



## **Area Agencies on Aging Bulletin 20-01**

**Date:** January 28, 2020

**To:** Area Agencies on Aging Directors

**From:** Access and Eligibility Services Program Policy  
State Office 2115

**Subject:** Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Training

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This information is shared with Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) directors who must share with all appropriate staff. Please direct any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin to the Help Desk ([AAA.Help@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:AAA.Help@hhsc.state.tx.us)).

## **Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Training**

### **Background**

House Bill 3428, passed by the 86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2019, requires Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to ensure all employees and volunteers who provide services directly to an elderly individual or the individual's family members or caregivers receive training on Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

### **Current Policy**

AAAs are not required to ensure employees and volunteers receive training on Alzheimer's disease or dementia.

### **New Policy**

AAAs must ensure all employees and volunteers who provide services directly to persons age 60 or older or to the family members or caregivers of persons age 60 or older receive training on Alzheimer's disease and dementia. AAAs must ensure that employees and volunteers hired on or before May 31, 2020 receive the training by June 30, 2020. All new employees and volunteers hired on or after June 1, 2020, must receive the training within 30 days of their start date.

### **Training Criteria**

The training must be evidence-based or evidence-informed and focus on:

- recognizing the signs and symptoms of cognitive impairments caused by Alzheimer's disease or dementia; and
- understanding how the cognitive impairments may affect the screening of and service planning for a person age 60 or older.

Evidence-based as defined by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), is training that has been tested through randomized controlled trials and is:

- effective at improving, maintaining, or slowing the decline in the health or functional status of older people or family caregivers;
- suitable for deployment through community-based human services organizations and involve non-clinical workers and/or volunteers in the delivery of the training;
- the research results have been published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal; and
- the training has been translated into practice and is ready for distribution through community-based human services organizations.

Evidence-informed as defined in the Senate Research Center's bill analysis, is the approach of using the unique preferences and circumstances of persons with

dementia together with the best scientific evidence to inform decisions of care. It is less restrictive than evidence-based.

### Training Costs

AAAs may allocate any costs associated with ensuring employees and volunteers receive the required training to one of the following:

- AAA administration; or
- the primary cost category under which the employee or volunteer provides direct services to an eligible person, such as:
  - ▶ information, referral, and assistance;
  - ▶ care coordination; or
  - ▶ benefits counseling.

### Certification of Training Completion

AAAs must maintain verification that all employees and volunteers have successfully completed the required training.

Acceptable verification of training completion may include system-generated training certificates, screenshots showing training completion, or a written statement issued by the trainer. The verification must be available to HHSC for review upon request and must include the following:

- employee's or volunteer's name;
- name of the training;
- date of completion; and
- the employee's or volunteer's signature.

### Notice of Compliance

By July 15, 2020, and annually thereafter by July 15, each AAA director must submit a notice of compliance letter to HHSC certifying that all AAA employees and volunteers who provide services directly to persons age 60 or older or their family members or caregivers have successfully completed the Alzheimer's disease and dementia training. The AAA director must sign the annual notice of compliance letter and send it to the AAA Help Desk ([AAA.Help@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:AAA.Help@hhsc.state.tx.us)).

The annual notice of compliance letter must include:

- the names of each employee and volunteer who successfully completed the training during the annual period;
- the name of the selected training; and
- the dates of successful training completion for each employee and volunteer during the annual period.

**Effective Date**

This policy is effective March 1, 2020.