



AB 2047 – Alzheimer’s Assessment Provider Toolkit

SUMMARY

AB 2047 directs the Consortium of ten California Alzheimer’s Disease Centers (CADCs) to develop and implement a “train the trainer” model to disseminate the existing Assessment of Cognitive Complaints toolkit for Alzheimer’s and Dementia (ACCT-AD) directly to physicians. By doing this, AB 2047 will increase providers’ ability to provide individuals with an accurate and timely diagnosis.

BACKGROUND

Alzheimer’s disease is a growing public health crisis. It is a progressive, neurodegenerative disease, which results in memory loss, impaired cognitive function, and ultimately death. According to the California Department of Public Health, deaths in California due to Alzheimer’s disease increased 243% from 2000 to 2015, and in 2015 Alzheimer’s was the third leading cause of death.

Without an effective treatment or cure, the impact of Alzheimer’s will only continue to rise. The over-65 population in California is projected to grow to 8.6 million by 2030, and though Alzheimer’s is not a normal part of growing old, aging is the greatest known risk factor for developing the disease.

There is a critical need for increased diagnosis. While today there are approximately 1.6 million California caregivers providing support for those diagnosed with Alzheimer’s, less than half of people with Alzheimer’s disease nationally, or their caregiver/family member, are told that they have the degenerative brain disorder.

Part of helping individuals receive a timely and accurate diagnosis is giving physicians the tools to effectively assess a patient’s chances of having Alzheimer’s. This is why in 2016, the California budget funded the Consortium California Alzheimer’s Disease Centers (CADCs) to develop the “Assessment of Cognitive Complaints Toolkit” for Alzheimer’s Disease (ACCT-AD).

The Consortium of CADCs is a statewide network of ten Centers of Excellence at university medical schools, created to improve dementia health care delivery, provide

specialized training and education to health care professionals, and advance diagnosis and treatment.

PROBLEM

California already invested in the CADCs to develop the ACCT-AD to provide primary care physicians with the specific information necessary to recognize normal cognition, diagnose Alzheimer’s disease, and identify other cognitive problems that may require specialty referral. However, this toolkit resource has not been made widely available beyond the expert urban academic medical centers that collaborated to develop it.

Receiving a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s is a somber yet critical step in the journey of living with the disease. Early detection and timely diagnosis provides people with a number of benefits, including enhanced quality of life, opportunity to have conversations with loved ones, time to find and access benefits, and ability to develop a care and life plan. A proper diagnosis is the first step in accessing critical services including care planning.

THIS BILL

AB 2047 directs the CADCs to develop and implement a “train the trainer” model to disseminate the ACCT-AD directly to providers throughout California with the goal of increasing accurate Alzheimer’s and Dementia diagnoses. Further, to ensure that this work is effective, the bill requires that a quantitative assessment be done with physicians utilizing the toolkit to measure its efficacy.

This bill follows through on the state’s 2016 investment in the Consortium of CADCs and the work they completed to create the Assessment of Cognitive Complaints Toolkit. The ACCT-AD is a nationally recognized tool that should be implemented or utilized widely, yet the effort to develop a rollout plan has not been executed.

SUPPORT

Alzheimer’s Association (Sponsor)