

Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

CS/CS/HB 299 — Education and Training for Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Form of Dementia

by Health and Human Services Committee; Healthcare Regulation Subcommittee; and Reps. Black, Salzman, and others (CS/CS/SB 1182 by Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services; Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee; and Senators Simon and Book)

The bill establishes the Florida Alzheimer’s Disease and Dementia Training Act. The bill establishes universal Alzheimer’s disease and related disorder (ADRD) training requirements to be used by nursing homes, home health agencies, nurse registries, companion or homemaker service providers, health care services pools, assisted living facilities (ALF), adult family-care homes (AFCH), adult day care centers (ADCC), and ADCCs that provide specialized Alzheimer’s services to replace each license type’s individual training requirements on that topic.

The bill defines a number of terms, including “covered provider,” “department,” “employee,” “personal care,” and “regular contact.”

The bill requires that all employees of covered providers receive basic written information about interacting with persons who have ADRD upon beginning employment. Employees of covered providers who provide personal care to or have regular contact with patients, participants, or residents, must also complete one hour of dementia-related training within 30 days of his or her initial employment.

The bill also requires that each employee of a home health agency, nurse registry, or companion or homemaker service provider who provides personal care receive two hours of additional training within the first seven months of employment. Each employee of a nursing home, ALF, AFCH, or ADCC who provides personal care must receive three hours of additional training within the first seven months of employment. Employees of ALFs with a limited mental health license are not required to complete this additional training.

Additionally, an employee of an ALF, AFCH, or ADCC that advertises and provides specialized care for persons with Alzheimer’s disease must also receive the following additional training:

- Three hours of additional training within the first three months of employment, rather than the first seven months as with non-specialized facilities;
- Four hours of dementia-specific training within the first six months of employment; and
- Four hours of continuing education each calendar year through:
 - Contact hours;
 - On-the-job training, limited to a certain amount of credit in each calendar year; or
 - Electronic learning technology.

Employees of a health care services pool must complete the training that correlates with the training required for the position and facility in which the employee will be working.

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The bill directs the Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) to provide the initial one hour of dementia-related training in an online format at no cost. The training must contain information on the following topics:

- Understanding the basics about the most common forms of dementia;
- How to identify the signs and symptoms of dementia; and
- Skills for communicating and interacting with persons with ADRD.

The bill requires the DOEA to make a record of the completion of the one-hour training program available to covered providers. The record must include the training, the name of the employee, and the date of completion. The bill also requires covered providers to maintain a record of each employee's completion of the training and, upon request, provide the employee with a copy of the completion record consistent with the employer's written policies.

Employees hired, contracted, or referred to provide services before July 1, 2023, must complete the training before July 1, 2026. However, proof of completion of equivalent training that has been completed prior to July 1, 2023, may substitute for the training. Employees hired, contracted, or referred to provide services on or after July 1, 2023, may satisfy training requirements by completing current training curricula approved by the DOEA until the effective date of the rules adopted by the DOEA under the bill.

The bill also requires the DOEA to offer education to the general public about ADRD. The education must provide basic information about:

- The most common forms of dementia;
- How to identify the signs and symptoms of dementia;
- Coping skills;
- How to respond to changes;
- Planning for the future; and
- How to access additional resources about dementia.

The bill also repeals s. 400.53, F.S., relating to the Nurse Registry Excellence Program.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 115-0