



Washington State Auditor's Office Performance Audit Description

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Initiative 1163: Home Care Aide Certification

Program background

Long term care workers in Washington provide essential services to vulnerable adults and children. In 2011, voters approved Initiative 1163, which expanded background check screening, training, and certification requirements for Home care aides. Home care aides are long term care workers working in community-based settings. The expanded requirements include undergoing state and federal background checks, completing 75 hours of training within 120 days of hire, and passing a certification exam and skills test within 200 days of hire. In fiscal year 2012, DSHS paid more than \$880 million for long-term care services in community-based settings.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and the Department of Health (DOH) are responsible for implementing, overseeing, and enforcing the initiative's new requirements at the state level. The initiative also requires the State Auditor's Office to conduct performance audits of the long-term in-home care program every two years.

Results of the first audit were published in January 2013. Auditors found that although DSHS and DOH had implemented procedures to carry out the background check, training, and professional certification processes, only 29 percent of home care aide applicants reviewed had completed the new requirements.

Scope and objectives

The objectives of this performance audit are designed to assess whether DSHS and DOH have ensured home care aides have met the requirements of Initiative 1163. The audit will seek to answer the following questions:

- What improvements have DOH and DSHS made to ensure home care aid applicants complete the background check, training, and certification requirements of I-1163 since the 2013 performance audit?
- Have the background check, training, and certification completion rates among home care aide applicants improved since January 2013?
- Do DOH and DSHS have sufficient controls in place to monitor and ensure that workers who do not meet the requirements are not working with clients?

Timing

Audit results will be released in December 2014.

July 2014