Federal Actions to Support the National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers

2026 Update

Developed by:

The Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Act
Family Caregiving Advisory Council

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The Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Coordinated by:

Administration for Community Living

An operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

November 2026

Contents

Introduction 2
Applicable to all goals 3
Goal 1: Increase awareness of and outreach to family caregivers 4
Goal 2: Advance partnerships and engagement with family caregivers 6
Goal 3: Strengthen services and supports for family caregivers 8
Goal 4: Ensure financial and workplace security 10
Goal 5: Expand data, research, and evidence-based practices 11

Disclaimer

Federal actions listed in this document reflect current agency plans or activities and are subject to applicable law, agency authority, and the availability of appropriations. Where actions depend on future funding opportunities or awards, implementation is contingent on funding availability.

Introduction

This document accompanies the 2026 Update to the National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers. It identifies federal efforts to support the Strategy's updated goals and outcomes and reflects opportunities that have emerged since the Strategy's initial release in 2022. Together, the Strategy and these actions help advance a coordinated federal approach to recognizing, assisting, including, supporting, and engaging family caregivers.

This document is intended to supplement — not replace — the federal actions developed alongside the original Strategy. Readers are encouraged to use it alongside the original Federal Actions document, which continues to provide the foundation for federal implementation of the Strategy.

The actions included in this document represent commitments and opportunities identified by participating federal departments and agencies. Implementation remains subject to each agency's authorities, priorities, and available resources. Federal efforts to support family caregivers will continue to evolve as agencies strengthen coordination and identify new opportunities.

Applicable to all goals

- The Administration for Community Living (ACL), in partnership with the National Aging Services Network, administers Older Americans Act (OAA) funding to serve over 800,000 family caregivers through the National Family Caregiver Support Program and the Native American Family Caregiver Support Program (NAFCSP). The core services include:
    - Information to caregivers about available services
    - Assistance to caregivers in gaining access to services
    - Organization of support groups, individual counseling, and caregiver training
    - Respite care to enable caregivers to be temporarily relieved from caregiving duties
    - Supplemental services, on a limited basis, to complement care provided
- **In Progress:** The National Caregiver Support Collaborative (NCSC) was created to support nationwide implementation of the goals of the Strategy. ACL awarded grants to five entities, each focused on a goal of the Strategy. In addition, a sixth project was funded to implement the principles of caregiver navigation. The initiative began in the Fall of 2023 and is designed to last a minimum of four years.

Goal 1: Increase awareness of and outreach to family caregivers

Outcome 1.1 — Americans are educated about and understand the experience of family caregiving.

- **In Progress:** ACL will use its elder justice website to increase the availability of information for family caregivers:
    - Identifying grandfamilies and caregivers as an outreach target audience under the National Center on Elder Abuse.
    - Expanding and promoting existing materials by the National Center on Law and Elder Rights, such as briefs including "Legal Basics: Grandparents and Other Non-Parent Kinship Families" and "Grandparents and Other Non-Parent Kinship Families: Legal Rights."
    - Increasing promotion of the financial planning resources available for individuals caring for a child or grandchild on ACL's National Resource Center on Women & Retirement's Financial Caregiving Hub.
- **In Progress:** ACL will engage family caregivers in evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention programs, such as chronic disease self-management education, falls prevention, and mental health.
- **In Progress:** ACL will provide education and resources to promote caregiver health and well-being through ACL's National Chronic Disease Self-Management Education Programs (CDSME), Falls Prevention, and Nutrition and Aging Resource Centers.
- **In Progress:** The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) will continue to support its webpage on caregiving to achieve Goal 1 of the Strategy. The website continues to be active with education and training content in HRSA's Caregiving Curriculum. The HRSA Caregiving Curriculum consists of 11 modules. Seven teach caregivers how to take care of their own health and cope with the challenges of caregiving. Four modules focus on helping providers understand and address caregiver needs.
- **In Progress:** In 2026, HRSA continues to have a caregiver representative on its Advisory Committee on Interdisciplinary, Community-Based Linkages.
- **In Progress:** The Indian Health Service (IHS) will publish an annual blog or public-facing content on the IHS website that addresses the role of caregivers.
- **New (In Progress):** IHS will continue to expand awareness and outreach efforts to acknowledge, promote, and support American Indian and Alaska Native caregivers through media, social media, and targeted training and events. This will be accomplished in coordination with partners such as tribal organizations and Urban Indian Organizations.

