

alz.org/maryland
800.272.3900

Greater Maryland Chapter
502 Washington Avenue, Suite 300
Towson, MD 21204
410.561.9099 p
410.561.3433 f

Western Maryland
108 Byte Drive, Suite 102
Frederick, MD 21702
301.696.0315 p
410.742.0525 f

Salisbury
909 Progress Circle, Suite 400
Salisbury, MD 21804
410.543.1163 p
410.742.0525 f



Bill: SB 999 - Certified Nursing Assistants - Licensing Requirements and Administrative Updates

Committee: Senate Finance Committee

Position: Favorable

Date: March 1, 2024

On behalf of the more than 110,000 Marylanders living with Alzheimer's disease, the Alzheimer's Association supports *SB 999 - Certified Nursing Assistants - Licensing Requirements and Administrative Updates*. SB 999 repeals references to "geriatric nursing assistant" (GNA) and updates requirements for certified nursing assistants (CNA). This will help alleviate staffing shortages in long-term care settings and provide greater flexibility in these settings when hiring staff.

The Maryland Board of Nursing has previously advised that Maryland is the only state with both CNA and GNA certifications. Nationally, CNAs can work in all settings - hospitals, assisted living, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, adult daycare centers, and clinical facility settings. However, in Maryland, CNAs are only authorized to practice in acute-care settings. This creates an additional hurdle for long-term care settings, such as nursing homes and assisted living facilities, to hire staff.

Almost everyone who has Alzheimer's disease or other dementias, and who lives long enough, will eventually need long-term care services. Many will require professional care when their needs overwhelm informal caregivers. It is important to eliminate barriers to staffing in our long-term care settings so that we can address current workforce shortages and prepare for the growing demand in services as our population ages and the prevalence of Alzheimer's and other dementia increases.

SB 999 will help to alleviate staffing shortages for nursing assistants across Maryland and puts Maryland's nursing assistant credentialing system in line with other states. This will also allow out-of-state CNAs to be qualified to work in Maryland nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Ultimately, allowing CNAs to work in long-term care settings will increase the number of qualified staff able to assist and care for seniors and older adults in health care settings in Maryland.

The Alzheimer's Association is committed to strengthening the health care workforce supporting our most vulnerable adults and urges a favorable report on SB 999. Please contact Megan Peters, Director of Government Affairs at mrpeters@alz.org with any questions.