

CALIFORNIA

Alzheimer's Research

By statute, California establishes legislative intent to encourage the establishment of Alzheimer disease research and treatment centers in medical schools and related institutions throughout the state. One role of the centers is to increase the education and training of health care professionals with respect to Alzheimer's disease and related disorders.

Certified Nurse Assistants

California heavily regulates the certification and training of certified nurse assistants employed by skilled nursing facilities and intermediate care facilities. By statute, the state requires that a certified nurse assistant employed in a skilled nursing facility or intermediate care facility have two (2) hours of dementia training initially and five (5) hours annually thereafter. In addition, the state statutorily sets minimum requirements for training programs for skilled nursing assistants in skilled nursing and intermediate care facilities, and requires at least two (2) classroom training hours and at least four (4) supervised clinical training hours addressing the needs of persons with developmental and mental disorders including Alzheimer's disease and dementia. The state sets criteria for state approval of the skilled nursing facility and intermediate care training programs required by statute.

By regulation, the state establishes the requirements for a certification program for certified nurse assistants. The curriculum must include two (2) hours of theory on long-term care, including Alzheimer's and other dementias. A competency evaluation is required. In addition, the regulations establish the in-service training requirements for nurse assistants employed by nursing facilities. The training must include nursing care related to dementia.

Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly

Several of the statutes governing dementia training for staff of residential care facilities for the elderly have recently been amended. While the current statutes governing training requirements for certain direct care staff do not include dementia specific requirements, a new statute

(effective January 1, 2016) sets training requirements for staff of residential care facilities for the elderly who assist residents with personal activities of daily living. Staff must complete 20 hours of training before working independently with residents. Six (6) of those hours must be specific to dementia care. An additional 20 hours of training must be completed within the first four (4) weeks of employment. Six (6) of those hours also must be devoted to dementia care. An additional twenty (20) hours must be completed annually, of which eight (8) must be devoted to dementia care training. The training must address the use and misuse of psychotropic drugs to control dementia and alternatives, including person-centered care. In addition, regulations require that all staff providing personal care to residents must complete 10 hours of initial training; an unspecified portion of the initial training must cover recognizing signs and symptoms of dementia.

Another statute specifically requires that information on sundowning be included in training of direct care staff in residential care facilities for the elderly.

Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly- Special Care Units

California has special statutory requirements for residential care facilities for the elderly. One statute, which expired on December 31, 2014, set requirements for all direct care staff of residential care for the elderly facilities that advertise as offering special services for the elderly with dementia. It required six (6) hours of orientation about care of persons with dementia and eight (8) hours of in-service training annually on serving people with dementia. The 2015 version of this statute is the same as the previous version with respect to training hours. However, the 2016 version of this statute will no longer distinguish between residential care facilities for the elderly that advertise as offering special services for the elderly with dementia and those that do not. As of January 1, 2016, all direct care staff at all residential care facilities for the elderly must have twelve hours of dementia care training, with six (6) hours completed before the staff person begins working independently with residents, and the other six (6) hours completed within the first four (4) weeks of employment. In addition, eight (8) hours of in-service training annually on serving people with dementia must be provided.

California also statutorily permits building standards that include locked and secured perimeters in residential care facilities for the elderly that serve individuals with dementia, and requires that regulations be adopted that ensure that staff for secured-perimeter facilities receive appropriate and adequate training in the care of residents with Alzheimer's disease or other related dementia.

The regulations also specify training topics. Training must cover dementia care including knowledge about hydration, skin care, communication, therapeutic activities, behavioral challenges, the environment; assisting with activities of daily living; recognizing symptoms that may create or aggravate dementia behaviors, including, but not limited to, dehydration, urinary tract infections, and problems with swallowing; and recognizing the effects of medications commonly used to treat the symptoms of dementia.

Another regulation sets out the details of the required training for staff of residential care facilities for the elderly that advertise as providing special care for dementia patients. Six (6) hours of orientation must take place within the first four weeks of working. Training can include up to two (2) hours of mentoring and hands on experience. Training topics must include: the effects of medications on the behavior of residents with dementia; common problems, such as wandering, aggression, and inappropriate sexual behavior; positive therapeutic interventions and activities such as exercise, sensory stimulation, activities of daily living, and social, recreational and rehabilitative activities; communication skills (resident/staff relations); promoting resident dignity, independence, individuality, privacy and choice; and end of life issues, including hospice.

California statute requires certain disclosures to the state by residential care facilities for the elderly that advertise special services for people with dementia. Disclosure requirements include reporting of staff training.

(To the extent there are discrepancies in training and hour requirements, it may be because the regulations parallel the old statutory requirements, not the ones that will become effective in 2016.)

Administrators - Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly

A new California statute, effective January 1, 2016, will set the requirements for certification as the designated administrator of a residential care facility for the elderly. The law requires 80 hours of coursework. The new law adds a requirement that dementia training include training in medication management and the adverse effects of psychotropic drugs for use in controlling the behavior of persons with dementia. It also requires training in non-pharmacological approaches and person-centered care. A competency exam is required. The administrator's license must be renewed every two (2) years. Requirements for renewal include at least eight (8) hours of instruction on serving clients with dementia, including instruction related to direct care, physical environment, and admissions procedures and assessment.

The current statute sets forth the requirements for certification of administrators of residential care facilities for the elderly, and includes completion of at least four (4) hours of training on serving clients with dementia (this provision is not in the 2016 statute). Administrator's license must be renewed every two years. Requirements for renewal include at least eight (8) hours of instruction on serving clients with dementia, including instruction related to direct care, physical environment, and admissions procedures and assessment.

Regulations also govern training requirements for administrators of residential care facilities for the elderly. Eight (8) hours of training in Alzheimer's disease and dementia are required as continuing education every (2) two years. Another regulation sets out a required training program that vendors must offer for certification of administrators of residential care facilities for the elderly. Administrators must take the course and pass a test showing proficiency. The regulation requires that the curriculum include four (4) hours of instruction in Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

Medication Aides

This statute sets the training requirements for employees who assist residents of residential care facilities for the elderly with their medications. The training must include an explanation of medication side effects, adverse reactions, errors, the adverse effects of psychotropic drugs for

use in controlling the behavior of persons with dementia, and the increased risk of death when elderly residents with dementia are given antipsychotic medications. Employees are also required to pass a competency test. Eight (8) hours of annual in-service training is required as well.

Dental Sedation

By regulation, criteria are established for dental sedation assistant permit courses. Instruction requirements include an overview of Alzheimer's disease as well as other neurological disorders.

Adult Day Health Care Centers

California statute permits adult day health care centers to install egress control devices if the center serves individuals with dementia. It includes a requirement for staff training regarding the use and operation of the egress control devices, the protection of participants' personal rights, wandering behavior and acceptable methods of redirection, and emergency evacuation procedures for persons with dementia. Another statute sets policies for Alzheimer's Day-Care Resource Center programs. Centers must provide training to volunteers. Centers also are to serve as models to other service providers for onsite training in the care of Alzheimer's patients and to establish contact with local educational programs, such as nursing and gerontology programs, to provide onsite training to students.

Adult Protective Services

By regulation, California establishes requirements for emergency adult protective services. If a program accepts individuals with dementia, it must conform to the requirements of Section 87705, which requires staff training in dementia.

Medicaid Waiver

The Medicaid waiver is available, in limited situations, to cover costs.