
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 2835

Brief Description: Creating a public information system regarding people with dementia.

Sponsors: Representatives Tharinger, Cody, Johnson, Harris, Appleton, Fey, Kilduff and Goodman.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires the Department of Social and Health Services to develop a purple card alert system for caregivers of individuals with dementia.
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Hearing Date: 2/3/16

Staff: Ariele Landstrom (786-7190).

Background:

Dementia is a term that can describe a number of symptoms, including impairment of: Memory; communication and language; ability to focus and pay attention; reasoning and judgment; and visual perception. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, representing 60 to 80 percent of dementia cases. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) estimates that by 2025, 150,000 individuals in Washington will have Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. In 2011, federal law established the National Alzheimer's Project to create a national plan to overcome Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, including expanding supports for caregivers and enhancing public awareness and engagement. In 2014, legislation was enacted at the state level to develop an Alzheimer's Disease Plan for Washington.

Summary of Bill:

"Dementia" is defined as a chronic or persistent disorder of the mental processes caused by a brain disease or injury and marked by memory disorders, personality changes, and impaired reasoning.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The DSHS must develop a purple card alert system for caregivers of individuals with dementia to use to alert others they encounter while caring for a person with dementia about their companion's dementia condition.

The DSHS is required, by June 1, 2016, to establish an advisory group composed of:

- not more than five individuals who care for a person with dementia and take the person with dementia into the community;
- two individuals representing organizations who represent people who care for people with dementia or advocate for people with dementia;
- one representative from the Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs;
- one representative from the Washington state law enforcement association;
- one representative from the Washington state association of fire chiefs;
- one representative from the association of Washington cities;
- one representative from the association of Washington counties;
- not more than six individuals representing organizations representing business interests; and
- additional members as the DSHS may deem appropriate.

The members of the advisory group must serve without compensation.

By September 1, 2016, the DSHS, with input from the advisory group, must develop a purple-colored card that measures two by three and one-half inches with information indicating that the companion of the person giving the card has dementia and memory loss issues and asking the receiver of the card to be understanding and accommodating to the person with dementia.

By January 1, 2017, the DSHS must create and begin to implement a public information plan to alert first responders, government officials, businesses, and others in the community of the purple card alert system to advise individuals of their potential interaction with a person with dementia and recommend ways to accommodate and assist the person with dementia.

The DSHS must develop and implement a plan for voluntary cooperation by government agencies, media, and businesses to enhance the public's ability to assist people with dementia in advising others who interact with persons with dementia of the need to accept and accommodate the person with dementia.

The DSHS must report to the Legislature by January 1, 2017, regarding compliance with the provisions of the bill requiring development and implementation of the purple card alert system.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.