

# DEMENTIA CARE AWARE DATA

December 2023

# DEMENTIA CARE AWARE COGNITIVE HEALTH ASSESSMENT 1494 F UTILIZATION

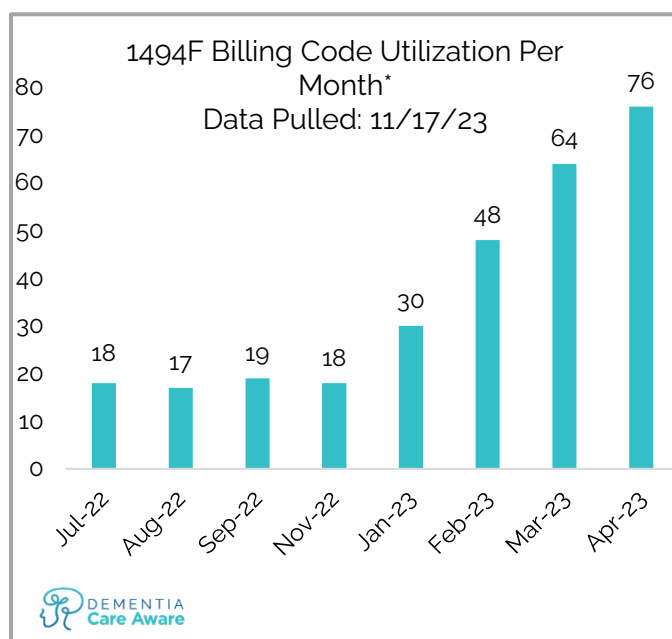
The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is committed to improving detection, care, caregiver support, and data analysis for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. DHCS launched Dementia Care Aware in July 2022, an initiative that established a statewide standard of care for dementia screening through an equity-focused, culturally appropriate provider training. Senate Bill 48, signed on October 4, 2021, established that an annual cognitive health assessment (CHA) for Medi-Cal beneficiaries who are 65 years of age or older is a covered benefit if they are otherwise ineligible for a similar assessment under the Medicare program. Dementia Care Aware provides a statewide standard of care for dementia screening in California, through equity-focused, culturally appropriate training for primary care providers across all payers, including Medicare, Medi-Cal, and other coverage.

As a part of SB 48, DHCS will report on a biannual cadence the utilization and payment of CHAs, which identifies signs of Alzheimer's disease or dementia. Medi-Cal Providers may receive a payment for completing a CHA for Medi-Cal Members who are 65 years of age and older. Prior to receiving this payment, Medi-Cal Providers must complete a training through Dementia Care Aware, which utilizes validated tools recommended by DHCS. DHCS receives billing code data through two primary mechanisms, direct claims data submitted by providers for Medi-Cal Members who are in fee-for-service Medi-Cal, or via encounter data submitted by Managed Care Plans (MCPs) for Medi-Cal Members enrolled in Medi-Cal managed care. DHCS analyzed these sources of data for 1494 F billing code, specific to the CHA in patients with only Medi-Cal coverage. As shown in the tables below, use of the 1494 F billing code has been steadily increasing and it was utilized 316 times between July 2022 and April 2023. Given that, on average, DHCS does not receive claims and encounter data for up to 6 months after a service is provided, data between May 2023 and December 2023 is not complete yet and will be included in the next biannual report.

There are some known limitations of this data. Providers may

perform cognitive health assessments without submitting the 1494 F billing code, especially if they practice in a setting such as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), which is not paid additionally for using the 1494 F billing code. As a result, monitoring billing codes is likely an underestimate of the number of CHAs being performed.

In 2024, DHCS and the Dementia Care Aware team will be assessing code utilization and exploring ways to expand screening and accurate coding usage statewide. DHCS will work collaboratively with our partners to update any necessary guidance that will ensure improved reporting in the future.



\* October and December 2022 utilization not included due to data suppression.