

Aging Parents and Care Issues



NORA GIBSON, MSW
Executive Director
Elderhealth Northwest

Nora Gibson has worked in the field of adult day services since 1978, as a clinician, program manager and assistant director. For over 10 years she has been the executive director of ElderHealth Northwest, the largest provider of adult day health services in the Pacific Northwest. Every year, ElderHealth serves 1,100 frail and chronically ill individuals through its adult day programs, in-home services and supported living homes. ElderHealth also offers volunteer companion services through its ElderFriends program. This range of programs is part of an Integrated Neighborhood Network of services that addresses the complex needs of community-based frail elders.

Nora has an undergraduate degree in Psychology from Antioch University in Yellow Springs, Ohio and a graduate degree in Social Work from the University of Washington. She serves on the faculty of the University of Washington, School of Social Work. She is on the boards of directors of the Alzheimer's Association—Western and Central Washington State Chapter, Brain Injury Association of Washington, Heritage Affordable Housing, Pioneer Network (national and Washington State boards), and the Washington Adult Day Services Association. She is also an advisory board member for the Washington Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, a board commissioner for the Seattle Housing Authority, a member of the Directors for Disability Organizations Leadership Team, and cabinet member for the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aged, Home and Community Based Services Cabinet.

Nora's work increasingly receives national recognition. In 2006, the National Adult Day Services Association selected Nora to receive an honorable mention for its Ruth Von Behren Award, recognizing her personal achievements and commitment to the field of adult day services. The same year, the Washington State Housing Finance Commission recognized Nora as a "Friend of Housing" in recognition of her leadership and exceptional contribution to provide safe, decent and affordable housing for Washington residents. In 2007, the American Geriatrics Society selected Nora for its David H. Solomon Distinguished Public Service Award, in recognition of her commitment to community service and advancement of knowledge for caring for older adults. Her most recent award is

the Washington Association of Housing and Services for the Aging's Meritorious Service Award, recognizing her significant contributions to the field of long-term care, services, and housing for the elderly.

One of her most prominent projects at ElderHealth Northwest is Buchanan Place, a small, supported-living home for persons with Alzheimer's or other dementia. The home is featured in the 2006 documentary "Brave New Home: Changing the Culture of Nursing Home Care," which is frequently reprised on KCTS.