



Advocacy 101 and Policy Update: Strategies to Elevate Respite for Policymakers

Elevate Respite: National Lifespan Respite Conference

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Denver, CO

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Session Overview

More than 43 million family caregivers provide care and support to individuals with disabilities or the aging. Government funded supports exist, and Congressional awareness is growing, but funding is limited. In this session national leaders on federal policy affecting access to respite and other caregiver supports will update attendees on specific respite and caregiver policy initiatives at the federal level, share tools and techniques to help attendees increase their advocacy skills, and provide insight into policy trends that will affect caregivers in the future. No matter what your role in the caregiver world is, there will be information in this session that will help you better play your part in the process.

Agenda

- History of enactment of Lifespan Respite
- Importance of coalition work
- Lifespan Respite legislative champions
- Annual appropriations advocacy
- Reauthorization advocacy
- State-level Lifespan Respite-related advocacy

History of Lifespan Respite Care Act Enactment

- State Initiatives
- Pressure to Move to Federal Level
- Broad Coalition Formed
- Grassroots Involvement
- Final Passage
- Transition to Enactment and Funding

Importance of Coalition Work

- Large coalitions supporting Reauthorization and Funding
 - CCD
 - LCAO
- State lifespan coalitions

Lifespan Respite Legislative Champions



Annual Appropriations Advocacy

- Coalitions Advocacy and Sign On Letters
- Capitol Hill Meetings
- “Dear Colleague” Letters
- Impact of overall HHS funding and ACL funding

Reauthorization Advocacy

- Using the House Disability Caucus
- Bipartisanship critical
- Grassroots advocacy needed
- Inside-the-beltway activities

State-level Lifespan Respite-Related Advocacy

Virginia 2010 – helped reignite discussions around Lifespan Respite with stakeholders including staff

- Sat on grant committee
- Chaired the Voucher Committee that helped design the voucher component of VA's Lifespan Respite program
- After receiving the grant, helped spread the word about the availability of respite vouchers in the state
- Chaired the VA Caregiver Coalition's Advocacy Committee and worked with state legislators to introduce a budget amendment for more funding for the voucher program; this amendment failed but helped raise awareness and advocacy efforts will continue