

# HEALTHCARE FOR HOUSING MINNESOTA



April 15, 2024

Re: 1115 Health Related Social Needs Waiver Support Letter

Dear Minnesota Senators and Minnesota Representatives,

In the last Legislative session, Minnesota made historic investments in housing and food support. While we understand that the economic picture for our state looks different this session, we are eager to ensure Minnesota seizes on an opportunity through the section 1115 Health-Related Social Need (HRSN) demonstration authority (1115 HRSN demo) offered by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services to provide housing and nutrition supports to achieve health care outcomes. Healthcare for Housing Minnesota is a coalition of six Healthcare Systems that was established to have a collective voice of support to advancing critical investments in addressing social determinants of health, in particular housing. We believe that Housing is Health and the most critical social determinant of health. We collectively support HF2639/SF3969, directing Minnesota to apply for an 1115 waiver in the coming year that will allow our state to access unprecedented federal funding to follow through on our commitment to build a healthcare and social care infrastructure that serves all low-income Minnesotans and reduces or eliminates our state's longstanding health disparities affecting Black and American Indians Minnesotans.

Through a section 1115 HRSN waiver, Minnesota could:

- Draw down \$1 of federal Medicaid matching funds for every \$1 of Minnesota state funds used to provide safe, affordable housing and sufficient, nutritious meals for Minnesotans whose household income is below 133% of the federal poverty level (or, for a household of one adult, \$1,615 monthly/\$19,391 annually).
- Draw down 50% federal Medicaid Administrative matching funds to pay for training and required certifications for Community Health Workers, Peer Support Specialists, Peer Recovery Specialists.
- Draw down federal Medicaid service matching funds to develop more supportive housing programs for individuals and families trying to get back on their feet, or to remain on their feet, while coping with chronic behavioral and/or physical health conditions.
- Draw down 50% federal Medicaid Administrative matching funds to make necessary improvements in Minnesota Healthcare Programs (MHCP) eligibility systems to reduce or eliminate Medicaid "churn" where Minnesotans lose their healthcare coverage even though, they remain eligible for MHCP.

Please ensure that Minnesota makes progress toward funding a section 1115 HRSN demonstration waiver so that we can take advantage of the opportunity to receive 50% federal Medicaid match on these critical services and infrastructure investments, which in turn will help more Minnesotan households secure stable and affordable housing, and the services they need to ensure long term housing stability.

Thank you,

**Healthcare for Housing Minnesota**

Policy Chair Larry Hiscock

Fairview

**Co-chairs**

Santo Cruz

CentraCare

Ben Waltz

Blue Cross Blue Shield