SBAR Dementia Training for Home Care Agencies

**Situation:**

Medicare certified and comprehensive licensed providers of home care services may not be aware of the requirements for additional dementia educational requirements for all staff and contractors providing care for individuals residing in “assisted living settings” or in establishments with Alzheimer's disease special programs or special care units as specified in §144D.065 effective January 2016, due the complexity of the statute §144D.065.

Upon MHCA’s recent conversations with MDH, it was clarified that all licensed home care agencies providing home care services to those individuals that reside in a HWS facility that advertises their services as “assisted living” or with Alzheimer's disease special programs or special care units must have additional dementia training.

This requirement for additional training was effective January 1, 2016. As of January 1, 2017 MDH shall impose fine for each staff providing services in the above stated facilities that does not have the additional training within the time frame specified at $200.00 per employee.

**Background:**

Effective July 1, 2014, the MDH licensure specifies all licensed home care agencies must provide orientation for all staff, contractors and volunteers that include; a current explanation of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders, effective approaches to use to problem-solve when working with a client's challenging behaviors, and how to communicate with clients who have Alzheimer's or related disorders. The orientation is not transferrable from agency to agency.

(Reference:§144A.4796 Subd. 5)

Effective January 1, 2016 additional dementia training is required for those that provide services to persons with dementia residing in Housing with Services establishments **(Chapter 144D)** as passed by the legislature in 2015. <https://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/statutes/?id=144D.065>

In March of 2016, MDH published Bulletin 16-03 <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/fpc/profinfo/ib16_3.html> outlining the requirements based on the location of the resident being served within a HWS facility advertising services as assisted living and/or establishments with Alzheimer's disease special programs or special care units

In short, all new employees hired after January 1, 2016 must have a minimum of 4 or 8 hours of dementia training within either 120 or 160 days of work. Ongoing, each employee providing service to an individual in these settings must have 2 hours of annual training based on the employee’s date of hire. Employees that have been hired prior to January 1, 2016 must have 2 hours of dementia training on an annual basis.

(Reference: <https://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/statutes/?id=144D.065>)

**Assessment**:

1. Home care agencies provides orientation to all new employees and contractors on the topics required:
   1. A current explanation of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders
   2. Effective approaches to use to problem-solve when working with a client's challenging behaviors, and
   3. How to communicate with clients who have Alzheimer's or related disorders.
2. Home care agencies that provide intermittent home care services in a HWS are not aware of the additional educational requirements
3. Home care agencies may not know where the client resides when the referral is accepted as a hospital discharge planner; family member or physician provides an address and client needs.
4. The home care agency may have cared for a client in their private home and when the client moves to an “assisted living” the home care staff is hired to continue care. Staff may not have had the additional dementia training.
5. Time and budgetary exceptions may be needed by agencies currently not in compliance to meet an additional 4-8 hours for employees and contractors that have been hired since January 2, 2016.
6. Additional education will need to be provided for the current employees that were hired before January 1, 2016 to meet the annual requirements for two hours of education per year.
7. If a direct care worker remains with a single employer the initial 4 or 8 hours of training is a one-time requirement, however, that must be repeated if they transition to a different employer more than 18 months after the initial training.
8. The home care licensure doesn’t require the orientation to dementia to be tracked in ‘hours’ but in ‘topics’ to be covered.
9. The CEUs for nurses are 50 minutes; will that be recognized as “1 hour” for the dementia training requirements?

**Recommendation:**

1. Provide clarity on the dementia training for community based home care providers.
2. Request state-wide education by MDH of the regulations through several repeated conference calls for providers.
3. Survey tags and fines related to dementia training would not be given until six months after there is further clarity and education on the requirements.
4. The complexity of this mandate, according to MDH’s interpretation, is causing significant misunderstanding by providers and trade associations. We therefore request a simplification of the dementia training requirements.