

Testimony
Department of Human Services
Human Services Committee
Representative Alon Wieland, Chairman
May 30, 2012

Chairman Wieland, members of the Human Services Committee, I am Jan Engan, Director of the Aging Services Division of the North Dakota Department of Human Services. I am here today to provide information about the Dementia Care Services Program administered by the Aging Services Division.

During the 2009 legislative session, the North Dakota legislature passed HB 1043 to provide dementia care resources, assistance, and support for citizens across the state of North Dakota. Through a competitive procurement process, the Alzheimer's Association was awarded a contract to provide the services.

The initial contract award was in the amount of \$962,085 and covered a period of 18 months (January 1, 2010, through June 30, 2011); the contract with the Alzheimer's Association was renewed with the appropriation of \$1.2 million for this biennium. Cumulative expenditures through March 31, 2012, are \$419,880.

The Alzheimer's Association provides monthly reports on staff service delivery, continued progress in providing assistance to caregivers, and documentation of successful outcomes. In addition, the Alzheimer's Association subcontracts with the University of North Dakota (UND) Center for Rural Health to study and report outcomes of the Dementia Care Services Program, including the estimated long-term care and health care costs avoided, and the improvement in disease management and caregiver assistance.

From July 2011 through March 2012 the Dementia Care Services Program worked with 502 caregivers, providing 837 contacts for 284 persons with dementia. Of the 284 persons with dementia:

- 80 percent have an Alzheimer's or dementia diagnosis
- 126 (44 percent) are at the middle stage of the disease progression
- 215 (75 percent) live at home
 - 38 of these individuals live alone
 - 160 live in rural communities
 - 111 live in urban communities
- 73 veterans participate in the program
 - 39 live in rural communities
 - 22 live in the Fargo and West Fargo area

Of the individuals receiving service, 19 reported obtaining a power of attorney through their caregiver. Health care directives were developed for 22 individuals, and 23 caregivers attended at least one education class on dementia/Alzheimer's disease issues after working with the Dementia Care Services Program.

The overall purpose of the Dementia Care Services Program is to inform people with dementia and their caregivers about dementia care issues and supportive services, which, in turn, may decrease depression, increase family support, delay nursing home placement, and reduce inappropriate use of health services. UND reports an estimated cost avoidance of \$8,364,574 in long-term care costs between July 2011 and March 2012. This is based on information gathered from 87 caregivers who were asked how likely it was for the caregiver to place the person with dementia in long-term care. Caregivers who had answered the question more than one time over at least a two-week period made it

possible for UND to identify a delay in out-of-home long-term care placement for 21 caregivers. Avoided health care costs were also reviewed, taking into consideration some caregivers have participated in the program for over a year while others have just begun. The results indicated health care cost saving of about \$62,076 linked to participation in the Dementia Care Services Program.

In addition to working with caregivers and individuals with dementia, Dementia Care Services Program continues to provide education for communities, professionals, and law enforcement agencies regarding the symptoms of dementia, the benefits of early detection and treatment, and the services available to individuals with dementia and their caregivers.

I thank you for your time today. I am available for any questions you may have.