Goal: To support the further integration, scaling and long-term sustainability of Colorado’s Lifespan Respite Program.

Objectives:
1. Further expand and enhance respite care services to family members;
2. Improve the statewide dissemination and coordination of respite care;
3. Provide, supplement, or improve access and quality of respite care services to family caregivers thereby reducing family caregiver strain, and
4. Enhance community understanding and education activities about respite.

Outcome: Colorado’s Lifespan Respite Program will have a strong infrastructure.
Outcome: Family caregivers will be able to easily access respite resources and supports.

Activities to Support the Above Outcomes*:

- **Colorado Respite Coalition Website**: The Colorado Respite Coalition developed a website ([www.coloradorespitecoalition.org](http://www.coloradorespitecoalition.org)) during the first three-year federal grant. The website includes financial information, training opportunities and a Respite Locator to match respite providers with caregivers. The Project proposes to continue to enhance and maintain the website to provide news and resources for family caregivers and advocates.

- **Social Media and Marketing**: The Project will continue to spread awareness about the need for and support of respite through social media and public relations.

- **Respite Locator**: The Colorado Respite Coalition website includes a Respite Locator which matches family caregivers with respite providers. The Locator currently has approximately 400 providers across the state. The Project proposes a partnership with the Nebraska Respite Network’s eLifespan Respite program. eLifespan Respite is a more detailed database for caregivers looking for providers. The partnership would enhance the Colorado Respite Locator by replicating this website’s advanced components.

- **Aging and Disability Resources for Colorado (ADRC) Expansion**: The Project proposes to partner with one ADRC to develop a pilot program to expand its services to include children in their client base, thus increasing their services across the lifespan.

- **Strategic Plan**: The Project proposes to develop a strategic plan to lay out activities during and after the grant period is complete. The plan will be written in conjunction with Project partners and will serve as an outline of goals in an effort to sustain Colorado’s Lifespan Respite Care Program.

- **Outreach to Targeted Populations**: The Project proposes to partner with agencies to reach targeted populations such as veterans, families facing Alzheimer’s and other chronic diseases and families with mental health concerns. The partnership will involve increased outreach
through new resources available online and via social media. Additionally, the Project plans to develop online training modules for caregivers dealing with specific symptoms. For example, many people with Alzheimer’s, Multiple Sclerosis or dementia face cognitive problems. The training modules would address cognitive problems affecting multiple populations and help families form networks with others in similar situations, especially in rural communities.

- **Regional Respite Coalition Development**: In 2013, the Project hosted three Respite Summits across the state to bring together stakeholders to develop stronger regional respite efforts. The result was the formation of three regional respite coalitions – the Western Slope Regional Respite Coalition, the Northern Colorado Regional Respite Coalition and the Southern Colorado Regional Respite Coalition. The Project is working alongside the coalitions to develop long-term goals to improve respite services and resources in their areas. To continue to build these efforts, the Project proposes hosting a retreat for the regional coalition leaders to share ideas and build stronger relationships between regional members. The coalitions are vital to the sustainability of the Project due to their ability to reach new areas and create a stronger presence in rural Colorado.

- **Emergency Respite Funds**: Many family caregivers turn to respite during times of crisis and are in need of emergency respite which is limited at best. The Project proposes to create a pilot program for emergency respite vouchers. Many other states have developed a voucher system for families needing emergency respite and the Project will look to their models for support.

- **Coming Up for Air**: Easter Seals Colorado hosted a weekend workshop in 2014, Coming Up for Air, targeting special needs families in need of respite, struggling with the stress and strain as a result of disability. Parents received training about financial planning, respite resources and personal health and wellness. The children with special needs were cared for by trained care workers while their siblings were able to participate in activities with siblings in similar situations. This model was very successful and many families expressed interest in attending again. The Project proposes to host another Coming Up for Air session for families with children with special needs and also expand the program for families caring for aging loved ones.

- **Adoption Exchange Trainings**: The Project has already partnered with the Adoption Exchange to host eight respite trainings across the state. The full day trainings educate potential providers about respite care. In the past, attendees have included medical professionals as well as family, friends and neighbors interested in helping to provide a break for caregivers. The Project would like to continue its partnership with the Adoption Exchange and provide an estimated four trainings per year across Colorado. The Project is currently working with the regional respite coalitions to identify communities interested in the trainings.

- **Bringing Down Barriers Training**: The training includes disability awareness, behavioral management and ways to include people with special needs in activities. The training is currently offered to local schools and recreation centers. The Project proposes to expand this training in conjunction with the three regional coalitions.

- **Employer Engagement Training**: An estimated 75% of caregivers are employed and many of them face challenges at work while juggling their caregiving responsibilities. The Project plans to partner with reACT (Respect a Caregiver’s Time), a national employer-focused coalition working
to provide employers with tools to address challenges faced by employee caregivers. The Project will identify businesses in the Denver metro area to develop a pilot program to assist businesses in changing their workplace culture to be more flexible for caregivers. Based on the results in Denver, the Project will expand its efforts across the state to reach more employers.

- **Metro State University of Denver Training:** Easter Seals Colorado partnered with Metro State University of Denver in 2013 and 2014 to provide training to counselors employed at Easter Seals Colorado’s summer camp. The training was developed with a Metro State professor and allows counselors to earn college credit by participating in classroom and hands-on field training. The Project proposes to expand the training by creating a toolkit to present at the national Easter Seals conference to help camps across the nation offer a similar program.

*Inclusion of these activities are contingent upon the final budget*