WSCC 2010 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

LONG TERM CARE

PRINCIPLES

There must be a growing conviction that a fully human civilization shows respect and love for the Elderly, so that despite their diminishing strength they feel a vital part of society. ....In addition to the obvious psychological need of the elderly themselves, the most natural place to spend one's old age continues to be the environment in which one feels most "at home", among family members, acquaintances and friends, where one can still make oneself useful.

Pope John Paul II, 1999

The preferential option for the poor and vulnerable includes all who are marginalized in our nation and beyond -- unborn children, persons with disabilities, the elderly and terminally ill, and victims of injustice and oppression.

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, USCCB, 2007

LONG TERM CARE SERVICES: Ensuring the dignity of older Americans includes ensuring their quality of life in our communities. Seniors and people with disabilities need appropriate high quality supportive services in the setting that best meets their needs. It is estimated that there are currently more than 9 million seniors and people with disabilities who need long term care. Most are cared for at home by family and other loved ones. Approximately 30 percent need supportive services provided by others. These services to people who have chronic illnesses are designed to help meet health and personal needs. All Catholic Charities in Washington State provide a variety of in home care services in partnership with the state. Home care services, senior nutrition, and volunteer chore services are the largest programs.

VOLUNTEER CHORE SERVICES (VCS): VCS helps elders and adults with disabilities remain independent in their own homes through a network of caring community members. VCS collaborates with faith-based congregations, civic groups, schools and community businesses to provide volunteers at no charge. VCS serves as a safety net for those individuals who do not qualify for state-paid chore assistance. VCS has the capacity to participate in disaster relief efforts as secondary responders, and to expand to provide additional volunteer services.

HOME CARE: Affording seniors and people with disabilities the choice of home care and community-based services saves public dollars. By providing care to these individuals, they can stay in their homes and avoid nursing home placement. The state needs high quality community partners, like Catholic Charities agencies who recruit home care workers, train, and supervise them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

WSCC SUPPORTS:

- Maintaining home care programs and services
- Expanding volunteer services
- Funding for agencies that partner with the state to provide home care services