

Advocacy Day Talking Points: Adult Protective Services and Home and Community Block Grant

To help frail elderly people stay in their homes, increase funding for Adult Protective Services and for services provided by the Home and Community Care Block Grant, which now has a waiting list of over 13,000 persons.

- As North Carolina's population ages, reports of abuse have risen dramatically—to 21,055 in 2012, an increase of 37 per cent over the last four years. Victims may be physically abused or financially robbed or exploited, and over half of them are women.
- Complaints are addressed by county departments of social services, but the system is underfunded and understaffed. In the last session of the General Assembly, all its funding was cut, with a loss of \$2 million.
- A pilot program is badly needed for the Vulnerable Adult Protection System to extend coverage to adults now excluded who are 60 years old and older without any disability and who may be at risk of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The Home and Community Care Block Grant supports in-home services for adults aged 60 and over which help to keep frail older adults in their homes where they want to be and out of more expensive institutional care.

- There are 18 of these services with each county deciding which ones it will provide. The most used are Meals on Wheels and personal care services; others include adult day care, transportation, and respite care for family caregivers.
- There is no income eligibility requirement; services are directed to low-income persons, in particular those at risk for institutional care.
- Increased funding is needed to provide services for some of the 13,000 persons on waiting lists. Because costs of services has increased, and the federal sequester has cut over five per cent of federal funds in the program, the current level of services is being cut day by day.