
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO DEMENTIA.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that dementia and
2 cognitive impairment are growing public health concerns in
3 Hawaii, particularly among the State's aging population. The
4 impacts of dementia extend beyond individuals to families,
5 caregivers, and communities, placing emotional and financial
6 strain on households and the healthcare system.

7 The legislature further finds that access to early
8 diagnosis, care planning, and long-term support for individuals
9 with dementia and cognitive impairment is limited, especially in
10 rural areas and on neighbor islands. Many residents face
11 barriers to receiving timely and coordinated care due to
12 geographic isolation, workforce shortages, and fragmented
13 service delivery.

14 The need for systemic reform for dementia and cognitive
15 impairment treatment cannot be overstated. Alzheimer's disease
16 is estimated to affect one in nine Hawaii residents over age
17 sixty-five. With the older adult population in the State



1 expected to double in the next twenty-five years, the number of
2 individuals living with Alzheimer's disease will exceed sixty-
3 two thousand by 2050. This surge will have devastating
4 financial consequences. Medicaid spending for Alzheimer's care
5 in Hawaii rose from \$240,000,000 in 2020 to \$309,000,000 in
6 2025. Without intervention, those costs are projected to
7 approach \$1,000,000,000 annually by 2050, placing an
8 unsustainable strain on the state budget.

9 The legislature further recognizes that Hawaii's long-term
10 care infrastructure is already at or above capacity, with memory
11 care beds in short supply. Families face crushing financial
12 burdens, paying more than \$15,000 per month, or \$180,000 per
13 year, for memory care in long-term care facilities. Neighbor
14 islands and rural communities experience even greater
15 challenges, with limited access to diagnosis and treatment
16 leading to delayed care and higher costs. Caregivers lack
17 guidance and support, compounding emotional and financial
18 stress.

19 The legislature notes that the Alzheimer's Association
20 launched the Hanai Memory Network to address these challenges
21 head-on by ensuring earlier diagnosis, equitable access to care



1 across all counties, and coordination that reduces emergency
2 room visits and hospitalizations. By shifting from crisis-
3 driven care to proactive planning, Hawaii can improve outcomes
4 for kupuna and caregivers while reducing medicaid costs and
5 alleviating pressure on the State's long-term care system.

6 The legislature additionally finds that a coordinated
7 statewide approach is necessary to ensure equitable access to
8 dementia care services.

9 The purpose of this Act is to establish a Hanai memory
10 network program to integrate community-based specialists,
11 clinical partnerships, and public education to improve early
12 detection, care coordination, and long-term support for
13 individuals with dementia and their caregivers.

14 SECTION 2. Chapter 349, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and
16 to read as follows:

17 **"PART . HANAI MEMORY NETWORK PROGRAM**

18 **§349-** **Definitions.** As used in this part:

19 "Dementia care specialist" means a trained social worker or
20 allied health professional who provides community-based dementia
21 screening, care planning, and coordination services.



1 "Memory clinic" means a clinical partnership between the
2 State and a health care provider or health system that provides
3 diagnostic and treatment services for individuals with cognitive
4 impairment, staffed by primary care providers and geriatricians.

5 **§349- Hanai memory network program; established.** (a)
6 There is established within the executive office on aging the
7 Hanai memory network program.

8 (b) The Hanai memory network program shall:
9 (1) Establish dementia care specialists;
10 (2) Establish one or more memory clinics;
11 (3) Ensure coordination between dementia care specialists,
12 memory clinics, and programmatic services;
13 (4) Develop and maintain a statewide referral network and
14 care options directory for dementia care;
15 (5) Provide training and technical assistance to
16 participating providers in the program;
17 (6) Operate a public-facing website to serve as a central
18 hub for education, referrals, and provider listings
19 for dementia care; and
20 (7) Collect and securely maintain data relevant to the
21 program.



7 (d) The executive office on aging shall:

10 (2) Collaborate with area agencies on aging, health care
11 providers, and community health centers;

15 (A) The number of individuals screened and diagnosed;

16 (B) The number of care plans created;

17 (C) Provider and caregiver satisfaction data; and

18 (D) Any proposed legislation."

19 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
20 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
21 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to



1 establish and implement the Hanai memory network program, to be
2 allocated as follows:

3 (1) \$ for salaries and fringe benefits for the
4 following positions:

5 (A) One full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE) memory
6 network program manager; and
7 (B) One full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE) dementia care
8 specialist; and

9 (2) \$ for equipment, supplies, operational
10 costs, and memory clinic partnerships, including but
11 not limited to:

12 (A) Clinical infrastructure and support services;
13 (B) Technology and data systems;
14 (C) Public education and outreach materials; and
15 (D) Contracts and memoranda of agreements with health
16 care providers and health systems to establish
17 memory clinics.

18 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the executive
19 office on aging for the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

21



H.B. NO. 1853

INTRODUCED BY:

George Town

JAN 23 2026



H.B. NO. 1853

Report Title:

Executive office on Aging; Hanai Memory Network Program; Dementia Care; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Hanai Memory Network Program within the Executive Office on Aging to create a network of dementia care specialists and support systems to assist individuals with dementia and their caregivers. Appropriates funds.

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