EXTENDING NURSE DELEGATION TO CERTIFIED HOME CARE AIDES

The Aging and Disability Services Administration is considering a proposal for statute change expanding the pool of individuals to whom an RN can delegate. The proposal would permit Nurse Delegation in Community-Based Care Settings to a new category of workers, called certified home care aides (CHCA). Under Nurse Delegation, the CHCA could perform delegated nursing tasks under the direction and supervision of a Registered Nurse Delegator (RND). Previous to this time, and since the beginning of Community-Based Nurse Delegation Program in l996, RNDs could only delegate to Nursing Assistants—Registered or Certified.

Nursing Assistants – Registered (NAR) are required to complete an HIV class s before submitting their application for NAR to the Department of Health. Once awarded this credential, they must renew annually, and may be disciplined by DOH under the Uniform Disciplinary Act (UDA).

Nursing Assistants – Certified (NAC or CNA) must complete 50 hours of clinical training plus 35 hours of classroom instruction on personal care and disease processes. They then take a standardized exam and must pass with an 80% grade. They may be disciplined under the UDA.

Home Care Aide-Certified is a new category of long term care worker who has obtained certification as a home care aide by the DOH. To become certified by the DOH, home care aides must complete a total of 75 hours' training on emergency procedures, personal safety, infection control, personal care and other approved topics relevant to serving older adults and people with disabilities. They must also pass a written and skills test and must renew their credential after completing 12 hours of continuing education annually. They may be disciplined under the UDA.

This new category of workers –like the NAR and NAC--would be required to have additional classes specific to the nurse delegation process, and would be trained for a specific client and supervised by the registered nurse delegator.

This proposal would require changing the language in the Nurse Practice Act to allow delegation to Certified Home Care Aides who have had the additional classes required for Nurse Delegation. DOH Certified Home Care Aides who want to participate in delegation would not have to pay for a redundant DOH certification as a Nursing assistant.

This expansion will broaden the pool of workers who can provide supervised nursing tasks to clients, and will increase the safety of community care plans by providing nurse oversight as required in the nurse delegation process. As of January 1, 2011, the new workers will have more training when compared to the requirements for NARs, who have made up nearly 9 out of 10 of the delegated caregivers in the past.

We have included draft language with this briefing. Please contact Kay Sievers (Kay.Sievers@dshs.wa.gov) or Doris Barret (Doris.Barret@dshs.wa.gov) for more information.