

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 30, 1995

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—1995–96 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1409

Introduced by Assembly Member Valerie Brown

February 24, 1995

An act to add Article 8.7 (commencing with Section 1336.5) to Chapter 2 of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to geriatric technicians, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1409, as amended, V. Brown. Geriatric technicians: certification.

Existing law provides for the licensure of long-term health care facilities and for the certification of nurse assistants by the State Department of Health Services.

This bill would state the findings and declarations of the Legislature regarding the need for adequately trained personnel to meet the needs of residents in long-term health care facilities. This bill would require the department to certify geriatric technicians who are certified nurse assistants in good standing and who have completed a training program approved by the department. This bill would require the department to maintain a list of approved training programs, and would specify the content of the training program. This bill would authorize a person meeting these requirements to represent himself or herself as a geriatric technician, and

would describe the duties that may be performed by a geriatric technician.

This bill would authorize the department to require the payment of fees, not to exceed the actual costs, for the certification and renewal of certification of geriatric technicians. This bill would establish the Geriatric Technician Certification Fund and would continuously appropriate the fund to the department for purposes of implementing the certification requirements.

This bill would provide that any person who violates these provisions is guilty of a misdemeanor, thereby imposing a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of
2 the following:

3 (a) The Health Manpower Pilot Project No. 152 was
4 approved in 1988 and successfully responded to a
5 shortage of adequately trained personnel to meet the
6 needs of residents in long-term health care facilities.

7 (b) Nursing resources in the long-term health care
8 setting are chronically in short supply resulting in an
9 inability to recruit and retain adequate nursing staff to
10 meet current needs.

11 (c) The population most in need of long-term care is
12 growing rapidly. It is estimated by the year 2000,
13 one-third of the entire population in the United States
14 will be composed of persons over 65 years of age.
15 Three-fourths of all residents of long-term health care
16 facilities will be generated by this age group.



1 (d) A 30 percent decrease in the labor pool of health
2 workers has been projected for the same time period.
3 This decline in resources will exacerbate the problem of
4 acquiring adequate nursing resources.

5 (e) The establishment of the geriatric technician as a
6 new category of health worker will add an appropriately
7 trained health worker to the resident care team in
8 long-term health care. It has the potential to increase the
9 retention of experienced workers in long-term health
10 care by creating health career opportunities, upward
11 mobility for certified nurse assistants, and better
12 utilization of licensed nursing personnel.

13 (f) *The certification and employment of geriatric*
14 *technicians is not intended to displace licensed nurses,*
15 *but rather to augment the level of available trained staff*
16 *to optimize the quality of long-term health care.*

17 SEC. 2. Article 8.7 (commencing with Section 1336.5)
18 is added to Chapter 2 of Division 2 of the Health and
19 Safety Code, to read:

20
21 Article 8.7. Geriatric Technicians

22
23 1336.5. For purposes of this article the following
24 definitions shall apply:

25 (a) “Geriatric technician” means any person who is a
26 certified nurse assistant, has at least 12 months of
27 continuous, full-time experience as a certified nurse
28 assistant in a long-term health care setting, and is certified
29 as having completed the requirements of this article.

30 (b) “Certified nurse assistant” means any person who
31 holds himself or herself out as a certified nurse assistant,
32 and who, for compensation, performs basic patient care
33 services directed at the safety, comfort, personal hygiene,
34 and protection of patients, and is certified as having met
35 the requirements set forth in Article 9 (commencing with
36 Section 1337).

37 (c) “Approved training program” means a program
38 for the training of geriatric technicians that meets the
39 criteria established and approved under this article.

1 (d) “Department” means the State Department of
2 Health Services.

3 (e) “Supervision” means to instruct a geriatric
4 technician in his or her duties and to oversee or direct his
5 or her work, but does not necessarily require the
6 immediate presence of the supervisor.

7 (f) “Long-term health care facility” means a licensed
8 health care facility as defined in subdivision (c), (d), (e),
9 (g), (h), or (k) of Section 1250.

10 1336.6. (a) The department shall certify geriatric
11 technicians.

12 (b) To be certified as a geriatric technician, an
13 individual shall meet all of the following criteria:

14 (1) Be a certified nurse assistant in good standing who
15 has at least twelve months experience with successful
16 performance in that capacity.

17 (2) Have successfully completed a training program
18 approved by the department, that includes an
19 examination to test the applicant’s knowledge and skills
20 related to the performance of the responsibilities of a
21 geriatric technician.

22 (c) Every person certified as a geriatric technician
23 under this article may place the letters CNA/GT after his
24 or her name when working in a licensed long-term health
25 care facility. An individual working in other health care
26 settings or working independently may not advertise or
27 represent himself or herself as a geriatric technician.

28 (d) Any person who violates this article is guilty of a
29 misdemeanor and, upon a conviction thereof, shall be
30 punished by imprisonment in the county jail for not more
31 than 180 days, or by a fine of not less than twenty dollars
32 (\$20) nor more than one thousand dollars (\$1000), or by
33 both the fine and imprisonment.

34 (e) The department may require the payment of fees,
35 not to exceed actual costs, for the certification and
36 renewal of the certification of geriatric technicians. All
37 fees collected pursuant to this subdivision shall be
38 deposited in the Geriatric Technician Certification Fund,
39 which is hereby established, and notwithstanding Section
40 13340 of the Government Code, is continuously



1 appropriated to the department for purposes of
2 implementing this article.

3 1336.7. (a) The department shall prepare and
4 maintain a list of approved training programs for geriatric
5 technician certification. Clinical portions of the training
6 programs may be obtained as on-the-job training,
7 supervised by a qualified instructor as determined by the
8 department.

9 (b) The approved training program shall consist of at
10 least the following:

11 (1) There shall be a specific emphasis on the
12 psychosocial and physiological aspects of aging, emotional
13 and functional disorders, the administration of select
14 medications and treatments, and death and dying.

15 (2) The training shall include a 450 hour didactic
16 instructional phase and a 400 hour clinical phase. The total
17 number of hours required to complete the didactic and
18 clinical phase shall be 850 hours.

19 (3) The training program shall include instruction in
20 at least the following areas: anatomy and physiology,
21 psychosocial issues, pharmacology, infection control,
22 nutrition, the aging process, skin management, medical
23 terminology, medical-clerical issues, and the role of the
24 interdisciplinary team.

25 (c) The department shall develop criteria for
26 approving training programs that include program
27 content for orientation, training, and the examination to
28 test for the knowledge and skills related to performing
29 the duties of a geriatric technician.

30 1336.8. (a) Certificates issued under this article shall
31 be renewed every two years, concurrent with the nursing
32 assistant recertification, and shall be conditioned upon
33 the certificate holder meeting all criteria for the renewal
34 of his or her nursing assistant certification in accordance
35 with Article 9 (commencing with Section 1337).

36 1336.9. In a long-term health care facility, under the
37 supervision of a registered nurse, the geriatric technician
38 may administer selected medications, and may perform
39 or assist with selected treatments as determined by the
40 department.



1 SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act
2 pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California
3 Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred
4 by a local agency or school district will be incurred
5 because this act creates a new crime or infraction,
6 eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty
7 for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section
8 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition
9 of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article
10 XIII B of the California Constitution.

11 Notwithstanding Section 17580 of the Government
12 Code, unless otherwise specified, the provisions of this act
13 shall become operative on the same date that the act
14 takes effect pursuant to the California Constitution.