Outcome 1.2 — Caregiver self-identification and knowledge of services are enhanced.

- **In Progress:** ACL will host, in partnership with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), an annual Older Adult Mental Health Awareness

Day — engaging family caregivers in the development and execution of the event to ensure their perspectives and needs are represented.

- **In Progress:** AmeriCorps Seniors may, in the future, use its grant opportunities to spur innovations that engage older or intergenerational volunteers to help increase access to information and services for caregivers. As of April 2025, AmeriCorps Seniors had a current open RSVP Notice of Funding that offers priority for innovative funders that will be for caregivers and grandfamilies. As of January 2026, AmeriCorps Seniors has not opened its Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) RSVP Competition Funding Notice. As of April 2026, AmeriCorps Seniors will continue to promote funding opportunities to support this work.

Outcome 1.3 — Outreach to family caregivers is improved.

- **In Progress:** Department of Education (ED) will amplify outreach activities carried out by ACL through media to support the goal of ensuring early identification and access to services and supports. As of April 2026, ED is committed to continuing to amplify all outreach activities and materials developed.

Outcome 1.4 — Family caregiving — and caregivers — are embedded in federal, state, territorial, tribal, and local planning.

- **In Progress:** ACL will issue notices of funding opportunity for Advancing State Implementation of the National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers in FY24, FY25, and FY26.
    - The first cohort of grantees, selected in FY24, includes CA, MD, MA, and WI. The second cohort, selected in FY25, includes AL, MN, MT, PA, and SC.
- **In Progress:** Department of Labor's (DOL) Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), through its technical assistance centers, will provide targeted technical assistance to state governments on state-level planning to support employed family caregivers, including family caregivers for veterans, to achieve the goal of incorporating employment concerns in local family caregiving strategies.
- **In Progress:** HRSA has had a member on its Advisory Committee on Interdisciplinary, Community-Based Linkages since 2021.

Outcome 1.5 — Public-private partnerships at all levels help drive family caregiver recognition and support.

- **In Progress:** AmeriCorps Seniors, through its Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) grant competition, may prioritize support, in the future, for engaging family caregivers and other activities aligned with the Strategy as a priority in its grantmaking. As of April 2025, RSVP grant competition for FY25 was open from July 15, 2024, through September 18, 2024. It includes support for caregivers and older adults as an AmeriCorps Seniors priority issue for which organizations can apply. This includes support for caregivers, including respite, system navigation, care coordination, and resources for custodial grandparents. As of January 2026, the FY26 RSVP competition funding notices had not been opened. As of April 2026, AmeriCorps Seniors will continue to promote funding opportunities to support this effort.

- **In Progress:** HRSA will continue to provide support to Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP) and Geriatrics Academic Career Award program (GACA) grant recipients and their partners to include family caregivers in their education and training activities in support of Goal 1 of the Strategy. From AY 2021-2022 to AY 2023-2024, HRSA GWEP grant recipients trained 475,033 patients, families, and caregivers.

Goal 2: Advance partnerships and engagement with family caregivers

Outcome 2.1 — In addition to the care recipient, family caregivers are recognized, supported, and engaged as co-leaders of the care teams when desired and appropriate, including clear documentation of caregivers and their roles in the health record.

- **In Progress:** On July 31, 2023, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience (GUIDE) Model, which will test whether providing an alternative payment methodology for participating dementia care programs to deliver a package of care management and coordination, caregiver education and support, and GUIDE Respite Services to Medicare beneficiaries with dementia and their caregivers reduces expenditures while preserving or enhancing quality of care. The GUIDE Model sets a standard approach to dementia care delivery and aims to address the responsibilities experienced by unpaid caregivers by providing caregiver training, support services, including 24/7 access to a support line, and connections to community-based resources.

  CMS also pays model participants to provide GUIDE Respite Services for eligible beneficiaries, to give unpaid caregivers temporary breaks from their caregiving responsibilities. The CMS Innovation Center released a Request for Applications (RFA) for the model in November of 2023. The model launched on July 1, 2024, with nearly 100 organizations participating as Established Program Track participants to deliver GUIDE services across the country. Another 240 organizations participating as New Program Track participants began providing services on July 1, 2025, after a one-year pre-implementation period to establish their programs. As of June 2025, participants served over 12,000 beneficiaries and their caregivers. The model will run through June 30, 2032.

- **In Progress:** HRSA has had a caregiver on its Advisory Committee on Interdisciplinary, Community-Based Linkages Programs since 2021.

