



Assemblymember Lisa Calderon, 57th District

AB 2331 – Adult Day Services: COVID-19 Mitigation

SUMMARY

Assembly Bill 2331 would establish the Bridge to Recovery for Adult Day Services: COVID-19 Mitigation and Resilience Grant Program to Combat Senior Isolation, to be administered by the California Department of Aging and upon appropriation.

BACKGROUND

Adult day service programs offer a safe, positive, caring alternative to nursing home care for those who do not need 24-hour skilled nursing. These programs are designed to help people stay mentally and physically active, reduce isolation, improve their health, and prevent decline of their abilities. Adult day health centers offer a medical model of care through an out-patient day program for older persons and adults with chronic medical, cognitive or mental health conditions and/or disabilities that are at risk of needing institutional care.

In California, there are 273 adult day health centers that serve 40,140 enrolled individuals. 96% of those served at these centers are Medi-Cal recipients and 67% are women. The centers assist an ethnically diverse population of Californians, with 23% of individuals utilizing services identifying as Asian-Pacific Islander, 21% Latino, and 13% Black. Nearly 44% of those relying on these programs live alone, and would otherwise not benefit from the care and social interaction provided at these centers.

PROBLEM

Before the pandemic, many older adults turned to adult day programs for social connections, meals, transportation and other services. Since March 2020, adult day programs and adult day health care centers had to pivot. They were granted flexibility by state and federal regulators to provide a combination of remote and limited in-person services to participants in response to COVID-19.

While these approved emergency flexibilities have been used to provide necessary alternative

services and needed support to caregivers, access to in-center “hands-on” support has been limited by distancing and related infection control requirements along with staffing shortages.

Centers need to adopt more aggressive mitigation measures to accommodate the reality that COVID-19 will remain an ongoing threat to vulnerable older adults and people with disabilities. The ability of centers to safely serve their participants as California moves to an endemic phase of the pandemic rests on their capacity to minimize transmission of the virus and to harden facilities to prepare for future public health emergencies or natural disasters.

In addition, centers are experiencing severe workforce shortages due to the fierce competition for core staff such as Registered Nurses (RNs) and social workers, without whom the centers cannot legally operate. Higher than normal turnover rates and the unbudgeted cost of recruiting new staff during a pandemic has added to the high cost of continuing to operate these centers.

SOLUTION

AB 2331 would create a grant program to provide one-time funding to qualified adult day service providers who need financial assistance with necessary COVID mitigation and resiliency relating to infrastructure and workforce. This measure will improve the emotional, cognitive, and physical health, safety, and well-being of vulnerable at-risk seniors by expanding safe access to vital services in adult day health care and adult day program settings.

SUPPORT

California Association for Adult Day Services (Sponsor)

CONTACT

Lucia Saldivar
Office of Assemblymember Lisa Calderon
(916) 319-2057
Lucia.saldivar@asm.ca.gov