



Scott Harris, M.D., M.P.H.  
STATE HEALTH OFFICER

September 26, 2022

Kelley Mitchell, RNC, MSN  
Executive Director  
Assisted Living Association of Alabama  
PO Box 759  
Greenville, AL 36037

SUBJECT: Dementia Education and CMS Hand in Hand Training

Dear Ms. Mitchell:

In response to your request on behalf of the Board of Directors and members of the Assisted Living Association of Alabama, Dr. Scott Harris, State Health Officer, has approved the "CMS Hand in Hand: A Training Series for Nursing Homes" offered through the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services as an equivalent dementia training to the current DETA Care and DETA Brain series for purposes of compliance with State Board of Health Rules for providers of assisted living care. A copy of the approval is attached.

We appreciate the work that members of the Assisted Living Association of Alabama provide for citizens of Alabama. Please feel free to reach out should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jacqueline D. Milledge".

Jacqueline D. Milledge, Director  
Bureau of Health Provider Standards


JDM/KM  
Attachment



Scott Harris, M.D., M.P.H.  
STATE HEALTH OFFICER

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Denise Milledge MBA, BSN, CPM  
Director, Bureau of Health Provider Standards

**FROM:** Scott Harris, M.D., M.P.H.   
State Health Officer

**DATE:** September 12, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Dementia Education and CMS Hand in Hand Training

As authorized by Act 2019-453 (“Alabama Alzheimer’s and Dementia Education, Care, and Training Act”), and until receipt of funding by the Alabama Department of Public Health to allow development of educational programs and services concerning Alzheimer’s disease, dementia, and related diseases, the “CMS Hand in Hand: A Training Series for Nursing Homes,” offered through the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services is approved as an equivalent training for purposes of compliance with the following State Board of Health Rules.

State Board of Health Rules for Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs), Rule 420-5-4-.04(6)(a)12, requires that:

“All staff who have contact with residents, including the administrator, shall have initial training prior to resident contact and refresher training annually and as necessary; identifying signs and symptoms of dementia.”

State Board of Health Rules for Specialty Care Assisted Living Facilities (SCALFs), Rule 420-5-20-.04(9)(b), requires that:

“Prior to providing any resident care, all staff shall complete The Dementia Education and Training Act (DETA) Care Series Training developed by the Alabama Department of Mental Health or equivalent training approved by the State Health Officer. All licensed staff shall complete DETA Brain Series Training, The Pharmacological Management of Dementia, and the Dementia Assessment Series provided by the DETA Program or equivalent training approved by the State Health Officer prior to resident contact. Documentation of all staff training to include attendance records and any required post-test evaluations shall be maintained.”

SH/LM

cc: Michele Jones, M.S.  
Karen Landers, M.D.



**Assisted Living Association  
of Alabama**

August 3, 2022

Denise Milledge, RN  
Director, Health Provider Standards  
Alabama Department of Public Health

Cynthia Granger, RN  
L & C Supervisor, Health Provider Standards  
Alabama Department of Public Health

Dear Denise and Cyndy:

On behalf of the Board of Directors and members of the Assisted Living Association of Alabama we thank you for your continuing leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic and the on-going difficulties and challenges it has placed on providers of assisted living care.

One of the major challenges currently affecting health care providers, as you well know, is staffing. Our assisted living providers are experiencing shortages, rapid turnovers, and lack of experience. These create an intense need in the industry for an effective, concise, and up to date dementia training program.

The "CMS Hand in Hand: A Training Series for Nursing Homes" emphasizes person-centered care for the care of those with dementia. This series also includes training in the prevention of resident abuse. The training is available, free of charge, in a self-paced online training as well as an instructor-led training with downloadable instructor materials. This link <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTXai0Km9UBZnoa-L3vyphKrnAE7hfkic> is a free, instructor led video of the training that is very appropriate for assisted living staff.

We respectfully request the State Health Officer approve the Hand in Hand training as an equivalent dementia training to the currently approved DETA Care and DETA Brain series for providers of assisted living care.

I am available for any questions or discussion, if necessary. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Kelley Mitchell, RNC, MSN  
Executive Director  
Assisted Living Association of Alabama