

## Case Study.

Mrs. B. is an elderly low-income woman with high-risk diabetes, living alone. Mrs. B. is eligible for WTAP, but was unaware of this option earlier. Mrs. B. was disconnected from local basic services for an overdue bill for over three months. Senior Services became aware of her situation through a neighbor who spoke to us at our booth at the Puyallup Fair in September. Mrs. B.'s past due bill was paid by her church on September 29<sup>th</sup>. Repeated attempts by Mrs. B. to have her phone service reconnected were unsuccessful. She was not told that she could speak to a supervisor or contact the WUTC and did not think of these options herself.

Mrs. B., her family, friends, and community advocates were concerned about her lack of access to E-911 and emergency medical consultation. None of the parties attempting to assist Mrs. B. was aware of the Medical Emergency provision or the option to contact WUTC.

Mrs. B. called Senior Services on Oct 14, 2002 requesting assistance reconnecting her basic local phone service. Senior Services contacted Qwest's Executive Number on her behalf. No record of a payment to her account was "in the system", however, by the next morning, Qwest had "found" the payment and applied the payment to her account. Qwest requested that Mrs. B. call the regular customer service line again and request reconnection of service now that her account was cleared. She would not be able, much to her disappointment, to keep the phone number she had had for 20 years without interruption.

It took an additional seven business days for Mrs. B. to be reconnected to local basic phone service once her account was cleared. Several appointments to reconnect her were rescheduled despite Mrs. B. informing Qwest representatives that she was a high-risk diabetic and wanted to utilize the Medical Emergency provision. Mrs. B. now has phone service, presumably under WTAP. We will be working with Mrs. B. to determine if she is eligible for service credits for missed appointments and to ensure that her bill reflects WTAP credits.