- **In Progress:** The HRSA website continues to be active with education and training content in HRSA's Caregiving Curriculum.

- **In Progress:** IHS will work through the IHS Health Information Technology (HIT Modernization initiative to identify family and kin caregivers in structured electronic health record (EHR) fields and support better recognition of caregiver needs in care planning. IHS has begun an analysis of EHR capability that will support the caregiver role for incorporation into the IHS HIT Modernization Initiative. This work continues as the new Patients at the Heart (PATH) EHR is under development with a phased roll-out planned for 2027 and beyond.

- **In Progress:** National Institute on Aging (NIA) awarded eight P30 Roybal Centers focused on dementia care and caregiving in response to funding opportunity RFA-AG-24-007. Two funding opportunities have been forecasted on grants.gov. Additionally, NIA hosted the 2026 Dementia Care and Caregiving Research Summit, which had a session on Rigorous Intervention Development for Dementia Care and Caregiver Research.

Outcome 2.3 — Where desired and appropriate, family caregivers are included and considered in the development of care plans.

- **In Progress:** ACL's state long-term care ombudsman programs regularly educate and advocate for family members of recipients receiving long-term care to ensure their input is heard. Activities include resolving complaints, providing information and assistance as recipients transition between residential long-term care and home, and providing technical assistance to family councils in long-term care. When a care recipient requires long-term services and supports, state long-term care ombudsman programs can provide information and assistance and advocate for quality services.
- **In Progress:** CMS shared that the GUIDE Model launched on July 1, 2024, and will run through June 30, 2032. Nearly 100 organizations are participating as Established Program Track participants to deliver GUIDE services across the country. Another 240 organizations participating as New Program Track participants began providing services on July 1, 2025, after a one-year pre-implementation period to establish their programs. As of June 2025, participants served over 12,000 beneficiaries and their caregivers.

Outcome 2.4 — When policies are proposed or revised, the potential impact on family caregivers is understood.

- **In Progress:** HRSA will continue to support its 42 GWEP and 25 GACA grant recipients in their training initiatives for interprofessional teams to deliver patient-centered care that includes family caregivers as essential members and partners in the care recipient's care team in support of Goal 2 of the Strategy. From AY 2021-2022 to AY 2023-2024, 475,033 patients, families, and caregivers participated in GWEP training courses including but not limited to interprofessional team training.

Outcome 2.5 — Professionals who engage with family caregivers receive education and training that improves their ability to provide effective support and appropriate referrals.

- **New (In Progress):** IHS is preparing asynchronous competency-based training for Indian health system providers and community health representatives to strengthen workforce knowledge and skills to support caregivers, with deployment scheduled for late FY26.
- **New (In Progress):** IHS plans to host a national clinical and community workforce summit in 2027 that will include caregiver-focused training, education, and resources for Indian health system staff.

Goal 3: Strengthen services and supports for family caregivers

Outcome 3.1 — Person- and family-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally appropriate caregiver services and supports are accessible for all family caregivers.

- **In Progress:** ACL will maintain and expand upon caregiver resources and educational materials, including resource webpages, webinars, and publications.
- **In Progress:** ACL will issue, in 2026, a notice of funding opportunity to continue operation of the Eldercare Locator. The Eldercare Locator is a nationwide service that connects older adults and their caregivers to trustworthy local support resources, including meals, home care, transportation, caregiver training, education, or a well-deserved break from caregiving responsibilities. Marketing will target family caregivers to increase awareness of the Eldercare Locator and better connect them to community resources.
- **In Progress:** ACL will increase promotion of the financial planning resources available for individuals caring for a child or grandchild on ACL's grantee website, the National Resource Center on Women & Retirement's Financial Caregiving Hub.
- **In Progress:** ACL will continue the operation of the Alzheimer's Call Center. The call center provides 24/7 information, expert advice, care consultation, and referrals at both national and local levels. They will prioritize marketing and outreach to family caregivers of persons with dementia to better connect them to community resources.
- **In Progress:** By the end of FY26, ACL will expand support for family caregivers through the Lifespan Respite Care Program by announcing two new funding opportunities for states and continuing operation of a national technical assistance center. These investments will strengthen access to respite services and enhance state capacity to support family caregivers across the lifespan. Since 2009, ACL has awarded competitive lifespan respite grants to eligible agencies in 39 states and the District of Columbia. In FY26, Congress appropriated $11 million for the program, representing a $3 million increase above the FY22 enacted level and reinforcing the federal commitment to strengthening services and supports for family caregivers.
- **In Progress:** The CMS Innovation Center's GUIDE Model, launched on July 1, 2024, will run through June 30, 2032. Over 90 organizations are participating as Established Program Track participants to deliver GUIDE services across the country. Another 240 organizations participating as New Program Track participants began providing services on July 1, 2025, after a one-year pre-implementation period to establish their programs. As of June 2025, participants served over 12,000 beneficiaries and their caregivers.
- **In Progress:** HRSA supports its 42 GWEP and 25 GACA grant recipients to provide meaningful information, services, and supports for family caregivers in their trainings.

