If you are interested in becoming a coalition member and participating on the many activities and goals the coalition is currently focused on, a new membership application form has been added to the Arkansas Lifespan Respite webpage.

[Download application form](#)



ARKANSAS
LIFESPAN RESPITE COALITION

