

Rep. Rohrkaste: Budget committee approves expansion of dementia care specialists

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Madison, WI – Yesterday, State Representative Mike Rohrkaste (R-Neenah), member of the budget-writing Joint Finance Committee (JFC), voted along with his Republican colleagues on JFC to restore and expand the Dementia Care Specialist program, as well as increase funding to the University of Wisconsin-Madison Alzheimer's Disease Research Center.

"As the former chair of the Speaker's Task Force on Alzheimer's and Dementia, the retention and expansion of Dementia Care Specialists across Wisconsin is something very important to me," said Rep. Rohrkaste. "Thousands of Wisconsinites are impacted by dementia every day, whether they are living with the disease or caring for a loved one who has dementia."

Under the motion, 19 Dementia Care Specialists will be retained in the 2017-18 fiscal year. In the 2018-19 fiscal year, the program will expand to 24 Dementia Care Specialists and funding will be provided on an ongoing basis. Currently, Dementia Care Specialists are located in Aging and Disability Resource Centers throughout Wisconsin and provide assistance and support to those living with some form of dementia and the family members who care for them.

"While traveling around the state with the Speaker's Task Force, we heard time and again how important Dementia Care Specialists are to their local community," said Rep. Rohrkaste. "The number of Wisconsinites living with Alzheimer's and dementia continues to grow and we must ensure that these individuals and their families have adequate support."

"I would like to thank my fellow members of the Joint Finance Committee who voted

in favor of these important initiatives, as well as the hundreds of constituents who expressed their support for Dementia Care Specialists and the UW-Madison Alzheimer's Disease Research Center. Moving forward, I encourage both chambers of the legislature and Governor Walker to support Dementia Care Specialists and the UW-Madison Alzheimer's Disease Research Center in the 2017-19 state budget."