An act to add Section 9402.5 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST


Existing law establishes the California Department of Aging in the California Health and Human Services Agency. Existing law requires the department 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. Existing law requires the department 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. Existing law 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.
Existing law requires the department 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.

This bill would require each area agency on aging 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. The bill would also require each agency to maintain an Alzheimer’s and dementia specialist to provide information, assistance, referrals, and options counseling to families. If an agency lacks the capacity to maintain a specialist, the bill would authorize the agency to contract with a qualified local entity to provide these services, as specified. *The bill would specify that it would be implemented only to the extent that funds are appropriated by the Legislature for its purposes.*


*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 9402.5 is added to the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

9402.5. (a) Each area agency on aging, in consultation with the local chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association or other community stakeholders with expertise in Alzheimer’s research or care, including universities, caregiver organizations, and health care systems, shall 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.

(b) (1) Each area agency on aging shall maintain an Alzheimer’s and dementia specialist to provide information, assistance, referrals, and options counseling to families.

(2) If an area agency on aging lacks the capacity to maintain an Alzheimer’s and dementia specialist, it may contract with a qualified local entity to provide the services described in paragraph (1). The area agency on aging shall coordinate with the qualified local entity in implementing the agency’s regular services and the specialist services.
(c) This section shall be implemented only to the extent that funds are appropriated by the Legislature for that purpose.