Outcome 3.2 — Family caregivers can obtain respite services that meet their unique needs.

- **In Progress:** ACL will launch the Alzheimer's Disease Program Initiative State Dementia-Specific Respite Program. This program will support states in leveraging their

existing OAA Title III-E caregiver services network to serve caregivers of people living with dementia with the respite they need to sustain their caregiving role.

- **In Progress:** ACL will continue to administer the Lifespan Respite Care Program, which supports the development of statewide lifespan respite programs.
- **In Progress:** ACL will continue operation of the National Technical Assistance Center on Kinship and Grandfamilies.
- **In Progress:** ACL will continue to administer the Dementia Capable Community Health Worker Program, which supports area agencies on aging and tribes in deploying dementia capable community health workers to support people living with dementia and their family caregivers.
- **In Progress:** ACL will continue to administer the Alzheimer's Disease State and Community Grant Program, which supports states and communities in scaling evidence-based interventions to support people living with Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias and their family caregivers.
- **In Progress:** ACL will continue operation of the National Lifespan Respite Technical Assistance Center to support states and other entities to develop and scale respite programs for caregivers supporting older adults and people with disabilities of any age.
- **In Progress:** ACL will continue to administer Title VI of the OAA, which authorizes grants to Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian communities to deliver culturally appropriate nutrition and supportive services to elders and their family caregivers. Each year, these programs serve more than 250,000 elders and caregivers through grants with 291 tribes.
- **In Progress:** ACL will continue to administer the adult protective services (APS) funding and tribal APS funding to support states and tribes in developing systems to prevent and respond to instances of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation (annually 1.4 million referrals). These efforts include a focus on supporting older adults and their families to prevent and remediate caregiver neglect and exploitation.
- **In Progress:** The CMS Innovation Center's GUIDE Model launched on July 1, 2024, and will run through June 30, 2032. Nearly 100 organizations are participating as Established Program Track participants to deliver GUIDE services across the country. Another 240 organizations participating as New Program Track participants began providing services on July 1, 2025, after a one-year pre-implementation period to establish their programs. As of June 2025, participants served over 12,000 beneficiaries and their caregivers.

Outcome 3.4 — Family caregivers and families have safe places to live, nutritious food, and adequate transportation.

- **In Progress:** HRSA encourages its 42 GWEP and 25 GACA grant recipients to inform caregivers about the availability of high-quality, setting-appropriate, caregiver-defined respite services.

Outcome 3.5 — Family caregivers have innovative tools and technology to assist them in their roles.

- **In Progress:** HRSA requires its 42 GWEP and 25 GACA grant recipients to continue to

support patients, families, and caregivers during teleconferencing and telemedicine visits to support Goal 3 of the Strategy.

- **In Progress:** Since 2022, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), including the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH), National Cancer Institute (NCI), NIA, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), and the National Institute on Nursing Research (NINR) have supported roughly 55 Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer grants that support innovative care coordination and technological tools to assist those in a familial caregiving role.
- **New (In Progress):** ACL launched the Caregiver AI Prize Challenge to identify practical and effective ways to use AI to reimagine how technology can improve care quality, reduce burden, and strengthen the caregiving infrastructure for the future. The competition will recognize and reward innovators who are developing, testing, and scaling AI-enabled tools to support both family caregivers and the direct care workforce. Phase 1 winners will be announced in fall 2026.

Outcome 3.9 — Kinship families and grandfamilies are recognized, supported, and valued.

- **New (In Progress):** The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), through the National Child Welfare Center for Innovation and Advancement (NCWCIA), funded by the Children's Bureau, supports public child welfare agencies in strengthening performance through evidence-based and innovative practices. It convenes the Kinship Leaders Peer Innovation and Insight Networking Group.

Goal 4: Ensure financial and workplace security for family caregivers and the care recipients they support

Outcome 4.3 — Family caregivers have access to and use of financial education and advance planning tools.

