

**Amount of grant request.**

The Bright Side Family is applying for \$30,000 in grant funds from The Friends Foundation for the Aging, to be utilized for the Portable Assisted Living Services (PALS) program.

What is the problem you have identified? Who will be served?

About 17 percent of New Jersey's total population is over 65, and 8.8 percent of New Jersey's adults ages 65 and older live in poverty. There is a huge need not just for affordable senior housing in New Jersey, but affordable senior housing that is catered to the needs of individuals aging in place, who cannot afford traditional assisted living facilities, and value the independence and autonomy that comes from living in one's own home. Our PALS program currently serves older adults living in Westwood House in Westwood, NJ and two buildings in Garfield Housing Authority in Garfield, NJ.

What is the solution you propose to address the problem?

PALS utilizes New Jersey's Assisted Living Program (ALP) model to bring care and services to seniors living in subsidized housing. There are only 15 Assisted Living Programs (ALPs) in the state to serve the rapidly growing older adult population. The Bright Side Family operates the only ALP in Bergen County, and is the only ALP with a full-time social worker on staff. PALS goes above and beyond typical ALP services by making social work an integral part of its framework. We want to share and promote our model, which can be done through the New Jersey Assisted Living Program Provider Coalition (NJALPPC), of which Bright Side was a founding member. Doing so will allow all stakeholders—other ALPs, housing providers, managed care organizations, and more—to recognize the benefits of running an ALP in subsidized senior housing, especially with the inclusion of a full-time social worker.

What actions will you take?

Our goal is to use this funding to support the PALS program overall but especially the community outreach, education, and personalized care efforts being carried out by our team, including the social worker, which will lead to PALS' continued growth and viability. These efforts, in collaboration with the NJALPPC and other community partners, such as Rutgers School of Social Work research team, will also contribute to the ALP model's continued growth and viability throughout New Jersey and replication elsewhere.

Do you have other partners for implementation or funding?

Our main funding partners for the PALS program are The Henry & Marilyn Taub Foundation and two local banks. The Bright Side Family is also reimbursed for PALS services through New Jersey's MLTSS program, although the rate for this is only \$67/day per eligible individual. Individuals not utilizing the MLTSS program are private pay, with generous sliding scale rates available.

How will you know your actions are having an impact?

Evidence of impact will include: continued growth of PALS census at existing locations, identification of potential new sites for PALS, increased reimbursement rate for ALPs, and increased awareness and appreciation of the ALP model on the part of State agencies, managed care organizations, and subsidized housing providers.

Brief statement of your organization's history and competence for this project.

The Bright Side Family launched the PALS program in 2016 as a response to the high cost of and growing need for assisted living services in Bergen County. Since then, PALS has provided uninterrupted care for enrolled clients—including throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, when many other organizations suspended their services. Bright Side also operates its own assisted living facility—Bright Side Manor—as well as a subsidized senior apartment building—The Brookdale—with plans to break ground on a new subsidized building in late summer 2022. Initially started in Westwood House in Westwood, NJ, PALS was proven successful and much-needed, and Bright Side looked into other buildings in the area that could benefit from the program. We expanded PALS into two additional buildings, both in the Garfield Housing Authority in Garfield, NJ. Now operating in these three buildings, PALS continues to expand care and services on a routine basis.