

Testimony of Jason Hess to House Human Services and Housing Committee at the informational hearing on the Oregon State Plan for Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias in Oregon.

May 27, 2015

Chairwoman Keny-Guyer and members of the House Human Services and Housing Committee, for the record, my name is Jason Hess, and I am the CEO of Elite Care. I want to thank you for your support for the State Plan and your commitment to addressing Alzheimer's disease in Oregon. I served as the co-chair of the task force that created the State Plan for Alzheimer's Disease in Oregon, which we also refer to as SPADO.

The process to create the State Plan was very collaborative. My co-chair was Jennifer Mead from DHS/APD, and the task force included other Long Term Care providers, staff of state and county agencies, non-profits including the Alzheimer's Association and AARP Oregon, researchers and educators from Portland Community College and OHSU, doctors, nurses and social workers, elder law experts and people who have experienced the impact of Alzheimer's in their own family and have been a caregiver for a loved one. We are also thankful for the involvement of Senator Monnes Anderson and Representative Dembrow on the task force.

These stakeholders came together over nearly three years ago to craft a plan to address the Alzheimer's crisis. The first meeting of the SPADO Task Force was held in November of 2010. That initial group then formed five workgroups to focus on specific areas:

- 1) Public Education and Awareness
- 2) Legal and Financial
- 3) Continuum of Care
- 4) Medical/Research
- 5) Public Safety

In addition to the expertise of the group, the task force also held six town hall meetings around Oregon and a telephone town hall meeting last year to get public input on what should be in the state plan. Hundreds of Oregonians from Brookings to Pendleton, from Portland to Bend took part in these events and provided much useful information. Furthermore, we developed an online survey that hundreds of people filled out that gave us some further insight into the needs of people impacted by Alzheimer's in Oregon.

Once the task force had heard the public input, recommendations were written and then vetted through dozens of other stakeholders in Oregon to get their feedback on the plan.

The State Plan is the culmination of all that work. Five goals and ten recommendations that represent actions that can be taken right away by the state government, nonprofits and the private sector, working together, that will help all Oregonians impacted by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. As a member of the private sector, I appreciate being involved in crafting public policy that will impact our clients and our business practices.

While this may not address every need of every person impacted by Alzheimer's, the plan represents a starting point from which we can move forward from to ensure that services are provided in an effective and efficient manner and move us toward a world without Alzheimer's.

These stakeholders continue to work together to make sure this plan is implemented and does not sit on a shelf gathering dust. Alzheimer's can't wait, so we will see this through.