



State of Wisconsin  
2015 - 2016 LEGISLATURE

LRB-4460/1  
TJD:kjf

## 2015 ASSEMBLY BILL 785

January 22, 2016 - Introduced by Representatives ROHRKASTE, HESSELBEIN, BERNIER, NOVAK, TITTL, KATSMA, CZAJA, BROSTOFF, MEYERS, KOLSTE, JAGLER, MACCO, SKOWRONSKI, PETRYK, SWEARINGEN, KLEEFISCH, QUINN, KITCHENS, KAHL, A. OTT, RIPP, SUBECK, SARGENT, ZEPNICK, SPIROS, MURPHY, E. BROOKS, KULP, BALLWEG, NYGREN, OHNSTAD, JOHNSON, SANFELIPPO, ALLEN, MILROY, STEINEKE, SINICKI and BORN, cosponsored by Senators OLSEN, CARPENTER, C. LARSON and HANSEN. Referred to Committee on Mental Health Reform.

1     **AN ACT** *to create* 146.43 of the statutes; **relating to:** dementia specialist  
2           certification program.

---

### *Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau*

This bill creates a dementia specialist certification program. If a nurse aide or a person designated by a care provider to coordinate and supervise resident activities attends an appropriate instructional program, completes a competency evaluation, and pays a certification fee, the Department of Health Services must certify him or her as a dementia specialist. A certificate as a dementia specialist is valid for two years. To renew the certificate, a person must provide proof to DHS of four hours of continuing education. No person may use the title "dementia specialist" or "certified dementia specialist" unless he or she is certified by DHS.

The bill requires DHS to establish standards for a curriculum for the instructional program, which includes certain instructional topics. The instructional program must consist of at least 40 hours and must include both classroom and clinical instruction. DHS must approve instructional programs and competency evaluations that meet the standards DHS established and review each instructional program at least once every two years. DHS may suspend or revoke an instructional program or competency evaluation that fails to satisfy the standards.

For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

---

***The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:***

**ASSEMBLY BILL 785****SECTION 1**

1           **SECTION 1.** 146.43 of the statutes is created to read:

2           **146.43 Dementia specialist certification.** (1) ELIGIBILITY FOR  
3 CERTIFICATION. The department shall certify as a dementia specialist any of the  
4 following persons who successfully complete an instructional program under sub.  
5 (4), successfully complete a competency evaluation program under sub. (5), and pay  
6 a fee set by the department by rule:

7           (a) A nurse aide, as defined in s. 146.40 (1) (d).

8           (b) A person designated by an entity, that is licensed or certified under ch. 50,  
9 to coordinate and supervise resident-centered activities for the entity.

10           **(2) RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATE.** A certificate as a dementia specialist under sub.  
11 (1) is valid for 24 months from the date the certificate is issued by the department.  
12 A person who is certified as a dementia specialist may renew the certificate by  
13 providing proof to the department of completion, every 24 months, of 4 hours of  
14 continuing education, as defined by the department by rule.

15           **(3) PROGRAM CURRICULUM.** (a) The department shall establish standards for the  
16 curriculum of an instructional program that includes instruction in all of the  
17 following:

18           1. Understanding the signs and symptoms of the various forms of dementia and  
19 the possible variations in care needs among individuals affected by the various forms  
20 of dementia.

21           2. How to approach, observe, listen to, and communicate with, an individual  
22 with dementia.

23           3. Recognizing pain in an individual with dementia.

24           4. Skills and techniques for encouraging purposeful activities to provide  
25 holistic care intended to promote optimal life experiences for persons with dementia.

**ASSEMBLY BILL 785**

1           5. Understanding the needs of an individual with dementia, how to develop a  
2 trusting relationship within the challenges of the effects of dementia, and how to  
3 avoid and manage behaviors that may be harmful to the individual or others.

4           6. Communication skills necessary to communicate with coworkers,  
5 professionals, and families regarding individuals with dementia.

6           7. Skills necessary to effectively advocate for the needs and interests of persons  
7 with dementia.

8           8. Developing and using care plans to assist individuals with dementia in  
9 experiencing the highest possible quality of life.

10          9. Techniques for effective problem solving.

11          (b) The curriculum under par. (a) shall be no less than 40 hours of instruction,  
12 including both classroom and clinical instruction.

13          **(4) INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM APPROVAL.** (a) The department shall approve  
14 instructional programs for dementia specialists that apply for approval and that  
15 satisfy the standards promulgated by rule under sub. (3).

16          (b) The department shall review the curriculum of each approved instructional  
17 program at least once every 24 months following the date of approval to determine  
18 whether the program continues to satisfy the standards for approval.

19          (c) The department may, after providing notice, suspend or revoke the approval  
20 of an instructional program or impose a plan of correction for the program if the  
21 program fails to satisfy the standards for approval or operates under conditions that  
22 are other than those contained in the application approved by the department.

23          **(5) COMPETENCY EVALUATION PROGRAM APPROVAL.** (a) The department shall  
24 establish standards for the approval of competency evaluation programs for  
25 dementia specialists.

