



Rapid response: Closure of facilities for the developmentally disabled

Several of you have heard from constituents concerned about a recent decision by the Developmental Disabilities Division (DDD) in DSHS to reduce the number of in-home care providers. These providers offer services including in-home care for developmentally disabled children and young adults so parents are able to work during the day to support their families. Following a competitive procurement, DSHS awarded contracts to only seven of the 41 bidders.

The reduction was originally set to take place Aug. 31; however, following feedback from families, DSHS is extending the contracts of affected companies until Oct. 31 so the appeal process can be completed. All bidders not awarded a contract are eligible to appeal. DSHS will assure that all clients are transitioned to a qualified care provider. It will also inform current workers they can apply to become a Medicaid personal care provider. This means an individual worker could continue to provide services to current clients if his/her agency loses its state contract.

The following information initially provided by DSHS may be helpful to you in replying to constituents:

Q: Why did the Aging and Disability Services Administration (ADSA) decide to do this procurement rather than maintain the existing method for contracting with DDD home-care agencies?

A: Federal Medicaid Title XIX personal care services require standardized procedures for contracting with qualified providers. As separate administrations, DDD and Aging had developed different procedures for home-care agency contracting. As a single administration, ADSA determined that a formal procurement process best met state and federal requirements.

Q: What process was used to select the successful bidders?

A: The procurement questions were divided into two sections: “technical” dealing with service delivery and “management” dealing with business operations. A panel of five people with expertise in home care and/or services to individuals with developmental disabilities reviewed and scored the answers. An additional reviewer with financial expertise evaluated the financial review submitted by each applicant. Based upon the outcome of the combined evaluation scores, seven applicants were selected as successful bidders.

Q: How were the points earned?

A: Each question had a possibility of 0, 1 or 2 points: 0 meant that the question was not answered or that the agency was unable to comply with this required activity; 1 meant that the agency performed the activity adequately; and 2 meant that the agency documented superior performance in the activity.

Q: How did ADSA choose the seven successful agencies?

A: The seven successful bidders scored significantly higher than the others in both the technical and management portions of the review and had a solid financial review.

Q: How will clients served by unsuccessful bidders be assisted in transitioning to a qualified provider?

A: DDD home care agency contracts were amended to expire Aug. 31. Between now and the end of August, DDD field staff will work with clients and families to transition to another qualified provider (individual provider or contracted home care agency). In cases where clients cannot be successfully transitioned by this timeline, agency contracts may be extended until another qualified provider can be secured.

Q: What if a client wants to keep his/her direct care worker?

A: The direct care worker may become contracted with DDD as an individual provider or he/she may choose to seek employment with another qualified, contracted home-care agency.

Q: How will the successful agencies be managed after the new contracts are in place?

A: DDD specific home-care agency contracts will no longer be managed by DDD regional offices. ADSA headquarters will be responsible for all DDD home-care agency contract activity until the responsibility is assumed by the appropriate Area Agency on Aging (AAA).

Q: Why are DDD home-care agency contracts going to be managed by the AAAs?

A: AAAs have a demonstrated history of managing and monitoring home care agency contracts. In doing so, they have developed the infrastructure and expertise to effectively manage the home care agency line of business.

Q: How can home-care agencies that would like to contract to provide Medicaid services to individuals with developmental disabilities be contracted in the future?

A: Each AAA is required to establish a procurement cycle which occurs at least once every four years. Upcoming home-care agency procurements are currently scheduled as follows but may occur sooner if evidence becomes available that clients are unable to find qualified providers in a particular area:

- Kitsap County Division of Aging & Long-Term Care 2007
- Aging & Adult Care of Central Wash. 2008
- Southeast Wash. Aging & Long-Term Care 2008
- Northwest Regional Council 2009
- Snohomish County Long-Term Care & Aging 2009

- Pierce County Aging & Long-Term Care 2009
- Lewis/Mason/Thurston Area Agency on Aging 2009
- Southwest Washington Area Agency on Aging 2009
- Olympic Area Agency on Aging 2010
- Aging & Disability Services (Seattle/King County) 2011
- Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Wash. 2011
- Colville Area Agency on Aging 2011
- Yakama Nation Area Agency on Aging 2011

As always, don't hesitate to let us know if you'd like more details or assistance in crafting responses to constituents.

Please call David Hanig, 360-786-7369, for additional information or with questions.

dh/klb/8/27/2007