

March 24, 2022



RE: HF 4398 / SF 4014

Representative Liebling and Senator Wiklund,

We write in support of a number of items included in the Governor's Supplemental Budget for the MN Department of Health.

Hennepin Healthcare is the state safety-net health system, a Level 1 Trauma center, academic teaching hospital, and houses a burn center, and the MN Poison Center. Nearly half of the patients we serve utilize Medicaid for their health care, and 70% of our patients use public programs for their health care. We support many of the items in the Governor's budget proposal, below are a few items of note:

**Community Health Workers (64.1-64.22)** are the health equity workforce and many CHWs represent BIPOC communities. CHWs often come from the communities they serve and are an investment in those communities. Research indicates that CHWs show a return on investment of at least three dollars for every dollar invested in them. Hennepin Healthcare CHWs contribute to improved health outcomes and health equity by providing language, cultural and community specific navigation of the system, care coordination and connection to resources. We support the investment proposed here in expanding the CHW workforce, and in evaluation of this critical service.

**Nurse Home Visiting (86.1-86.11)** grant increase will fund the 'Family Connects' program, a nurse home visiting program for parents of babies born at Hennepin Healthcare's Birth Center and who live in Hennepin County. A nurse visits the parent between 1-3 times after the baby turns 3 weeks old, offering support and guidance on caring for baby, helping parents connect with their infant, and sharing community resources. Each nurse sees 25-30 families at any given time. This program in Hennepin County serves a significant number of families of color, and impacts advancing health equity and family outcomes.

**Long COVID monitoring (50.4-51.11)** funding represents a critical investment in the infrastructure required to address Long-COVID. Health systems will collaborate with MDH to understand the impact COVID-19 has had on the state and ensure that we are able to meet the increasing clinical needs of patients with Long-COVID. We strongly support this initial investment in infrastructure, but this will require continued funding. Minnesota has the opportunity to be the best prepared state in the country to meet these challenges and this funding is a necessary and critical investment in that future.

We sincerely thank you for considering these proposals, and we are available to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jen DeCubellis".

Jennifer DeCubellis  
Chief Executive Officer  
Hennepin Healthcare

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