



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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February 4, 2016

TO: Members
Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: Bob Lang, Director

SUBJECT: Assembly Bill 783: Virtual Dementia Tour License Funding

Assembly Bill 783 was introduced on January 22, 2016, and referred to the Assembly Committee on Mental Health Reform. The Committee adopted Assembly Amendment 1 and recommended the amended bill for passage by a vote of 10 to 0.

As amended, the bill would provide one-time funding of \$50,000 GPR to the Department of Health Services (DHS) in 2016-17 for the purchase of virtual dementia tour (VDT) licenses.

BACKGROUND

The virtual dementia tour (VDT) is an interactive program that simulates what an individual with dementia would experience. Use of the tool is intended to increase awareness of the disease and promote an understanding of what individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias experience.

During the VDT, participants wear gloves, shoe inserts, goggles, and headphones with confusion sounds to simulate the experiences of an individual with dementia. These restraints are believed to mimic the moderate stage of dementia, in which affected individuals have persistent memory loss and can no longer hide their condition. Participants are asked to complete numerous day-to-day activities while wearing these modalities to mimic what day-to-day life is like for an individual with dementia.

One of the State Centers for the Developmentally Disabled, Southern Wisconsin Center (SWC), has a VDT license. The Department indicates that this license was acquired in November, 2014 for approximately \$880, and that no renewal of this license has been required to date. This licensed is only used at SWC by certified facilitators to train SWC staff.

SUMMARY OF BILL AND ASSEMBLY AMENDMENT 1

Assembly Bill 783 would provide \$10,000 in one-time funding for DHS in fiscal year 2016-17 to purchase a VDT license.

Assembly Amendment 1 would modify the bill to provide \$50,000 in one-time funding to purchase multiple VDT licenses.

The Department has sought information regarding purchase of VDT licenses from Second Wind Dreams, a nonprofit organization that provides training and licensing for VDTs. DHS has received information and cost estimates regarding the "VDT Comprehensive Program." Purchase of this package would include facilitator training for two individuals, a manual and instructional materials, the VDT toolkit, promotional materials, and a one-year license. This toolkit could only be used in the location where facilitators had been certified, and could only be utilized by the certified facilitators. The estimated cost of this program starts at \$1,800 in the first year, with license renewal costs starting at \$400 per year.

The vendor informed the Department that, in order to use the VDT in other locations for broader training of different groups including health care professionals and community members, the licensure costs would be greater than the costs outlined above. At this time, no estimate has been received regarding the cost of purchasing VDT licenses beyond the comprehensive package.

FISCAL EFFECT

As adopted by the Assembly Committee on Mental Health Reform, the bill would provide \$50,000 GPR in one-time funding in fiscal year 2016-17 for the purchase of VDT licenses.

At this time, the costs for VDT licensure that would allow the Department to utilize the VDT program at multiple locations to train health professionals, family members, and community members are unknown. However, based on the initial cost estimate of \$1,800 in the first year for the 'VDT Comprehensive Program', the Department would be able to purchase, at most, 27 of these packages. The bill does not provide any funding for licensure renewal.

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