

Presentation Notes Update on 2018 OPE Report on Residential Care



Mr. Chair and members of the Committee—my name is Tamara Prisock, and I am the administrator for the Division of Licensing and Certification in the Department of Health and Welfare. Thank you for the opportunity to update you on our division's progress in implementing the recommendations contained in the 2018 report on Residential Care released by the Office of Performance Evaluations, or OPE. The study OPE conducted focused on three of the 18 facility types my division oversees—nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and children's residential care facilities.

In the report released in January 2018, OPE made several recommendations. To date, we have fully implemented or are close to implementing all but one of the recommendations.

OPE made recommendations for improving the survey process for children's residential care facilities. We have implemented all recommendations, including implementing an abbreviated application process, for which we have received positive feedback from facilities. In late 2018, we began sending more than one surveyor to large facilities in order to reduce the amount of time the survey team is on-site at the facility. That change is also working well. We have also implemented anonymous customer feedback cards and an informal dispute resolution process for facilities to be able to challenge citations.

We have also implemented OPE's recommendations related to the division's assisted living team. To help manage the workload in a growing industry, we now offer national accreditation to assisted living facilities in lieu of regular licensure surveys.

To address the recommendation to provide more support for the Assisted Living team supervisor, the division worked with the Department's Human Resources Office to establish the role of Field Supervisor, and we appointed two seasoned individuals to fulfill the role on a permanent basis. Establishing the new role has provided relief to the Assisted Living Program Supervisor.

The most serious concerns in the 2018 OPE report revolved around workplace issues and deteriorating provider relationships with the division's Long-term Care Team, the team that surveys skilled nursing facilities, or nursing homes. During the OPE study, morale was low, and surveyors told OPE team members about unprofessional and even hostile conduct coming from other surveyors and from the two Long-term Care supervisors. The Department Director at the time immediately directed the Department's Human Resources Office to conduct a workplace assessment to identify specific issues. In the course of that assessment, both supervisors resigned.