
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2835

State of Washington 64th Legislature 2016 Regular Session

By House Health Care & Wellness (originally sponsored by Representatives Tharinger, Cody, Johnson, Harris, Appleton, Fey, Kilduff, and Goodman)

READ FIRST TIME 02/05/16.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a purple card alert system; and
2 adding a new chapter to Title 70 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that Washington
5 state's elderly population is growing and the number of individuals
6 with dementia is increasing.

7 (2) The legislature finds that more than one hundred thousand, or
8 about two percent, of Washington residents exhibit symptoms of
9 dementia.

10 (3) The legislature further finds that it is important that
11 families and individuals caring for individuals with dementia be able
12 to function in the community while caring for an individual with
13 dementia.

14 (4) The legislature further finds that first responders,
15 government officials, those in the business community, and others in
16 the community benefit from knowing when they are interacting with a
17 person with dementia and benefit from information and recommendations
18 on ways to interact with people with dementia.

19 (5) The legislature recognizes the work that has been done in
20 creating a state Alzheimer's plan and that concerns about the

1 community interacting with individuals with dementia should be a part
2 of that plan.

3 (6) It is the intent of the legislature to utilize the existing
4 structure of the state Alzheimer's plan to address the creation and
5 promotion of voluntary information systems to: (a) Help first
6 responders, businesses, government officials, and others in the
7 community to be aware that the individual they are interacting with
8 has special needs related to dementia; and (b) assist unpaid
9 caregivers when taking an individual with dementia into the
10 community.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
12 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
13 otherwise.

14 (1) "Dementia" means a chronic or persistent disorder of the
15 mental processes caused by brain disease or injury and marked by
16 memory disorders, personality changes, and impaired reasoning.

17 (2) "Department" means the department of social and health
18 services.

19 (3) "First responders" means police officers and firefighters.

20 (4) "Unpaid caregiver" means a spouse, relative, or friend who
21 has primary responsibility for the care of an adult with a functional
22 disability and who does not receive financial compensation for the
23 care.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The department, as an integral part to
25 the development and implementation of the state Alzheimer's plan
26 pursuant to section 1, chapter 89, Laws of 2014, shall work to ensure
27 that the following considerations regarding a purple card information
28 system are addressed as part of the plan's next generation
29 Alzheimer's disease and dementia advisory group:

30 (a) Development of a purple-colored card with information
31 indicating that the companion of the person giving the card is asking
32 the receiver of the card to be understanding and accommodating to the
33 person with dementia. The advisory group should also consider if
34 there are similar cards available through community organizations;

35 (b) Creation and implementation of a public information plan to
36 alert first responders, government officials, businesses, and others
37 in the community of the purple card information system to advise
38 individuals of their potential interaction with a person with

1 dementia and provide recommendations for accommodating and assisting
2 the person with dementia, while also increasing awareness about other
3 information or alert systems available to ensure safety and quick
4 return of adults who wander. These include, but are not limited to,
5 medic alert, safe return, project lifesaver, and silver alert
6 programs;

7 (c) Investigation of the rights and limits related to privacy,
8 such as unpaid caregivers not having the authority to disclose
9 medical information without consent of the individual, as well as
10 federal and state privacy laws. Additionally, the advisory group
11 should examine issues surrounding identifying individuals with
12 dementia and whether that identification could lead to exploitation
13 of the individual; and

14 (d) Development and implementation of a plan for voluntary
15 cooperation by local, state, tribal, and government agencies, radio
16 and television stations, cable and satellite systems, newspapers and
17 other publications, and businesses to enhance the public's ability to
18 assist people with dementia and to advise others who interact with
19 persons with dementia of the need to accept and accommodate the
20 person with dementia. This plan should include, at minimum,
21 information about the purple card information system and wandering
22 return programs.

23 (2) Nothing in this section precludes an organization from
24 developing a card or promoting the awareness of the use of cards to
25 assist individuals with dementia, unpaid caregivers, first
26 responders, or others in the community.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Sections 1 through 3 of this act
28 constitute a new chapter in Title 70 RCW.

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