



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

June 3, 2024

The Honorable Wes Moore
Governor
State of Maryland
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk
Chair, House Health and Government Operations
Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: Report required by Health-General Article § 13-32A-05 - Report of the Director of Dementia Services and Brain Health, 2023 (MSAR# 14095)

Dear Governor Moore, Chair Beidle, and Chair Peña-Melnyk:

Pursuant to Health-General Article, § 13-32A-05, Annotated Code of Maryland, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) Director of Dementia Services and Brain Health (the Director) is directed to report on activities and recommendations of the Director. The role of the Director was established in Chapter 397 of the Acts of 2022 for the purpose of coordinating and facilitating communication relating to dementia services in the State. This letter serves as the Director's 2023 report and describes MDH activities from July 2022 through June 2023.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs, sara.case-herron@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary

cc: Marie Grant, JD, Assistant Secretary for Health Policy, Office of the Secretary
Jaqueline Vok, Director of Dementia Services and Brain Health
Sarah Case-Herron, JD, Director, Office of Governmental Affairs
Sarah Albert, Department of Legislative Services (5 copies)

Activities

MDH posted an initial job announcement for the Director of Dementia Services and Brain Health position on August 26, 2022. The position was re-posted on October 18, December 14, 2022, February 23, and May 18, 2023. The position was filled July 26, 2023 by Jacquelyn Vok; while the position remained unfilled, Kristi Pier, Director of the MDH Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Control (the Center), served in an acting capacity. In addition to the activities and recommendations described below, MDH provided staff support to the Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer’s Council (the Council) in four quarterly meetings (July 27 and October 26, 2022, and January 25 and April 26, 2023) and four ad hoc legislative meetings (January 20 and 30, and February 7 and 9, 2023).

The Center applied to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC’s) Building Our Largest Dementia (BOLD) Infrastructure’s Public Health Programs to Address Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) funding opportunity (CDC-RFA-DP23-0010). On August 10, 2023, MDH was notified that it was selected as a grant recipient to receive funding for five years to conduct ADRD activities. The CDC will be awarding MDH \$500,000 annually for five years (total award \$2.5 million) with an award date of September 30, 2023.

MDH received one-time funds in the State Fiscal Year 2023 (SFY 23) Supplemental Budget for the purpose of funding Alzheimer’s initiatives “in a manner consistent with the implementation of the recommendations of the Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer’s Council.” MDH consulted with key stakeholders, including the Council and the Maryland Department of Aging, to determine funding priorities and identify activities from the State Plan that could easily be initiated, scaled, and completed within a single fiscal year. Funding priorities included raising awareness of ADRD; providing outreach and education to the public, healthcare providers, and ADRD caregivers; and enhancing statewide ADRD data capabilities. The following table summarizes key SFY 23 projects:

Project Title	Brief Description	Vendor(s)	Key Outcomes
Creation of Healthy Brain Aging and Dementia Awareness Campaign	Developing branding, messaging, and creative assets for a statewide multimedia awareness campaign about dementia and healthy brain aging.	Pinnacle Communications Resource Co., LLC	Print, digital, video, and audio assets for the Healthy Life = Healthy Brain campaign.
Community Outreach and Education for ADRD	Conducting culturally sensitive, community-based outreach and education to improve public knowledge about healthy brain aging and increase awareness of dementia prevention, screening,	Asian American Center of Frederick Career Haven, LLC	50 outreach workers trained in ADRD 16,230 community members reached

Project Title	Brief Description	Vendor(s)	Key Outcomes
	and resources.		
Caregiver Outreach and Education for ADRD	Conducting culturally sensitive outreach and education of ADRD caregivers to address topics specific to ADRD caregiving, including caregiver well-being, respite care, legal and financial planning, and long-term care options.	Area Health Education Center (AHEC) West MAC Inc. University of Maryland Extension	41 caregiver educators trained in ADRD 409 caregivers reached
Healthcare Provider Outreach and Education for ADRD	Training for healthcare providers to increase the early identification and diagnosis of ADRD in primary care settings.	The Beacon Institute Career Haven, LLC	8 training courses developed and delivered 356 healthcare providers trained
Local Health Department Cognitive Health Initiatives	Increasing public awareness of ADRD and local resources, and partnering with primary care practices to increase ADRD screening and referrals.	Baltimore City Health Department Carroll County Health Department Charles County Health Department	8 educational events held 181 community members reached 4 primary care practices 541 primary care patients screened

Recommendations

The below are recommendations for the best use of the program’s resources:

1. Establish a work plan with measurable goals and outcomes aligning with the BOLD Roadmap and the Maryland 2022-2026 ADRD Action Plan.
2. Incorporate brain health activities and messages into aligned healthy lifestyle and disease programming, such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, physical activity, and nutrition.
3. Support the Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer’s and Related Dementias Advisory Council to build commitment from partners across the state to implement activities from the ADRD Action Plan.