

## Adult Day Achievement Center Enhancement Act

### Request

On behalf of the over 400,000 people living with multiple sclerosis (MS) nationwide, the National MS Society urges you to support the *Adult Day Achievement Center Enhancement Act*. When introduced, this legislation is aimed to sustain and grow adult day programs by establishing a new grant program within the Administration on Aging that is specifically designed to support adult day programs targeting younger populations such as those living with multiple sclerosis (MS) and other chronic disabling diseases. A vital resource in the community, adult day centers are associated with reduced costs long-term, offer socialization and medical monitoring for its participants, and support families by providing family caregivers time for respite.

### Position

The National MS Society supports **sustaining and enhancing Adult Day Achievement Center programs for people living with MS and similar chronic conditions and urges Congress to cosponsor the *Adult Day Achievement Center Enhancement Act*.**

MS is a chronic, often disabling disease that attacks the central nervous system, which is made up of the brain, spinal cord, and optic nerves. Symptoms may be mild, such as numbness in the limbs, or severe, such as paralysis or loss of vision. The progress, severity, and specific symptoms of MS are unpredictable and vary from one person to another.

Because of the chronic and often disabling nature of MS, individuals can require considerable assistance with activities of daily living such as dressing, bathing, eating, and accessing transportation. Family caregivers are the primary providers of this support for loved ones living at home. Adult day programs help families by providing respite from caregiving duties and/or time to remain in or return to the workforce.

For its participants, adult day centers offer life enhancing services, including medical care, rehabilitation therapies, dignified assistance with activities of daily living, nutrition therapy, health monitoring, social interaction, stimulating activities, and transportation. They also permit persons living with disabilities to remain actively engaged in their communities.

The assistance offered at adult day centers can help reduce ongoing medical care, lower hospital costs and decrease the necessity for premature admission to nursing home facilities. There is data that indicates that the services themselves are also less costly. A



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Multiple Sclerosis  
Society**

2007 survey of six states showed that bundled adult day health care services cost much less than nursing home care for Medicaid-eligible participants. For example, the bundled adult day health care services in California were reported as \$76/daily (or \$914/monthly), whereas nursing home bundled reimbursement was reported as \$152/daily (or \$4,562/monthly).

The *Adult Day Achievement Center Enhancement Act* will provide states the cost effective opportunity to sustain and grow adult day centers by establishing a competitive grant program at the Administration on Aging (AoA). Since MS is typically diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, a critical aspect of this legislation is that it provides support to adult day centers serving younger persons with disabilities. Currently, few adult day programs are equipped to provide the younger disabled population with age-appropriate adult day programming.

## **Supporting Rationale**

- Documented benefits to participants of MS adult day centers include improvements in functional status, fatigue, depression, pain and social support.
- Adult day centers can provide long-term cost savings by reducing ongoing medical care and hospital costs and decreasing admission to costly nursing home facilities.
- Caregiver burden has a significant impact on employers. A study by MetLife estimates U.S. employers lose between \$17.1 and \$33.6 billion per year due to decreased productivity of stressed caregivers. This cost includes replacement costs for employees who quit because of overwhelming caregiving responsibilities, absenteeism, and workday interruptions.
- MS caregivers are primarily spouses and average 60 years of age. Almost half spend more than 20 hours per week on caregiving and have been fulfilling this role on average for over 13 years. The impact on employment is significant, with 10% leaving the workforce completely due to their caregiving responsibilities.
- By providing opportunity for respite, adult day centers can reduce family caregiver strain, as well as the considerable cost that U.S. businesses currently incur from decreased productivity.
- Adult day centers that offer programming appropriate to the younger disabled population can provide cost-effective services that keep persons with disabilities in their communities.
- A 2007 survey of California, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Texas, and Washington revealed that bundled adult day health care services for Medicaid beneficiaries for all six states were less costly than bundled rates for nursing home care—in one instance, the monthly rate for nursing home care was five times higher than for Adult Day health care services.