

Date of Hearing: April 18, 2017

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON AGING AND LONG-TERM CARE

Ash Kalra, Chair

AB 614 (Limón) – As Amended March 23, 2017

SUBJECT: Area agency on aging: Alzheimer's disease and dementia: training and services.

SUMMARY: This bill requires each Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) to maintain an Alzheimer's and dementia specialist to provide information, assistance, referrals, and options counseling to families. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires each AAA to maintain an Alzheimer's and dementia specialist to provide information, assistance, referrals, and options counseling to families.
- 2) Requires each area agency on aging, in consultation with their local chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, to develop an evidence-based or evidence-informed core training program relating to Alzheimer's disease and dementia and any additional training based on local needs.
- 3) Requires that if the area agency on aging lacks the capacity to maintain an Alzheimer's specialist, it may contract with a qualified local entity to provide the service.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the California Department of Aging (CDA) in the California Health and Human Services Agency.
- 2) Requires CDA to provide leadership to those agencies in developing systems of home and community-based services that maintain individuals in their own homes or least restrictive homelike environments, and requires those agencies to function as the community link at the local level for the development of those services.
- 3) Requires CDA to designate various private nonprofit or public agencies as area agencies on aging to work for the interests of older Californians within a planning and service area, and provide a broad array of social and nutritional services.
- 4) Requires each area agency on aging to maintain a professional staff that is supplemented by volunteers, governed by a board of directors or elected officials, and whose activities are reviewed by an advisory council consisting primarily of older individuals from the community.
- 5) Requires CDA to adopt policies and guidelines to carry out the purposes of the Alzheimer's Day Care-Resource Center Program, whereby direct services contractors receive funding to provide services to meet the special care needs of, and address the behavioral problems of, individuals with Alzheimer's disease or a disease of a related type.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown.

COMMENTS:

Author’s Statement: The author states, “Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) are on the front line to connect constituents with services. Since AAAs are already the experts on local community resources it’s a natural fit for them to provide assistance and referrals as well as options counseling. Information, assistance, as well as counseling about Alzheimer’s services will fill a much needed gap for family members and caregivers and help individuals with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia to live in the community.”

“Alzheimer’s is the 5th leading cause of death in California and the only one in the top ten without a proven cause, preventative action or cure. According to the Alzheimer’s Association, the number of Alzheimer’s cases is growing rapidly across the entire United States population, and could nearly triple by 2050 to 13.8 million.”

Background: Alzheimer’s is the most common form of dementia, which is a general term for memory loss and other intellectual abilities that interfere with daily life. Alzheimer’s disease accounts for 60% to 80% of dementia cases. Alzheimer’s is not a normal part of aging, up to 5% of people with the disease have early signs appears when they are in their 40s or 50s.

The California Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A) is a non-profit organization representing California’s 33 area agencies on aging. The association is an advocate for meeting the needs of seniors and adults with disabilities, with the purpose to implement the provisions and intent of the Older Americans Act and the Older Californians Act.

Area agencies on aging, established by the Federal Older Americans Act in 1965, receive federal, state, and local funds to contract with local organizations for service to seniors. There are 33 area agencies on aging designated by the California Department of Aging as the local Planning Services Agencies.

Federal and state law requires AAAs to provide information and referral services to older adults and their caregivers.

Arguments in Support: California Association of Area Agencies on Aging state in their letter, “Area agencies on aging are the primary source for information of senior services in every community and connect services to those most in need, including individuals with Alzheimer’s. ... Since area agencies on aging are already the experts on local community resources it’s a natural fit for them to provide assistance and referrals as well as options counseling.”

“C4A strongly supports AB 614 because information, assistance, as well as counseling about Alzheimer’s services will fill a much needed gap for family members and caregivers and help individuals with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia to live in the community.”

Arguments in Opposition: None.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Agency on Aging/Area 4
California Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A)
California Commission on Aging
National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter (NASW-CA)

Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging
One individual.

Opposition

None on file.

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