

Questions?

For more information contact
Patty McDonald,
Program Manager
with Aging and
Long-Term Support
Administration
1-800-422-3263 or
TTY 1-800-737-7931.



Transforming lives

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Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
P.O. Box 45600
Olympia, WA 98504-5600

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Self-Directed Care

How This Civil Rights Law in Washington State Affects You



Aging and Long-Term Support Administration

Washington State Department
of Social and Health Services

Adults with functional disabilities who live in their own home can self-direct their health related tasks.



What is Self-Directed Care?

We perform many health-care tasks prescribed by a health care professional for ourselves. We open a bottle of prescription medication and take it as ordered. Perhaps we have a long-standing health problem, such as diabetes, and we monitor our blood sugar level. Other health care tasks could include special bowel programs, bladder catheterization, or wound care.

However, what if a functional disability prevents an adult from physically performing a health-care function that he or she would normally do? An adult with a disability can now choose to direct and supervise a paid personal aide or Individual Provider (IP) to perform such tasks. (An aide paid by home care agency cannot perform such tasks.) In 1999 a law was passed which established this right of self-directed care.

If you have a disability, live at home, are age 18 or older, and want to self-direct your own health care, you are responsible for the following:

- ▶ You must tell the health care professional who has ordered the treatment that you want to direct a personal aide or IP to perform the task.
- ▶ You must have the necessary knowledge and ability to train someone to perform the tasks.
- ▶ You must train the personal aide or IP to perform the tasks.
- ▶ You must supervise the performance of the personal aide or IP.

If you receive state funding,

- ▶ Be sure the IP receives a copy of your service plan.
- ▶ Give the name of the IP or personal aide to your case manager or social worker. The case manager or social worker will authorize your provider. DSHS will do a criminal history background check on personal aides, and maintain a registry of personal aides who have been found to abuse, neglect or exploit people. DSHS will not pay providers who have a criminal history.