**New Chief has firsthand knowledge**

On Jan. 1, 2001 William “Larry” Minnix Jr. will become the new president and CEO of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, Washington. He will replace Len Fishman, who held the post for less than two years. The first provider to be selected as the association’s president, Minnix is currently the president and CEO of Wesley Woods Inc., Atlanta, GA, a comprehensive, nonprofit long-term care, housing, outpatient and acute care program that serves seniors throughout the state. Minnix spoke with McKnight’s Long-Term Care News about his background and his new position.

***McKnight’s LTC News:*** Mr. Minnix, congratulations on your new job. Please tell us about yourself.
**Minnix**: I think it is important for people to know that I have had a long career as a healthcare administrator. My first job was as an aide working the evening and night shifts in the psychiatric ward of a hospital. For the past 27 years, I have worked at Wesley Woods. During this time I have been the administrator of Housing and Urban Development facilities, nursing homes, a geriatric teaching and research hospital and the developer of a network of community outreach services. I know what it’s like to be an employee, a family member, a manager, a CEO and a member of the board.

***McKnight’s LTC News:*** How will your background help you in your new position?
**Minnix:** I think my experiences will allow me to represent providers in the field and the people we service effectively to those outside the field of long-term care. I will be able to tell policymakers what works and doesn’t work and why.

In Atlanta, I had a practice of getting policymakers to come in to our facilities and see what we were doing. For example, I would have them sit in on a care conference – not something we made up, but with the permission of the family, an actual care conference. They would begin to see that this is a very difficult situation. It might be a mother with lupus, who has no insurance and has three kids. Everyone thought she would die. Well, she didn’t die. But she is on a ventilator. We hope to wean her off that ventilator and get her back home. But how will our healthcare system support her when she is back home? She wants to be a good mother, but she is going to be limited in what she can do. She is a person who doesn’t have any resources.

We will never a true continuum of care until we can help people get their needs met across time, place and provider. You’ve got to get them to see those kinds of situations before it really makes an impact.

***McKnight’s LTC News:*** How do you view your role as president and CEO?
**Minnix:** I think the role of the CEO is as the orchestrator of the resources to achieve the mission and fulfill the vision. And I think I will be responsible for telling the stories that communicate to decision-makers what needs to be done. And while on the one hand, policymakers will say ‘show me the data, show me the statistics,’ it is the stories that have the real impact. Now, you can’t go in there all the time with anecdotes. Nobody buys that anymore.

***McKnight’s LTC News:*** Will the association be any different under your leadership?
**Minnix:** I look forward to making sure that the association’s mission and vision do not get compromised. I think that the association has a soul, and we need to make sure we keep it. Historically, the association has believed in the importance of older people in our society. Our nonprofit institutions respect our elders, especially when they are in the most vulnerable of circumstances. The association envisioned – even before it was ever talked about – the continuum of care. I think we must remember what our values are, and why we are doing this. That should be reinforced all the time, or we can lose our way.

***McKnight’s LTC News:*** What do you think nonprofit providers need to do in order to be successful?
**Minnix:** I think what nonprofits stand for is healthy, affordable, ethical healthcare deliver. In the future, I think the nonprofits will have to be more creative in care and service delivery, more effective in promoting policy changes, more outspoken in our advocacy to do what is right, and we will have to raise more private, philanthropic support to help address today’s challenges.

***McKnight’s LTC News: Any final thoughts?*Minnix:** I feel honored to have a chance to lead an organization like the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging. I think it is the best platform in the country from which to make a positive difference for the future of long-term care. I have 27 years’ worth of experience from all my work at Wesley Woods in Atlanta that I think will serve me and the association very well as we address the challenge of building a long-term care system for our future.