- **In Progress:** ACL will continue promotion of the financial planning resources available for individuals caring for a child or grandchild on ACL's grantee website, the National Resource Center on Women & Retirement's Financial Caregiver Hub.
- **Modifying (In Progress):** ACL will identify grandfamilies as a priority target population in the next notice of funding opportunity for ACL's Legal Assistance Enhancement Program grants. The purpose of these grants is to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of legal assistance programs to improve the lives of older Americans with economic or social need through legal solutions and strategies.

Goal 5: Expand data, research, and evidence-based practices to support family caregivers

Outcome 5.1 — A national infrastructure will exist to support the collection of population-based data, using standardized wording of the definition of family caregiving and standardized wording of questions that address the core characteristics of the family caregiving experience.

- **In Progress:** ACL will continue to administer the Dementia Capability in Indian Country Program, which supports tribes in developing and scaling culturally specific dementia capable services for family caregivers.
- **New (In Progress):** In 2026, NIA hosted the Dementia Care & Caregiving Research Summit, built on the progress of the previous care summits, to review research progress, highlight innovative and promising research, and identify remaining unmet research needs with input from the research community, persons living with dementia and their care partners, those who provide healthcare or services and supports to persons living with dementia, and other interest holders.

  The 2026 summit focused on the economic impacts of dementia, the role of community in dementia care research, rigorous dementia care and caregiving intervention development, advances in Alzheimer's disease and related dementias data infrastructure to support dementia care and caregiving research, and dementia care models and care coordination strategies across systems and states. The research gaps and opportunities and summit report is forthcoming.
- **New (In Progress):** NIA funded "The National Dementia Workforce Study" (NDWS) – the first longitudinal study of the characteristics and experiences of the paid dementia workforce (clinicians, nursing home and assisted living staff, and home health aides). While NDWS focuses on the paid dementia care workforce, the needs and well-being of family caregivers of persons living with dementia are intertwined with these clinicians, nursing homes and assisted living staff, and home health care workers.
- **New (In Progress):** NIA shared that "The United States Cost of Dementia Project" seeks to document the full monetary costs of dementia – not only medical costs and long-term services and supports but also the value of the time of unpaid (typically) family caregivers, including the loss of future income and wealth. This project seeks to provide national, annual, and comprehensive cost estimates of dementia.
- **In Progress:** In 2025, multiple institutes within NIH, including NIA, NCI, the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), NINR, NICHD, and NIMH, awarded the "Advancing the Science of Palliative Care Research Across the Lifespan (ASCENT) Consortium" (U54AG093230) in response to RFA-AG-25-002. The consortium aims to develop a national scientific infrastructure to advance innovative, high-quality palliative care research for those living with serious illness and those who care for them.

Outcome 5.2 — Family caregiver research facilitates the development and delivery of programs and services that support and enhance the health and well-being of the family caregiver and the person receiving support.

- **New (In Progress):** ACF released a forecast for the funding opportunity, Kinship Navigator Programs: Replication and Tribal Adaptation, to increase the number of state and tribal child welfare agencies that replicate and implement an evidence-based Kinship Navigator Program.
- **New (In Progress):** ACF has released a new forecast for the funding opportunity number: HHS-2026-ACF-ACYF-CF-0004, "Kinship Navigator Programs: Evaluation," to support the implementation and rigorous evaluation of existing Kinship Navigator Programs.
- **New (In Progress):** IHS will support and assess the impact of grants and program awards made through the IHS Alzheimer's Grants Program on people living with dementia and family caregivers as part of a formal evaluation due in 2027. Caregiving support is identified as one of five key drivers of comprehensive dementia care in IHS Alzheimer's funding opportunities. Formal assessment of the impact of the Models of Care grants is underway.
- **In Progress:** NIA is supporting the Center for Aging Families (CAF), one of 16 Demography and Economics of Aging Centers. CAF is a consortium between Ohio State University, Bowling Green State University, and Purdue University, and has three primary research areas: the changing demography of aging families; aging family health; and health disparities in aging families, under which family caregiving research falls. CAF will advance science on how family relationships across the life course link to population health and health disparities in the second half of life.

Outcome 5.3 — Emerging and evidence-informed practices are promoted, translated, replicated, disseminated, and sustained to support family caregivers.

- **In Progress:** HRSA requires its 42 GWEP and 25 GACA grant recipients to promote, translate, and disseminate promising and evidence-supported practices to support family caregivers in the delivery of health care and long-term services and supports.