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CALTCM Applauds Governor Newsom and Assemblymember Nazarian for Supporting Clinical Leadership in Long Term Care Medicine

AB 749 sets critical, minimal training requirements for medical directors by requiring nursing home medical directors to be certified by the American Board of Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine in response to elevating standards of care due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Sacramento, CA – Governor Newsom has signed AB 749 authored by Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian (D-Van Nuys), Chair of the California State Assembly Aging and Long-Term Care Committee.

"Aging Californians and our most frail living in SNFs have been a tragic highlight of the COVID-19 pandemic," said Assemblymember Nazarian. "The standard of care is insufficient, and the standard of care did not serve the health and well-being of California's elders during the pandemic. AB 749 increases accountability, costs the state nothing and professionalizes a position of great importance."

AB 749 prohibits a skilled nursing facility from contracting with a person as a medical director if the person is not, or will not be within five years, certified by the American Board of Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine (ABPLM) as a Certified Medical Director. The ABPLM developed the Certified Medical Director Program in 1991 and has certified more than 4,000 medical directors since its inception. AB 749 received bipartisan support throughout the process without receiving any "No" votes in the Assembly or Senate.

Dr. Mike Wasserman, Immediate Past President and Current Chair of CALTCM's Public Policy Committee stated "CALTCM is excited that California recognizes the importance of a competent and prepared medical director in improving the quality of care in nursing homes across the state. We hope that this is the beginning of a new era for the state and nursing home industry to fully engage the experts in geriatrics and long term care medicine in efforts to improve quality."

"AB 749 is a critical win for patients, families, and health care providers in California. COVID-19 absolutely devastated our loved ones in nursing homes, and we must provide a higher standard of care to keep our patients safe. With AB 749, nursing homes across California will be able to count on medical directors who are trained and certified. This means that for the first time in any state across the US, all of the medical directors in our state will have the foundational education, training and certification needed to guide nursing homes forward to better care," added Dr. Albert Lam, CALTCM President.

Founded in 1975, the California Association of Long Term Care Medicine (CALTCM) is the professional organization for California physicians, medical directors, nurses, pharmacists, administrators, and other professionals working in long-term care. As the medical voice for long term care in California, CALTCM is California's only statewide association solely focused on clinical quality in nursing homes. CALTCM is positioned at the forefront of statewide efforts to advocate quality patient health care, provide long-term care education, and influence policy. Visit caltcm.org for more information.

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