



**Report: Resolve, To Promote Quality and
Transparency in the Provision of Services
By Assisted Housing Programs that Provide
Memory Care**
February 2020

Pursuant to Resolves 2019, Ch. 106

Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Licensing & Certification
Office of Aging and Disability Services

Introduction and Background

Resolves 2019, Ch. 106, (L.D. 1548) required the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to establish a work group for the purpose of conducting a review and making recommendations for direct care staff training regarding Alzheimer's and dementia care.

In addition, the legislation directed the Office of the State Controller to transfer \$355,501 from the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation Other Special Revenue accounts to the General Fund. These funds shall be used by the Department of Health and Human Services to issue a request for proposal that would focus on the time allocated by staff to meet the needs of residents diagnosed with Alzheimer's and related dementias living in assisted living homes.

This report provides information to the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services regarding activities, recommendations, and suggested legislation relating to the aforementioned subjects established in the Legislation.

Work Group Composition and Recommendations

As directed, a work group was established that consisted of family caregivers, agency staff, the Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, the Alzheimer's Association, Maine Chapter and the Maine Health Care Association, and convened by the Division of Licensing and Certification within DHHS. The group was charged with making recommendations specific to Sections 2 and 3 of the Legislation. The following are the tasks and corresponding recommendations:

1) Consider the development and implementation of a written or oral competency exam or evaluation to demonstrate skill competency and knowledge gained through the training curriculum:

The work group recommends adopting the standardized competencies developed by the Maine Partnership to Improve Dementia Care, a statewide coalition of dementia care experts. These competencies include: understanding dementia, communication, reducing unnecessary readmissions and medication management, dining and nutrition, pain management, empowering those living with dementia (i.e. providing person-centered care) and palliative and end of life care. This tool which has been developed by the Maine Partnership will be utilized after orientation to evaluate staff competency. The work group recommends that providers have choice in the individual education programs and methods of instruction they employ to ensure their staff can demonstrate the competencies. Recognizing that there are many good, qualifying programs to achieve the goal, the group further recommended that a list of training and education options be maintained on the Division of Licensing and Certification's web page and disseminated initially to the assisted housing providers offering memory care.

2) Recommend rule changes to meet the requirements of the Legislation:

The work group recommends that regulations that govern the licensing and functioning of Assisted Housing Programs, Chapter 113, be revised to ensure that the assisted housing providers offering memory care meet all requirements identified in the Legislation.

3) Training requirements that would include family surveys:

The work group recommends increasing the number of hours of training required to work with this special population. The recommendation is for a total of 16 hours at orientation, eight hours of clinical and eight hours of classroom training, prior to working with residents. In addition, the work group recommends that a minimum of eight hours of staff education specific to dementia related topics be required annually. The group recommends that providers encourage or provide opportunities for family member engagement in the process of caring for their loved ones. The work group recommends the following questions as quality assurance, either at the care plan meeting or via written survey:

- 1) How would you describe the care your family member has received?
- 2) Do you believe based on your observations, that staff are knowledgeable regarding how to provide care to residents with dementia?
- 3) Do you believe that staff know your family member, and understand their life history, their preferences and their needs?

The group recommends incorporating a statement in rule about engagement that allows providers choice in meeting the requirement.

4) Recommend if management and other staff should be included in the training:

The work group recommends that all program staff, including management and contracted staffing agencies, should be included in the mandatory training identified above. The group recommends that the staffing agency be held to the same requirements of the Legislation when supplying staff to assisted housing providers offering memory care.

5) Define “Person Centered Care”:

The group reviewed several options and makes the recommendations below. “Person Centered Care” is a philosophy of care built around the needs of the individual. Care providers understand the individual’s personal experience and seek to know them as a unique person living with a disease. This knowledge is continuously assimilated through the interpersonal, therapeutic relationship between the individual and the care providers. It becomes the basis for creating and modifying care plans throughout the course of the disease. (Source: Alzheimer’s Association)

Time Study of Needs of Residents in Assisted Housing Programs

The Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS) is working on a request for proposals to conduct a time study. The Legislation requires the Department to conduct a time study to focus on time allocated to meet the needs of residents living in assisted living facilities with Alzheimer's or related dementias. The selected vendor will be required to convene a technical advisory group to assist with designing the time study. The Department plans to issue the RFP by August 2020.