

House Human Services Finance & Policy Committee

Thursday, February 18, 2021

HF 976, Section 3 Letter of Support



Chair Schultz and members,

On behalf of the Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, we write today in support of Section 3 of House File 976, and express our gratitude to Rep. Acomb for championing this bill.

As you know, Section 3 of HF 976 directs the Commissioner of Human Services to convene a stakeholder group to discuss and develop a service ensuring that Minnesotans who have disabilities are able to access Personal Care Assistance and other direct support during periods of hospitalization.

Federal policy currently allows Personal Care Assistants (PCAs) and other Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) to provide support for people who have disabilities during short hospital stays. To implement this option, Minnesota must create its own enabling statute and supporting policy.

Creating a plan for Minnesotans who have disabilities to access direct support while in the hospital will help them get the individualized care they need, while creating more space and time in hospital staff's intense schedules.

Many Minnesotans who have disabilities need individualized supports from PCAs and DSPs to understand their health concerns, navigate treatment, and communicate with health care professionals about what is important to and for them during hospital stays.

Support from PCAs and DSPs who know individuals' unique needs will also help health care staff optimize care on an ongoing basis, as they are uniquely able to express concerns and changes in care plans, implement new care plans during hospitalization and post-discharge, and improve understanding of and compliance with those care plans.

The critical importance of developing this service has become even more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic, but the benefits of implementing it will far outlast it.

We look forward to working with other stakeholders to create a plan that will give Minnesotans who have disabilities access to their direct support team while in the hospital well into the future.

Many thanks again to Rep. Acomb for her hard work on HF 976 this session, and to the team at ARRM for advancing this proposal within their broader policy bill.

Marnie Falk & Alicia Munson

*MNCCD Board Co-Chairs*

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