

**Appropriation Request Title:** Enhancing Expertise for High Quality Dementia Care

**Appropriation Request Sponsor:** Senator Brian Shiozawa, MD

**Brief Description of Appropriation Request:** A new and annually recurring appropriation of \$490,000 will support the goals of the Utah State Plan for Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias adopted in 2012. The Department of Health through the Office of Primary Care will contract services from a single, multidisciplinary team of dementia experts currently involved in clinical care, professional education and community outreach. The expert team will provide community education and engagement to achieve a Dementia-aware Utah (Goal 1 of the Utah State Plan) and health professional education for a Dementia-competent Workforce (Goal 4). In addition, funding will provide access to dementia experts for citizens in rural, currently underserved parts of the state through dementia teleconsultation using the existing Utah Telehealth Network (Goals 2 and 4) beginning in St. George, Utah.

**Projected Budgetary Impact:** The appropriation is projected to save state government \$12 million annually when the program is fully operational. State government is the largest single payer for dementia care largely through Medicaid payments for long-term care. Most adults qualifying for Medicaid late in life have depleted personal assets because of the costs of institutional care. Many, but not all patients with Alzheimer's disease require institutional care. Delaying the need for institutional care through family education about management and family support planning would postpone this spend-down and decrease the number of individuals qualifying for Medicaid. Delaying spend-down by 6 months in only 1% of AD patients in Utah (or 500 people) through higher quality care would decrease Medicaid expenditures by \$12 million (conservatively assuming institutional care costs of \$24,000 / year).

High quality care providing integrated health education and family support planning is often unavailable or poorly utilized for Utah citizens with dementing diseases. Current programs and services are uncoordinated, inefficient and provided by those without sufficient expertise. This new appropriation will improve the quality of care for individuals with dementing disease by sustaining, expanding and disseminating expertise throughout Utah.

**Rural Impact:** Dementia expertise is now almost completely limited to the Salt Lake County. Three components of this request will enhance the quality of dementia care in rural areas: 1) sustaining current expertise and making this expertise available on a consultative basis to rural health providers, 2) providing teledementia consultations that provides local access to dementia experts, and 3) training new dementia experts and providing dementia education to health professions trainees and current practitioners in Utah.