



I am Deborah Wesley CEO of Addison County Home Health and Hospice. With me this evening is Bryan Young our Board President; Lisa Roberts our Board Vice-President; Karen Lueders a member of our Board and Amy Curtis our Waiver Program Coordinator.

We are asking you to make the Choices for Care program solvent through rate increases and home health provider tax relief.

- State-wide the VNAs' most recent combined loss totaled \$4million which computes to 27%.
- Our reimbursement rate is 27% less than the costs to provide this essential service to our most vulnerable patients.
- The Medicaid Provider tax annual for Fy 2019 was \$409,655, fy 18 was \$377,084 and fy 17 was \$357,143.

These elements make this program unsustainable but it is an essential program that in fact saves money for the state by keeping people in their homes, instead of facilities.

ACHHH is the provider of care for Addison County and we provide care for about 450 patients; more than 130 of these patients belong to our Choices for Care program.

This program provides basic essential care and services that allow patients to remain as independent as possible in their homes, with assistance for daily activities of living. Our residents are too frail and could not travel here to speak and asked that we convey their message.

This is one example of what this program does for a family:

"My parents began experiencing difficulties when my mother returned home after a hip replacement. My father had long been struggling with failing health. My mother had been managing to support much of his care until her own health changed. Addison County Home Health enrolled us in the Choices for Care Program and they were able to receive homemaker(PCA) assistance in their home. Meal prep, light housekeeping and laundry were the "official" tasks, for which my parents benefitted and which their children were grateful to have others take care of since we all worked and were not available during some daytime hours. But what was of equal importance was the warm, friendly personalities of the care providers. Our family had peace of mind knowing there were other "eyes" on our parents and they were able to live in their home with some degree of independence. As my parents aged in place and their health further declined the program continued to meet their needs and we were able to honor their wishes to die in their own home and not in an institutional facility. If it were not for Choices for Care I feel our family would not have been able to manage the complexities of having two parents facing serious medical issues at the same time and one or both of them likely would not have been able to remain in the setting of their choosing, their own home."

This program is an essential service to Vermonters and needs to become a solvent program to support our aging population. To be clear, without this program many elderly Vermonters would be forced to live in facilities, not in their own homes, where they are most comfortable and where they would most often like to remain.