



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
PO Box 45600, Olympia, WA 98504-5600

October 13, 2014

ALTSA: AFH #2014-019
FOSTERING A CULTURE OF DIGNITY AND RESPECT

Dear Adult Family Home Provider:

It has recently been brought to my attention that you, our AFH stakeholders and partners in caring for our state's vulnerable adults, have expressed concern that Residential Care Services has neglected to foster a relationship with you that is based on professionalism and respect. I sincerely apologize for any interactions you may have had with RCS staff that have been less than supportive. With that said, I would like to invite you to help us recalibrate our working relationship with you so we can all better serve the vulnerable adults of our state.

I would like you to know that I recently met with the Washington State Residential Care Council in an attempt to better understand how RCS is viewed by our stakeholders. I was profoundly disturbed by the information I was given. Some of the things we discussed include:

- Providers have expressed they are hesitant to ask questions of RCS staff for fear of being cited.
- Some providers have said they feel intimidated by RCS staff.
- Providers are concerned about self-reporting issues in their homes because they are afraid of the potential consequences.

In a spirit of creating a shift in our organizational culture, I have requested WSRCC provide me with a one page summary of provider concerns and keep me updated on our progress in fostering a more collaborative relationship with you. I would like to let you know that RCS will be doing the following to help achieve this goal:

- RCS staff will attend cultural competency training
- The HQ Executive Team will conduct field visits to homes to inquire about how we are doing
- RCS will conduct quarterly stakeholder meetings around the state to give providers a forum to connect with RCS, express concerns and ask questions
- Providers will be given customer service questionnaires after inspections and complaint investigations so they can provide feedback on their experience with RCS staff.

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I would like to thank each and every one of you for your hard work and dedication. I look forward to building a new business relationship with you that is based not only on professionalism, but mutual respect for the roles we all play.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carl I. Walters II." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Carl I. Walters II., Director
Residential Care Services

"Transforming Lives"