

Testimony
Human Services Committee
October 29, 2013

Chairman Damschen, members of the committee, my name is Kristen Hasbargen. I am the Director of Richland County Social Services and a member of the Adult Services committee, a sub-committee of the North Dakota County Social Services Director's Association.

Home and Community Based Services are a part of a continuum of care that provides choice of services to help individuals remain in their own homes or in their communities and to delay or prevent institutional care. County social service offices are responsible for managing cases that receive state funded Home and Community Based Services for persons that are elderly or have a physical disability. When a referral comes into the county social service office, an HCBS case manager schedules a visit to the potential client to assess their functioning, as well as determining their financial eligibility for the programs. When determined eligible, both financially and functionally, the HCBS case managers authorize the needed services and the client then chooses which Qualified Service Provider (QSP) will provide that service. This process is driven by client choice. It is important to note that there are certain areas within the state and certain services that are difficult to provide due to the lack of QSPs, as well as the 'ruralness' of where these people may live. The travel and windshield time issue will be helped by your legislative action last session to provide a rural differential rate for those QSPs will to travel into rural areas to provide services. We are very appreciative of that.

County social service offices are proud of the work they do and the services provided by both individual and agency QSPs around that state. As most would tell you, home is where they would choose to stay, as long as they're safe and able to get the services they need to remain independent. Because of the work we do, we have also identified potential services or changes that would eliminate barriers to these clients, as well as keeping them in their homes longer. Penny Woodward, HCBS case manager from Morton County Social Services will speak to more specific service changes or additions within the HCBS program.

We are excited your committee has selected this program to study during the interim. We look forward to the results of this extensive study and the recommendations that may come from it. We stand willing and eager to work with Myers and Stauffer and the ND Department of Human Services.

Thank you for your time and I would be willing to answer any questions.