

Senate File 547 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 547
BY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES

(SUCCESSOR TO SSB 1170)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to area agencies on aging, dementia service
2 specialists, and a dementia services coordinator, and
3 providing an appropriation.
4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. **231.33A Area agencies on aging —**
2 **dementia service specialists.**

3 1. Each area agency on aging shall provide for the position
4 of a dementia service specialist in an effort to increase access
5 and connections to local supports and services for persons living
6 with dementia, their families, and caregivers, and to increase
7 awareness about dementia within the network of area agency
8 on aging providers as well as in counties, communities, and
9 businesses throughout the state. In addition, the department
10 shall provide for the position of a dementia services coordinator
11 to provide statewide coordination of dementia initiatives and
12 dementia service specialists.

13 2. The duties of a dementia service specialist shall include
14 but are not limited to all of the following:

15 a. Supporting people living with dementia, their families,
16 and caregivers including through conducting education and
17 outreach activities to increase community awareness of dementia
18 and the resources available to support individuals with dementia
19 and their caregivers.

20 b. Providing referrals to support groups, respite care
21 providers, research opportunities, and other community resources.

22 c. Conducting community cognitive screenings, and training
23 area agency on aging staff to conduct cognitive screenings.

24 d. Building dementia-capable area agencies on aging through
25 staff trainings, resources, and support.

26 e. Promoting dementia-capable communities by serving as
27 a supporter for dementia-friendly initiatives, presenting
28 dementia-friendly sessions and trainings to consumers and
29 businesses, and serving as a resource for dementia-friendly
30 community action teams.

31 f. Providing technical assistance for internal and external
32 program planning to enhance relevance and improve access for
33 people living with dementia including through support groups,
34 evidence-based programs, meal sites, and home-delivered meal
35 programs.

1 g. Providing training and technical assistance related to
2 dementia, and how to work effectively with a person who has
3 dementia in a crisis situation, to first responder or public
4 safety agencies including law enforcement, emergency medical
5 service providers, fire and rescue teams, adult protective
6 services workers, and crisis response workers within the service
7 area.

8 3. The duties of a dementia services coordinator shall
9 include but are not limited to the following:

10 a. Coordinating state-funded and privately funded dementia
11 services within the state.

12 b. Coordinating the dementia service specialist program
13 within the area agencies on aging.

14 c. Coordinating the implementation of the Alzheimer's disease
15 and related dementias state plan.

16 d. Assessing and analyzing dementia-related data collected by
17 the state.

18 e. Evaluating state-funded dementia services.

19 f. Identifying and supporting the development of
20 dementia-specific trainings.

21 g. Performing other duties as may be required to ensure the
22 state is addressing Alzheimer's and related dementias.

23 Sec. 2. DEMENTIA SERVICE SPECIALISTS — DEMENTIA SERVICES
24 COORDINATOR — APPROPRIATION. There is appropriated from the
25 general fund of the state to the department of health and human
26 services for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending
27 June 30, 2026, the following amount, or so much thereof as is
28 necessary, to be used for the purposes designated:

29 \$ 750,000

30 The funds appropriated in this section shall be used by the
31 area agencies on aging to provide a dementia service specialist
32 in each of the area agencies on aging and to provide for a
33 dementia services coordinator within the department of health and
34 human services as provided in section 231.33A, as enacted in this
35 Act.

EXPLANATION

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The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

This bill relates to area agencies on aging, dementia service specialists, and a dementia services coordinator.

The bill requires each area agency on aging to provide for the position of a dementia service specialist (specialist) to increase access and connections to local supports and services for persons living with dementia, their families, and caregivers, and to increase awareness about dementia within the network of area agency on aging providers and in communities and businesses throughout the state. The bill also requires the department of health and human services (HHS) to provide for the position of a dementia services coordinator (coordinator) to provide statewide coordination of dementia initiatives and specialists.

The bill provides that, at a minimum, the duties of a specialist shall include providing support, providing referrals, conducting cognitive screenings, building dementia-capable area agencies on aging, promoting dementia-capable communities, and providing technical assistance as detailed in the bill.

The bill provides the duties of a coordinator shall include coordinating dementia services throughout the state, coordinating the specialist program, coordinating the Alzheimer's disease and related dementias state plan, evaluating state dementia services, identifying trainings, and performing other duties as may be required.

The bill appropriates \$750,000 from the general fund of the state to HHS for FY 2025-2026 to be used by the area agencies on aging to provide a specialist in each of the area agencies on aging and to provide for a coordinator within HHS.