Certification of Individuals with Limited English Proficiency

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Limited English Proficiency Data

- LEP individuals represent 9% of the US Population (25.2M people)
- US LEP population increased by 80% from 1990 - 2010
  - Washington’s LEP population grew nearly 210% in that same period to 512K individuals
  - Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Russian are most common in Washington

* Source: Migration Policy Institute’s LEP Data Brief, December 2011

Limited English Proficiency Data

- 2010 Census data: 18.2% of Washington residents over 5 speak a language other than English at home
- According to recent studies, over 160 different languages are spoken in Washington
Washington State’s Aging Population
1993 - 2030 (Projected)

Projected Occupational Growth in Health Careers 2010-2020

Need

*Based on estimated increase in the number of Medicaid recipients using HC services as individual providers, through home care agencies, and in adult foster homes and nursing homes.
Supporting the Public in Homes and Communities

Empowering Clients
- Consistent care across multiple delivery models and settings
- Higher quality of care
- Maintain living in their own home
- Less use of alternative settings
- Ability to hire home care aides who speak the same language and share cultural background

Who are Long Term Care Workers?
- A long term care worker is a caregiver employed by home care agencies, adult family homes, and assisted living facilities
- An individual provider reimbursed by the Department of Social and Health Services for providing in-home services for Medicaid clients

Unique Workforce
- One of the only health professions allowed to start work before obtaining a credential
- Almost two-thirds are individual providers who are hired, supervised by and work in the home of the care recipient
- Seventy percent of individual providers are relatives
Unique Workforce Continued

- Almost one-in-five serve clients speak little or no English
- The average wage is approximately $10.49 per hour
- The majority of the work is part time
- Most workers receive no benefits
- High turnover rate, physical and emotional stress

Home Care Aide Certification History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislation</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESSHB 2284</td>
<td>Spring 2007</td>
<td>The legislature created a joint task force charged with making recommendations for training requirements for long-term care (LTC) workers. Established the definition of LTC workers and the Training Partnership. Created requirements to offer optional peer mentorship, optional advanced training, and increased hours for continuing education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I-1029</td>
<td>Fall 2008</td>
<td>Set the starting date for the major provisions to January 1, 2010. Expanded background checks for LTC workers to include Washington State Patrol and FBI. Established the LTC worker certification designation.</td>
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<td>ESSB 6180</td>
<td>Spring 2009</td>
<td>Delayed start date for the major provisions of I-1029 to January 1, 2011.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESHB 1548</td>
<td>Spring 2011</td>
<td>Delayed start date for the major provisions of I-1029 to January 1, 2014.</td>
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<td>I-1163</td>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>Adjusted provisions within I-1029 and advanced the start date to January 7, 2012. Established periodic audits of the in-home program by the state auditor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESHB 2314</td>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Clarified some aspects of I-1163 and delayed implementation of requirements for community residential service businesses to January 2016. Allowed delegation of specified nursing tasks to home care aides.</td>
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Requirements for Home Care Aide Certification

- Submit a home care aide certification application and fee within 14 days of hire.
- Submit to a state and fingerprint-based federal background check through Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).
- Seventy-five hours of training approved by the DSHS
- Successful completion of the certification written (or oral) and skills exams
Important Considerations for the Test Development Process

- Validity
- Reliability
- Fairness
- Standardization
- Fiscal Impact

Creating the Home Care Aide Certification Exam

- Washington SMEs developed the exam in English in 2010 to evaluate whether an applicant possesses the skills and knowledge necessary to practice competently.
- Industry-standard processes and procedures are the foundation of the exams.

The Home Care Aide Certification Exam Specifications

- Written/Knowledge Exam:
  - 50 scored items + 10 "pre-test" items; 90 minutes to complete
  - 3 Content Domains
    - Roles and Responsibilities of the Home Care Aide (19 items)
    - Supporting Physical and Psycho-Social Well-being (22 items)
    - Promoting Safety (9 items)
  - 3 option multiple choice items
  - 4th to 6th grade reading level
  - Oral versions of the exam are available in all languages
At the panel recommended cut (82%), the pass rate is 84%.

Publishing Foreign Language Exams

- Prior to launch of the program in June 2012, DOH elected to translate the exams into the 5 most common languages
- Subsequent analysis of the candidate population drove additional translations in September 2013
- When the test is launched, candidates see the translated language and English
- Audio recordings are available in the oral versions

Available Languages

- Original Languages
  - English
  - Russian
  - Spanish
  - Vietnamese
  - Korean
  - Chinese
- New Languages (9/1/13)
  - Arabic
  - Khmer
  - Laotian
  - Samoan
  - Somali
  - Tagalog
  - Ukrainian
At the panel recommended cut (82%), the pass rate is 57%

At the panel recommended cut (82%), the pass rate is 58%

Challenges

- Many long term care workers have Limited English Proficiency
- Some candidates have limited literacy in native language
- Limited English Proficient candidates do not perform as well on the credentialing exam as English speaking candidates
Improving the Process

- Extended the deadline to submit an application from 3 days after being hired to 14 days
- Created a home care aide credentialing coordinator and established a dedicated credentialing unit and phone line
- Legislature extended the certification timeframes from 150 days to 200 days

Improving the Process Cont.

- Developed a provisional certification for candidates with limited English proficiency that extends the certification time-frame to 260 days
- Established an electronic process for application and exam payment and verification of training completion for individual providers
- Translated the exam into 12 languages

Improving the Process Cont.

- Posted detailed translated exam preparation materials
- Developed a practice examination
- Offer examination in an oral format
- Interpreters are available for skills demonstration in 12 languages
- Increased testing sites
- Training Partnership created “Navigators”
Improving the Process Cont.

- Established a workgroup to examine feasible options to improve access of limited English proficient candidates to training and testing
- Conducted a root cause analysis and established workgroups to improve processes
  - Identify students at risk and provide support
  - Reduce the time between training and exam
  - Training and test translation

Acknowledgments

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- Associations
- Prometric

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