

**Governor's Commission on  
Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders**

March 15, 2023

To: House Committee on Appropriations

Dear Chair Lanpher and members of the House Appropriations Committee,

On January 15, 2023, the Governor's Commission on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders (ADRDR) submitted its annual report to the House Committee on Human Services. As part of the report, we listed our 2023 Legislative Priorities (attached) for supporting Vermonters with Alzheimer's and other dementias.

This week the ADRDR met to review the progress that has been made in the first half of this session. We commend the House Committee on Human Services for the significant time and energy they put into requesting and reviewing Medicaid rate studies, hearing from witnesses, and creating their FY24 Budget Recommendations Chart. Their requests for funding increases for a variety of Home and Community Based Services reflect the vital importance of these programs to Vermonters with dementia, their unpaid family caregivers, and the communities at large.

Fully implementing the Assistive Community Care Services (ACCS) payment recommended in the rate study and moving Enhanced Residential Care (ERC) toward full implementation will advance the state's goals for continuum of care services and help build residential care facility capacity. This will have positive impacts across the health system, allow for appropriate bed placements and reduce wait times in hospitals, and improve capacity at skilled nursing facilities by providing placement for patients in need of assisted living and Residential Care Homes (RCH) Level III services. Specifically, in section B 334.1 we support:

- \$2,212,800 million increase for personal care, homemaker, and respite/companionship services provided by home health agencies under the Choices for Care program. This is a 15% increase as part of a multi-year plan per the rate study.
- Elimination of the Home Health Provider Tax. Only two other states place this this additional financial burden on providers.

- \$824,156 for a 4% increase, for Long Term Care ERC Levels 1-3.
- \$12,484,844 to implement the rate study recommendations for ACCS. This provides a base increase for all residential care facilities and assisted living residences.

The 15% reimbursement rate increase for Adult Day Programs ( \$1,060,800 or \$21.33/hour) will not be enough to sustain these programs. We ask the Committee to increase this reimbursement rate to \$25/hour to ensure this important community resource remains available to all who need it. Underfunding this reimbursement rate will require additional appropriations to supplement the programs or it means additional Adult Day programs will close. These programs provide safe, stimulating and appropriate care to Vermonters with dementia, allow family caregivers to remain in the workforce, and are the most cost-effective option for both the state and families facing dementia.

“My husband has Alzheimer’s and has been on the wait list for the South Burlington Adult Day program for almost two years. I want to remind you how important this funding is for those of us who are unpaid dementia caregivers. We are in the thick of it and desperately need these programs to manage.”

~Luba Routsong, ADRD  
Member with Lived Experience

Thank you so much for the work you do on behalf of Vermonters with ADRD and our entire state.

Respectfully,

Megan Polyte, Chair

Commission Members and Advocates

- Mohamed Basha, CEO TLC Homecare
- Mark Boutwell, Executive Director Senior Solutions
- Senator Randy Brock
- Alecia Demario, Executive Director Birchwood Terrace
- Molly Dugan, Director of Policy and Strategic Initiatives
- Glenn Jarrett, Attorney Jarrett & Luitjens Elder Law

REPRESENTATION

- Registered Nurses
- Area Agencies on Aging
- State Senate
- Nursing Home Administrators
- SASH Support Services at Home
- Legal Profession

Glenn Jarrett, Attorney Jarrett & Luitjens Elder Law

Legal Profession

Representative Dan Noyes

State Legislature

Janet Nunziata, Director

UVM Center on Aging

Mary Beth Pinard, Executive Director Vermont  
Catholic Charities

Residential Care

Meg Polyte, Policy Director

Alzheimer's Association

Sarah Poole, Dept of Veterans Affairs

Mental Health Provider

Simone Rueschemeyer, Vermont Care Partners

Family Caregivers

Andrea Stauffenecker, Director, Riverside Life  
Enrichment Center

Adult Day Providers

Deborah Wesley, VP of Addison County Home  
Health & Hospice

Home Health Providers

Carolyn Taylor Olsen (Application Pending)

Physicians

Advocates Living with Alzheimer's Disease

Darryll Rudy

Pamela Smith

Advocates Caregiving for Someone with Alzheimer's  
Disease

Laura Brooks

Luba Routsong

CC: House Human Services Committee