AN ACT

Providing for the establishment of an education program to assist physicians, physician assistants, clinical nurse specialists and certified nurse practitioners in recognizing and understanding cognitive impairments, including Alzheimer's disease or other dementia, for continuing medical education for physicians and physician assistants, for continuing nursing education for clinical nurse specialists and certified nurse practitioners and for report of diagnosis by physicians.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Short title.

This act shall be known and may be cited as the Early Detection of Alzheimer's Disease or Other Dementia Act.

Section 2. Definitions.

The following words and phrases when used in this act shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Alzheimer's disease or other dementia." An irreversible and
progressive neurological disorder diagnosed by a physician that has all of the following characteristics:

(1) The disorder causes cognitive and memory impairment, behavioral and psychiatric problems and loss of the ability to care for oneself or a related disorder, including vascular dementia, dementia with lewy bodies, frontotemporal lobar degeneration or mixed dementia.

(2) The disorder is severe enough to interfere with work or social activities and requires continuous care or supervision.

"Certified registered nurse practitioner." A registered nurse licensed in this Commonwealth who is certified by the State Board of Nursing in a particular clinical specialty area.

"Clinical nurse specialist." A registered nurse licensed in this Commonwealth who is certified by the State Board of Nursing as a clinical nurse specialist.

"Department." The Department of Health of the Commonwealth.

"Physician." A medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy.

"Physician assistant." An individual who is licensed as a physician assistant by the State Board of Medicine.


"Task force." Pennsylvania's Alzheimer's State Plan Task Force established by the Department of Aging to implement the objectives and recommendations specified in the State plan.

"Toolkit." A collection of best practices, cognitive assessment tools and other information and resources to assist in the detection, diagnosis, treatment and care planning of
Alzheimer's disease or other dementia.

Section 3. Establishment of education program.

(a) Establishment.--The department, in conjunction with the task force, shall establish an education program to assist physicians, physician assistants, clinical nurse specialists and certified nurse practitioners with the detection, diagnosis, treatment of Alzheimer's disease or other dementia and the care planning for individuals with Alzheimer's disease or other dementia.

(b) Curriculum content.--The curriculum for the education program under this section shall include all of the following topics:

(1) The diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or other dementia, including recognizing the signs and symptoms of cognitive impairment and every type of dementia.

(2) Individual-centered care.

(3) Assessment and care planning.

(4) Cultural competency.

(c) Toolkit.--The department, in conjunction with the Department of Aging and the task force, shall develop a toolkit to assist physicians, physician assistants, clinical nurse specialists and certified nurse practitioners in the detection, diagnosis, treatment and care planning for individuals with Alzheimer's disease or other dementia.


(a) Requirement.--The State Board of Medicine shall require a physician or physician assistant to complete the education program under section 3 as part of the continuing medical education requirements under 49 Pa. Code § 16.19 (relating to 20200HB2695PN4134 - 3 -
continuing medical education) or 18.145 (relating to biennial registration requirements; renewal of physician assistant license). The State Board of Medicine shall require a physician or physician assistant to complete the education program under section 3 within four years of the effective date of this subsection.

(b) Applicability.--The requirement under subsection (a) shall not apply to a physician or physician assistant who does not provide health care services to adult patients.

(c) Regulations.--The State Board of Medicine shall promulgate regulations necessary to administer the requirement under subsection (a).

(d) Penalties.--A physician or physician assistant who fails to comply with the continuing medical education requirement under subsection (a) shall be subject to disciplinary proceedings under section 41 of the act of December 20, 1985 (P.L.457, No.112), known as the Medical Practice Act of 1985.

Section 5. Continuing nursing education for clinical nurse specialists and certified registered nurse practitioners.

(a) Requirement.--The State Board of Nursing shall require a clinical nurse specialist or certified registered nurse practitioner to complete the education program under section 3 as a part of the continuing nursing education requirements under section 12.1 of the act of May 22, 1951 (P.L.317, No.69), known as The Professional Nursing Law. The State Board of Nursing shall require a clinical nurse specialist or certified registered nurse practitioner to complete the education program under section 3 within four years of the effective date of this subsection.
(b) Applicability.--The requirement under subsection (a) shall not apply to a clinical nurse specialist or certified registered nurse practitioner who does not provide health care services to adult patients.

(c) Regulations.--The State Board of Nursing shall promulgate regulations necessary to administer the requirement under subsection (a).

(d) Penalties.--A clinical nurse specialist or certified registered nurse practitioner who fails to comply with the continuing medical education requirement under subsection (a) shall be subject to section 13(b) or 14(a)(3) of The Professional Nursing Law.


(a) Report.--Except as provided under subsection (b), a physician shall, upon an initial diagnosis of a patient with Alzheimer's disease or a related disorder, report the diagnosis to a family member or legal personal representative of the patient and provide to the family member or legal personal representative information regarding the diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's disease or other dementia and care planning resources.

(b) Exception.--A physician may not report an initial diagnosis of a patient with Alzheimer's disease or a related disorder unless any of the following apply:

(1) The physician has first obtained the consent of the patient.

(2) In accordance with Federal and State law, in the reasonable judgment of the physician, the patient is incapacitated or unable to provide consent.

(c) Liability.--A physician shall not be subject to civil or
criminal liability or a disciplinary action by the State Board of Medicine based on a decision to communicate with or to not communicate with a family member or legal personal representative of a patient diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or a related disorder.

Section 7. Effective date.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.