

# How Can You Support Coloradans Living with Alzheimer's and Other Dementias?

vote **YES** on **SB 118**

Help Adult Protective Services (APS) Respond Appropriately

Sponsors: Sens. Ginal & Gardner, Reps. Snyder & Pelton

## Problem

APS staff need more options. Currently, APS staff use the same approach to respond to every report of potential mistreatment of an at-risk adult – an investigation resulting in a “finding of fault.” However, for some cases more flexibility would allow APS workers to more appropriately provide support to help the at-risk adult.

## Why it Matters to People with Dementia

Cognitive decline is the hallmark of Alzheimer's and other dementias, and this decline is progressive. That means every Coloradan living with dementia will reach a point in their lives where they meet the APS definition of an at-risk adult. It also means the person experiencing cognitive decline, or their caregiver, is likely to discover something is no longer safe only after some type of incident occurs.

**76k**

Coloradans are living with Alzheimer's



**256k**

Family caregivers for a loved one with dementia

## What the Bill Does

- Creates a pilot program to allow county APS staff to adopt an alternative approach to low risk cases, such as an initial case of wandering, burnt food or a client's home condition.
- Allows APS to revert to a traditional approach if, upon assessment, the situation warrants it.
- Copies the successes of many county APS programs that successfully use this type of response in their child welfare programs.

## MORE INFORMATION:

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# How Can You Support Coloradans Living with Alzheimer's and Other Dementias?

## vote **YES** on **SB 158**

Increase the Number of Health Care Professionals Specializing in Geriatrics

Sponsor: Sen. Danielson

### Problem

Colorado seniors need more geriatric specialists. The number of health care professionals specializing in geriatrics is not keeping pace with the rapid growth of Colorado's senior population. By 2050, our state will need more than 3 times the current number of geriatricians just to serve 10% of Coloradans 65 years and older.

### Why it Matters to People with Dementia

Geriatric practitioners tend to spend more time with patients, making it easier for them to recognize the symptoms of Alzheimer's or other dementias. Increasing the number of health care professionals who specialize in geriatrics would help more Coloradans experiencing cognitive difficulties receive a timely dementia diagnosis. Early diagnosis allows a person to get the maximum benefit from available programs and services, participate in clinical trials and gives families time to plan for the future.

### What the Bill Does

- Expands loan repayment opportunities to physician assistants and advanced practice nurses who receive additional training in geriatrics.
- Builds on CDPHE's successful Health Service Corps Program that provides loan repayment for health care professionals who work in underserved areas.
- Fills the gap left from medical schools not graduating enough geriatric physicians nationwide by expanding support to other types of professionals who are educated in geriatric medicine.

In 2019  
there were

**89**

geriatricians  
in Colorado

By 2050  
our state will need

**289**

geriatricians  
to serve  
**10% of Coloradans**  
65 yrs or older

By 2050  
our state will need

**867**

geriatricians  
to serve  
**30% of Coloradans**  
65 yrs or older



Nearly **50% of Coloradans** age 75 and older live in rural areas, but only about **10% of geriatric specialists** serve these areas.

