AGENCY RESPONSES

Appendix 2

- Department of Social and Health Services
- Office of Financial Management

STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Olympia WA 98504-5000

January 25, 1999

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JLARC

Thomas M. Sykes, Legislative Auditor
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee
P.O. Box 40910
Olympia, Washington 98501-2323

Dear Mr. Sykes:

We have reviewed the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee's preliminary report of the Washington State Quality Assurance of In-Home Care study. We appreciate recognition that many important quality control features are in place for home care services and also appreciate and concur with the report's recommendations on areas that must be strengthened.

We in particular share concerns about strengthening the effectiveness of the individual provider program for the most vulnerable clients. Our approach to that task will be from the perspective those clients and their families are the best supervisors and quality-control experts for the day-to-day personal care they need to remain independent. Accordingly, we expect to focus our efforts primarily on strengthening the system for clients who have cognitive impairments and are without substitute decision makers or family members involved in their care. Further analysis of some of the rough statistics presented in the report shows that about 8% of IP's fall into that category. They will be the ones to receive our first attention.

Our response to the recommendations follows:

RECOMMENDATION	AGENCY POSITION	COMMENTS
Rec 1	Concur	The department will incorporate performance monitoring of case management into the monitoring of Area Agencies on Aging as recommended.
Rec 2	Concur	The Governor's 1999-2001 budget includes funds to establish an IP brokerage system which, if funded, includes a fiscal intermediary function, to strengthen the accountability controls over the IP payment system by: • Processing IP claims for reimbursement, • Reviewing timesheets and auditing IP work hours, • Collecting client co-payments, • Resolving IP payroll questions, and • Payment of required federal and state taxes, including IRS forms.

RECOMMENDATION	AGENCY POSITION	COMMENTS
Rec 3	Concur	The department is developing an automated APS Intake & Recording System that will identify APS clients who use state funded services and to collect information about the disposition of the complaint. Specific procedures describing the DSHS and AAA roles and responsibilities for investigating abuse, neglect and exploitation of a vulnerable adult receiving services through an Aging Network agency will be clarified.
Rec 4	Concur	The Governor's 1999-2001 budget includes funding to improve the ratio of AAA case managers to home-care clients from 1:100 to a ratio of 1:85. If funded, this will improve quality assurance mechanisms for the IP and home care agency programs. Resources will be targeted to the most vulnerable persons in both the IP and agency-care systems. The establishment of an IP brokerage system, as proposed in the Governor's 1999-2001 budget will support client-employers in successfully recruiting, managing and supervising their workers. The brokerage includes employment registry, fiscal intermediary, and client/employer support/education components that will improve quality assurance mechanisms while strengthening client involvement in their own care planning. Second Substitute Senate Bill 6544 (Chapter 272, Laws of 1998) directed the Department of Health, Department of Social and Health Services, and the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission to review current home and community long-term care training standards. The Governor's 1999-2001 budget provides funding to enhance the home and community based training available. The department will develop, with input from clients and disability advocates, a customer survey for home care by summer 1999.

If you have questions, or if I can provide additional information, please contact Kathy Leitch at 493-2541.

Sincerely,

LYLE QUASIM
Secretary

cc: Ralph Smith
Kathy Leitch

STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
[illegible] • Olympia, Washington 98504-[illegible] • (360) 902-0555

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JLARC

Thomas M. Sykes, Legislative Auditor
Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee
Post Office Box 40910
Olympia, Washington 98504-0910

Dear Mr. Sykes: Tom

I am writing in response to your request for the Office of Financial Management's formal response to the preliminary reports of the Washington State Quality Assurance of In-Home Care Services and the Department of Social and Health Services' Division of Developmental Disabilities audits as presented to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee on January 8, 1999.

The Department of Social and Health Services has responded to the findings in this report. The Office of Financial Management does not have anything to add to their response.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the preliminary report.

Sincerely,

Dick

Dick Thompson
Director

DT:GA:dh