

**Performance Audit
of the Home Care
Quality Authority
Report 09-9**

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STATE OF WASHINGTON
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REPORT SUMMARY

This report presents the results of the second Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) performance audit of the Home Care Quality Authority (HCQA). Voters created the HCQA in 2001 with the passage of Initiative 775. The Initiative also directed JLARC to conduct a performance review of the Authority by December 1, 2006. In 2008, in response to a recommendation from that first review, the Legislature directed JLARC to conduct this second evaluation, which is more narrowly focused on HCQA's performance of its statutory duties.

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 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)). HCQA has statutory 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.

Conclusions and Recommendation

HCQA is meeting its statutory duties and met 14 of its 15 performance targets.

HCQA has adopted 15 performance measures related to its recruiting and training duties and has kept documentation of its activities related to background checks and consumer input into the collective bargaining process. HCQA has documented its activities related to all four duty areas and has data to demonstrate that it has achieved or exceeded 14 of the 15 performance targets. JLARC has concluded from the data that HCQA is meeting its statutory duties and has integrated its performance measures into the daily operation of the agency.

HCQA has not yet adopted performance measures that enable it to determine the impact of its own actions on the stability of the individual provider (IP) workforce—specifically on the retention or turnover of IPs on the registry.

HCQA does collect data and has contracted with Washington State University to calculate the effect of changes to wages, benefits, and other external factors on the stability of the workforce. Although the University's research shows a stabilizing effect on the IP workforce, the elements studied are not HCQA activities or within HCQA's control.

HCQA also collects or has access to data that it could analyze to better understand the effect of HCQA's activities on the retention and turnover of IPs listed on or hired from the referral registries. These data could be used to identify where management interventions and performance measures may be needed.

Recommendation

The Home Care Quality Authority should develop performance measures that reflect its impact on the stability of the IP workforce on, or hired from, the referral registries.

To develop these performance measures, HCQA will need to analyze its data and identify the factors relevant to workforce stability and the areas in which management interventions are needed.

Report Organization

This report provides brief overviews of long-term care and HCQA's history, examines how well HCQA is performing, and concludes with findings and a recommendation.