

Department of Aging Receives \$3 Million to Support Aging and Disability Resource Centers during Pandemic

Harrisburg, PA -- The Pennsylvania Department of Aging's Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) Office has been awarded \$3 million from the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Community Living to support efforts to mitigate and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ADRC, also known as the PA Link to Aging and Disability Resources, is a statewide program that provides information and referral services to older adults and individuals with disabilities. This program helps individuals with activities of daily living by connecting them with medical and non-medical supports and services. Consumers, family members, caregivers and providers, can contact the PA Link through the helpline, 1-800-753-8827, or at www.aging.Pa.gov/local-resources/pa-link.

Funds from this grant will enable the PA Link to support the operations and capacity of the aging and disability network, increase coordination of efforts and provide critical access to services for those populations most at risk from COVID-19.

"During COVID-19, being able to obtain information and access support services is a vital concern for older adults, persons with disabilities and their caregivers," said Aging Secretary Robert Torres. "The PA Link provides seamless connection to a vast array of services, supports and person-centered counseling delivered in local communities throughout the Commonwealth. This federal funding will help PA Link boost capacity and improve connectivity to serve consumers during this pandemic and beyond."

The PA Link will use the grant funds to administer the following activities:

Virtual Management of ADRC Access Functions: Implement e-services for PA Link staff and partners to improve business operations related to accessing PA Link programs.

Care Transition Services: Assist those most at risk of COVID-19 who are seeking transitional support from hospital or nursing home to a home setting.

Food Order and Delivery: Collaborate with local grocery stores, restaurants and/or online/mobile food order and delivery services to provide delivered groceries and food.

Assistive Technology: Help older adults, individuals with disabilities, caregivers and care providers learn how to use telehealth technologies to provide and receive needed services. The Department will partner with the Assistive Technology Act program to provide assistive technology assessments, devices and training.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Provide PPE for community partners to ensure in-home supports can be maintained safely.

Marketing of PA Link Helpline and Outreach: Increase public awareness of the PA Link helpline, 1-800-753-8827.

Reduce Social Isolation: Provide individuals with the ability to request periodic check-in calls by trained staff and increase awareness of low-cost programs that connect individuals through broadband and telecommunication equipment.

Information and Counseling Services: Increase the capacity of the PA Link network partners to respond to requests from individuals in need of resource information, assistance with referrals and person-centered counseling.