

Agenda Item Number 12.E.

Family Caregiver Support Program Budget Update

Presenter: Kay Metzger

Action Recommended: None, information only

Background:

The Family Caregiver Support Program was enacted in 2000 as part of the Older Americans Act Reauthorization. Its goal was to offer services to two groups of people:

- Those who are the primary caregiver for a loved one over 60 years of age, or
- People over 60 years of age who are the primary caretakers of dependent grandchildren under the age of 19.

Since its inception, the Family Caregiver Support Program has provided much needed information and referral, counseling, training, respite care and financial assistance to hundreds of people in Lane County. In FY2005-06 alone, the Family Caregiver Support Program of Lane County provided the following:

- 6,867 Responses to requests for information and assistance
- 6,418 Hours of respite care provided for family caregivers
- 215 Family caregivers received respite care
- 19 Group training sessions offered
- 57 Family caregivers (unduplicated number) attended the trainings
- 37 Family caregivers received financial assistance to purchase medical supplies, adaptive equipment, dental care, household cleaning, and small home repairs.

Recent Events:

In October 2006, Senior and People with Disabilities (SPD), a division of the Department of Human Services, State of Oregon, informed the Area Agencies on Aging that there had been a miscalculation in the allocations. The error occurred during the first allocation cycle, 2001-03, was just recently discovered, and was

estimated to be 2.8 million dollars. As a result, SPD re-allocated approximately 1.2 million dollars. This left a 1.6 million dollar hole to be absorbed in the remaining months of the fiscal year by the local Area Agencies on Aging.

On November 30, 2006, the Legislative Emergency Board met to consider a rebalance of the Department of Human Services (DHS) 2006-07 budget. In its funding request, DHS chose not to address the shortfall in the Family Caregiver Support Program budget. However, due to public concern regarding the impact of such severe reductions to the program, the Emergency Board determined additional funding was important. The latest information indicates the E-Board approved \$391,279 additional funds for the program statewide.

This is certainly good news for family caregivers residing in Lane County, but the program must still operate on a reduced budget for the remaining months of FY2006-07. The most recent figures indicate the impact of the DHS calculation error on Lane County is a \$76,382 shortfall. Since Lane County generally receives about 10% of the statewide pie, we are hoping for over \$39,000 to bring the shortfall to \$37,382. After learning of the problem in October 2006, S&DS took action to close the program to new requests and hold open a vacant staff position. Once we receive firm figures from SPD, we will re-evaluate these actions.

Budget Outlook for FY2007-08:

Even though the Legislative E-Board allocated funding to backfill the error in FY2006-07, the projected biennial budget for FY2007-09 looks to be much smaller than the past. Initial projections given by DHS indicate Lane County's Family Caregiver Support Program allocation will be about 75% of what we initially received for FY2005-07.