



Rhode Island Academy of
**PHYSICIAN
ASSISTANTS**

Date: May 28,, 2026

From: Rhode Island Academy of Physician Assistants

Re: Support for H 8545 – An Act Relating to Health and Safety – Rhode Island Program
to Address Alzheimer’s Disease

Position: Support

The Honorable Susan Donovan
Chair,
House Committee on Health and Human Resources
82 Smith St.
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chair Donovan and members of the committee:

As the professional organization representing over 1,000 Rhode Island licensed physician assistants (PAs), the Rhode Island Academy of Physician Assistants (RIAPA) thanks the committee for the opportunity to comment on H-.8545.

House Bill 8545 amends Rhode Island law to include licensed physician assistants (PAs), alongside physicians and nurses, in the requirement to complete continuing education on the diagnosis, treatment, and care of patients with cognitive impairments, including Alzheimer’s disease

Specifically, the bill requires that physician assistants complete a minimum of one hour of training during each two year license renewal cycle

focused on cognitive impairment and Alzheimer’s-related care.

RIAPA strongly supports this legislation because it:

- 1) Promotes High-Quality Patient Care \

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By ensuring that PAs receive ongoing education in recognizing and managing cognitive impairment supports earlier identification, improved treatment planning, and better outcomes for patients and families.

2) **Aligns Training Requirements Across Clinical Professionals**

Current law establishes training requirements for physicians and nurses. This bill appropriately extends the same expectations to PAs, ensuring consistency across key healthcare providers involved in patient care. This alignment reflects the collaborative, team-based nature of modern healthcare delivery.

3) **Strengthens the State's Response to Alzheimer's Disease,**

H 8545 builds on Rhode Island's existing Alzheimer's disease initiatives by expanding the pool of trained clinicians equipped to identify and manage cognitive impairment. PAs often serve as frontline providers, especially in primary care settings, where early detection is critical.

4) **Supports Access to Care in All Communities Across Rhode Island,**

PAs play a vital role in improving access to healthcare—particularly in underserved and high-need populations. By ensuring PAs are trained in Alzheimer's care, this bill helps ensure that patients receive consistent, informed care regardless of where they enter the healthcare system.

RIAPA Perspective

For nearly five decades, the Rhode Island Academy of Physician Assistants has supported efforts to enhance healthcare quality, expand access, and promote team-based care across the state.

H 8545 is consistent with these goals. It is a practical, targeted policy change that improves care delivery without imposing undue burden on providers.

RIAPA respectfully urges the Committee to support passage of H 8545.

By ensuring that physician assistants are included in continuing education requirements related to Alzheimer's disease and cognitive impairment, this legislation will:

- Improve early diagnosis and intervention
- Enhance patient and caregiver support
- Strengthen Rhode Island's healthcare workforce
- Promote consistent, high-quality care across provider types

Thank you for your consideration and your ongoing commitment to the health of Rhode Islanders.

Respectfully submitted,



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