



March 12, 2013

Senate Committee on Health Care
and Human Services
900 Court Street NE, Room 453
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Committee Members:

The Oregon Home Care Commission (OHCC) would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on Senate Bill 21 - Long-Term Care 3.0 (LTC 3.0) being proposed by the Department of Human Services/Aging and People with Disabilities (DHS/APD) for the 2013 legislative session. OHCC appreciates DHS/APD in its proactive efforts to look at Oregon's long-term care system to ensure that the system continues to meet the overarching goals of independence, dignity, choice, and safety for Oregon's seniors and people with disabilities. OHCC has participated in the community forums relating to Senate Bill 21 that have focused on home and community-based care, emphasizing preventative care and early intervention, and strengthening the person-centered approach to services and supports. OHCC readily supports this approach.

A focus on home and community based care: Oregon is a pioneer at providing care in the home and/or in a community-based care setting that would not only offer cost savings overall but also maximize the independence, dignity, choice, and safety of the individuals. LTC 3.0 takes this vision to the next level and enables seniors and people with disabilities to live more independent lives in the community.

Person centered approach to services and supports: Oregon's system of long-term services and supports has focused on the person as key principles. Prioritizing independence, dignity, choice, and safety of the individual results in the individual investing at a higher level in their own care and outcomes, which also is a goal in the new Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs). Strengthening the person-centered approach is a necessary and required element of Oregon's approach in its current format and/or under any new plan to be developed.

- 1) **Prioritizing prevention and early intervention:** Maximizing an individual's ability to avoid or delay more costly interventions isn't only the right thing to do, but also nets fiscal savings to Oregon's long-term care system of federal and state funded programs. Research at the federal level supports prioritizing investment in prevention and early intervention, which will in turn net positive results to budgets, programs, and most importantly, to the individual and their family.

Ensuring quality in-home services for seniors and people with disabilities

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As you move forward with Senate Bill 21, we urge you to follow this vision of community-based care for all, preventative care and early intervention, and person-centered services and supports. In addition, we encourage you to follow the funding options that will truly keep this ideal in place and not leave it vulnerable to the kind of "cutbacks" that we have seen in the past. The LTC 3.0 visionaries, DHS/APD, and Legislature must realize and understand that some of those community placements will not take place without well-trained and adequately reimbursed staff and home care workers. At this time, there are still seniors and people with disabilities in nursing homes and other more costly and restrictive settings, that with better supports and the LTC 3.0 vision, could thrive in the community at large.

We applaud DHS/APD for continuing to be proactive in their approach to helping Oregon's seniors and people with disabilities receive services and supports that maximize independence, dignity, choice, safety, and most importantly, person-centered opportunities.

Thank you,

Joseph C Lowe Jr.

Joseph Lowe – Chair
Oregon Home Care Commission