

September 20, 2021

Secretary David R. Brinkley  
Department of Budget & Management  
45 Calvert St., Annapolis, MD 21401 - 1907

Secretary Brinkley,

Thank you for your work to aid Marylanders. We write to ask for the Administration's financial support in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget for the 110,000 Marylanders with Alzheimer's and other dementia and their caregivers.

This request stems from the work of Maryland's Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Council (VJADRDC Council). The Council, [per Chapter 410 of 2019](#), has released its [draft State Plan goals](#) and will soon finalize Maryland's new Alzheimer's State Plan. Its recommendations outline methods by which the State can effectively assist in meeting the needs of individuals with Alzheimer's and other dementia, along with their caregivers.

## **BUDGET REQUESTS**

### **Director of Dementia Services Coordination: \$130,000**

This proposal is to permanently fund a director-level role, at the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), to 1) coordinate the state's response to dementia across state agencies and 2) develop resources to build public awareness of dementia. This investment, to oversee these responsibilities and implement the new Alzheimer's state plan, would make Maryland a prime candidate for a federal Centers for Disease Control BOLD grant. Over half of U.S. states have received a BOLD award, in the amount of \$225,000 to \$500,000 in funding, annually for three years. Maryland is not one of them.

Fifteen states, including Virginia and the District of Columbia, have established dementia-specific positions to oversee their jurisdiction's approach for individuals with Alzheimer's and other dementia. States beyond our "DMV" region that have this role include:

- [North Carolina](#): Following passage of their state dementia plan in 2018, a dementia-specific position was created in the state's Department of Health and Human Services;
- [Illinois](#): Created a permanent position in 2019 within the state's Department of Health responsible for supporting implementation of their state dementia plan, analyzing dementia related data, and coordinating dementia efforts across state agencies; and
- [Kentucky](#): Created the Office of Dementia Services in 2021, along with establishment of a full-time position to manage the work of the statewide ADRD Advisory Council, to ensure the state has a coordinated response to Alzheimer's and other dementia.

Senator Malcolm Augustine and Speaker Pro Tem Sheree Sample Hughes will introduce legislation to establish and require an appropriation for this role, based on a draft recommended action of the VJADRDC Council to have "a director-level position and resources within the Department of Health to coordinate implementation of the actions outlined in this state plan through public health activities."

**Dementia Care Specialist Program: \$1.6 million**

The [2021 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts and Figures](#) report indicates that an estimated 238,000 Marylanders – our family members and friends - provided more than 364 million hours of unpaid care to someone with dementia. Other facts about these caregivers are staggering:

- Maryland has the third-highest percentage nationwide of adult dementia caregivers;
- Nearly 69 percent of those caregivers have chronic health conditions;
- Roughly 28 percent of them have depression; and
- More than one-third of these dementia caregivers provide over 20 hours per week in care; more than half have been providing care for at least two years.

COVID-19, including the strain of continued social isolation, has heightened the importance of supporting caregivers. Yet Maryland delivers caregiving aid chiefly via the federal National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP); the NFCSP can provide as little as \$20,000 to a county to help the countless caregivers in need.

This proposal asks for an ongoing appropriation to support dementia caregiving at each of Maryland’s Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), who would be required to designate a dementia care specialist (DCS) on its staff. The Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA) will be required to distribute funding (via grants) to each AAA, based on a formula which considers the number of people with dementia in each county. Additional funds would be reserved for an MDOA staff position to coordinate and oversee the work statewide.

DCS responsibilities would include: support for family caregivers, including assistance with care planning and connections to support groups and education; aid in the development of dementia-friendly communities, including outreach events and professional consultations; and work to offer cognitive screenings, to help identify individuals with dementia.

This proposal is modeled on [Wisconsin’s Dementia Care Specialist Program](#). The Wisconsin initiative, created in 2015, currently receives \$7.12 million in funding. Other states providing funding for caregivers include:

- New York: Over \$20 million to provide direct services to support people with dementia and dementia family caregivers;
- North Dakota: \$1.3 million to the state’s Dementia Care Services Program which supports dementia-friendly caregivers; and
- Washington: \$1.5 million for its Dementia Resource Catalyst programs to deliver and connect individuals with dementia-specific community services.

Delegate Karen Lewis Young, the Maryland General Assembly’s representative to our State Commission on Caregiving, will serve as lead sponsor for 2022 legislation to permanently establish the Dementia Care Specialist Program and require an appropriation to fund it.

**Maryland’s VJADR State Plan: \$250,000**

This proposal seeks one-time funding, for MDH’s Bureau of Chronic Disease, to ensure the effectiveness of Maryland’s forthcoming ADRD plan. States who have provided funding for their state dementia plans include:

- Utah: \$250,000 per its state plan in 2018, with an additional \$250,000 in 2020 for work such as dementia-specific provider education, public awareness and data collection.
- Washington: \$200,000 in 2019 to broaden public awareness of its state plan and create dementia-specific positions to coordinate services

**Alzheimer’s Disease Research Grants: \$2 million**

The VJADR Council’s fourth goal calls on Maryland to identify and prioritize ADRD-related research need areas. This proposal, in turn, asks the Governor to appoint a Maryland Alzheimer’s Consortium (MAC), including representatives from relevant state agencies, research institutions, community-based organizations, consumer advocacy groups, health care providers and payers, to hold a summit designed to identify and prioritize specific high priority Alzheimer’s and dementia research area needs. From that summit, the Consortium would put out a call for proposals, and award this one-time funding in coordination with MDH.

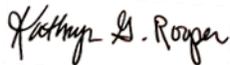
The MAC proposal is modeled on the [Arizona Alzheimer’s Consortium](#), which is designed to find effective treatments to halt the progression and prevent the onset of Alzheimer’s disease without losing a generation. Arizona provided \$2 million in state funding for that initiative in 2018, along with an additional \$1.1 million in 2020 to aid Alzheimer’s research statewide.

Other recent state investments in Alzheimer’s and dementia research include:

- California: \$6 million in 2020 to its Department of Public Health to advance research;
- Minnesota: \$1 million in 2019 for research through the Minnesota Partnership for Biotechnology and Medical Genomics (and an additional \$1 million in 2021); and
- Mississippi: \$3 million in 2021 for dementia research through the MIND Center at the University of Mississippi Medical Center

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this memo further, please contact Alzheimer’s Association Director of Government Affairs Eric Colchamiro, at ercolchamiro@alz.org.

Thank you,



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Cc: Marc Nicole, Deputy Secretary, the Department of Budget and Management  
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Maryland State Senate President Bill Ferguson  
Maryland House of Delegates Speaker Adrienne Jones  
Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee (B&T)  
Senator Melony Griffith, Chair, Senate B&T, Health and Human Services Subcommittee  
Delegate Maggie McIntosh, Chair, House Appropriations Committee  
Delegate Kirill Reznik, Chair, House Appropriations Health and Social Services Subcommittee  
Dr. Quincy Samus, Chair, Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders Council