

Alaska Commission on Aging

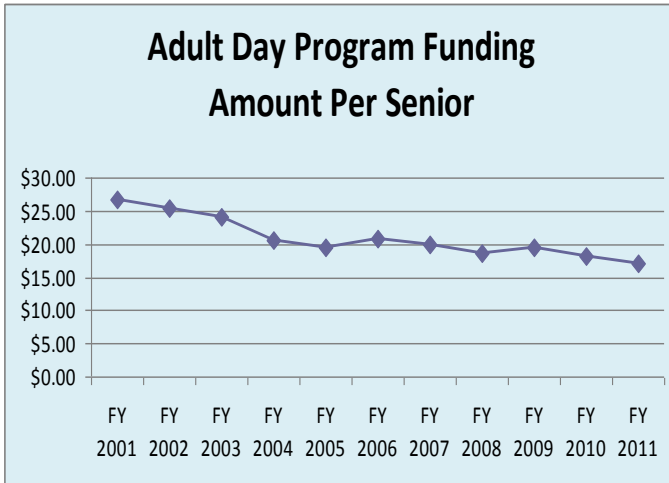
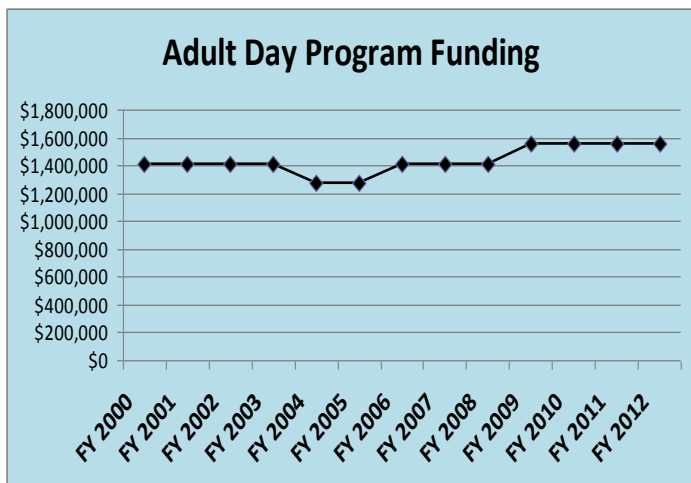
Adult Day Services (ADS) Grants DHSS Division of Senior & Disabilities Services Senior Community-Based Grants Component

Problem Statement: As the numbers of Alaska seniors increase, particularly older individuals most at risk for developing Alzheimer's disease and related dementia (ADRD) and high health care needs, the financial, social and personal costs of caring for them will continue to grow. Based on national prevalence rates by age, the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) estimates that there are roughly 7,785 Alaskans with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia (6,067 age 65 and above and 1,718 age 55 to 64). Eleven percent of Alaskans age 65 and older are estimated to have ADRD, with almost half of those 85 and older being affected by the disease. The number of people with ADRD is expected to triple, based on current population growth trends, with an estimated 18,609 Alaskans age 65 and older experiencing ADRD by 2034.

Adult Day Services (ADS) provide cost-effective community care in an interactive, safe and structured environment for individuals with ADRD, as well as those with physical, emotional and/or cognitive impairments. ADS activities include age-appropriate structured activities such as assistance with personal care, exercises, games, art projects, recreational outings and lunch/snacks. ADS also provide caregiver support, education and respite for unpaid family caregivers. According to a recent ACoA provider survey and interviews with ADS grantees, the following concerns were cited by ADS providers as their most pressing program challenges:

- More seniors are receiving fewer days of adult day service due to physical space-capacity issues and increased staff/client ratios required by serving a greater number of clients with ADRD.
- More seniors are entering adult day programs with higher levels of acuity, more advanced levels of dementia, and increasing presentation of challenging behaviors.
- Adult day providers are concerned about the case mix of program participants with varying levels of abilities, acuity and challenging behaviors.
- Providers are reporting increasing challenges being able to recruit, train, and retain a qualified and dedicated workforce with limited funding.
- Adult day providers are most concerned that their capacity to provide service, as defined by their existing facilities, programs, and funding, will be significantly inadequate for serving the growing numbers of seniors over the next ten years with higher levels of acuity as the baby boomer population ages.

Proposal: Administered by the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS), this funding will increase multiple year grants to ADS providers to serve additional older Alaskans with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, those with physically disabling conditions, and older persons with other cognitive impairments who are not safe staying alone unsupervised; provide critical respite for unpaid family caregivers; and provide start-up funds for one new program in an underserved area. Twelve grant-funded ADS programs served 472 seniors in FY 2010 of whom 56% had dementia (per SDS 2011 reports). This increment will add a total of \$350.0 (\$225.0 GF/MH and \$125.0 GF) to the \$1,555.0 baseline.



Recommendation: The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) supports an increase in funding for Adult Day Programs to the Senior and Disabilities Services senior community-based grants component in the amount of \$350.0. The ACoA appreciates the Governor’s increment of \$225.0 GF/MH in his budget for these services. The ACoA recommends that the full \$350.0 GF increment be added to the baseline in order to fully address the need for these important services for elderly Alaskans and their family caregivers, particularly in underserved areas. Since 2001, the amount of funding available per senior has declined as the senior population increases at a rate of 6% annually.

