

**PERFORMANCE
AUDIT OF THE HOME
CARE QUALITY
AUTHORITY**

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

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STATE OF WASHINGTON
JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT AND
REVIEW COMMITTEE

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Why a Second Performance Audit of the Home Care Quality Authority?

Voters created the Home Care Quality Authority (HCQA) in 2001 with the passage of Initiative 775. The Initiative also directed the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) to conduct a performance review of the Authority by December 1, 2006. In response to a recommendation from that first review, the Legislature directed JLARC to conduct this second, more narrowly focused review of HCQA (Chapter 140, Laws of 2008).

Background

Over 30,000 Washington residents receive state-funded in-home long-term care services each month. These people are served by either an employee of a home care agency or by individuals who work as independent contractors and provide their services as individual providers (IPs). Individual providers assist clients by providing help with various personal care tasks, such as feeding, bathing, and dressing.

Voters created the Home Care Quality Authority to ensure that the quality of long-term care services provided by individual providers is improved through better regulation, higher standards, increased accountability, and improved access to IP services. HCQA is also directed to encourage stability in the IP workforce through collective bargaining and by providing training opportunities.

HCQA has four staff and is governed by a nine-member board appointed by the Governor. HCQA has duties in four primary areas:

- Recruiting and assisting consumers to find IPs by establishing a referral registry;
- Training IPs and consumers;
- Obtaining background checks for criminal history, abuse, and neglect; and
- Obtaining and providing informed input from consumers in the collective bargaining process.

Study Scope

This performance audit will assess the services provided by HCQA to meet its statutory duties. It will also analyze how HCQA is meeting its obligation to “to regulate and improve the quality of long-term in-home care services by recruiting, training, and stabilizing the workforce of individual providers” (RCW 74.39A.230(1)). In 2007 JLARC recommended that HCQA update its performance measures to ensure that its performance targets are clear and adequately reflect HCQA’s current duties and goals. This study will also review those measures.

Study Objectives

This performance audit will focus on HCQA's current statutory duties and how the performance of those duties assists HCQA to meet its purposes of regulating and improving the quality of long-term in-home care services and stabilizing the workforce of individual providers.

- 1) What information is HCQA collecting to measure its performance?
- 2) How are HCQA's performance measures related to its statutory duties and goals?
- 3) Is HCQA meeting its performance targets?
- 4) To what extent is HCQA meeting its statutory duties?

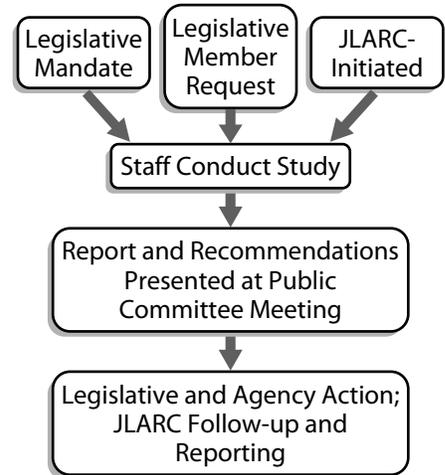
Timeframe for the Study

Staff will present the preliminary report in September 2009 and the proposed final report in October 2009.

JLARC Staff Contact for the Study

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JLARC Study Process



Criteria for Establishing JLARC Work Program Priorities

- Is study consistent with JLARC mission? Is it mandated?
- Is this an area of significant fiscal or program impact, a major policy issue facing the state, or otherwise of compelling public interest?
- Will there likely be substantive findings and recommendations?
- Is this the best use of JLARC resources? For example:
 - Is JLARC the most appropriate agency to perform the work?
 - Would the study be nonduplicating?
 - Would this study be cost-effective compared to other projects (e.g., larger, more substantive studies take longer and cost more, but might also yield more useful results)?
- Is funding available to carry out the project?