

SB 1542 Homecare Choice Program Update November 7, 2014

The Oregon Home Care Commission, charged with implementing the Homecare Choice Program authorized by [SB 1542](#) during the 2014 legislative session, gave a [presentation](#) on the program at the first stakeholder meeting this week. Cheryl Miller, Executive Director and Jenny Cokeley, recently hired to manage the new program, provided a [summary](#) of the bill requirements and draft implementation plan.

The Commission has had a registry of approved Medicaid home care providers that have undergone a background check and completed desired training in all Oregon counties since 2008. Currently persons paying privately for in-home services can use the Commission's registry to search for providers who are willing to work for private pay individuals. The Homecare Choice Program will enable private pay individuals to purchase home care services from the Commission through the home care registry.

The Commission is to have the program operative by July 1, 2015 and implement it no later than January 1, 2016. [Click here](#) to access an outline of the requirements for the Commission and the private pay consumer under the program as specified in SB 1542.

The Commission must establish by rule the types and scope of home care services to be offered through the registry. To accomplish this, they will next establish a homecare worker classification committee and eventually from a rule advisory committee. LeadingAge Oregon will seek appointment to the committees as well as member in-home care agencies and keep you apprised of program implementation and opportunities for input.

More information about the program:

Under the program, private pay consumers will have to complete a standard self assessment prescribed by the Commission that evaluates the capacity and willingness of the individual to effectively manage and direct home care services. The Commission will be creating a subcommittee to develop the assessment instrument.

Private payer consumers will also have to enter into a written service plan with the worker based on the assessment prior to the commencement of services. The private pay consumer will also have to pay the Commission in advance for the services and be responsible for the typical consumer-employer responsibilities:

- Locating and hiring a qualified provider
- Supervising the provider
- Scheduling the provider's work, leave and coverage
- Tracking hours worked and hours of work completed
- Addressing performance deficiencies and discharging an unsatisfactory provider

The Commission must establish the payment rates for the home care services, pay the worker's wages and provide employee benefits (health insurance, workers' compensation and unemployment

insurance). They will publish the rates online showing the projected cost of each component required to be included in calculating the rate. They will be hiring a fiscal analyst to establish the payment rate and use a fiscal intermediary for the payment of wages.

The rates established are required to generate total revenue sufficient to reimburse up to 107 percent of the costs associated with the program including costs for:

- Screening, registering and training private pay home care workers
- Maintaining and expanding the home care registry;
- Hiring additional staff;
- Providing referrals of private pay home care workers to private payers;
- Paying the private pay home care workers' wages;
- Paying payroll taxes;
- Paying for health insurance and employee benefits, either directly or through a trust account;
- Processing payments from private payers and payments to private pay home care workers;
- Paying workers' compensation and unemployment insurance;
- Publicizing the availability of the home care registry; and
- Other activities undertaken to ensure the quality of private pay home care workers, the adequate provision of home care services and other administrative expenses associated with the program.

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