



An association of resources and advocacy for children, youth and families
www.aspiremn.org

May 4, 2021

Dear Chair Liebling,

As a statewide association of children's service providers, AspireMN is writing to you with gratitude and great hope for how the Health and Human Service Omnibus will come to fruition.

With expertise in serving children, youth and families in the areas of mental health, child welfare, and a myriad of community-based supports, the following priority recommendations are submitted for your consideration in shaping a joint HHS Omnibus for final passage.

Family First Preservation Services Act (FFPSA) – reflects needed compliance with federal child welfare requirements, and, creates an opportunity to focus future attention, building needed treatment services and true family preservation supports moving forward; ***please support the Senate language.***

Third Path for families to access intensive mental health support – concept seen in HF944 and Senate FFPSA language, creates a path for access to mental health care for children who are not involved in the child welfare system. ***Please support the updated language and fully fund the Third Path*** for access to critical treatment for children and families.

Mental Health Workforce (HF970) – policy and investment to support BIPOC leaders to serve in all roles within the mental health field is a top priority ***in the House proposal.***

Telehealth Innovations – critical to maintain telehealth access and the many benefits for those accessing care via telehealth, ***please support the Senate language.***

Intensive Treatment in Foster Care improvement – language added on the Senate floor supports greater flexibility in ITFC to encourage greater access for children and families.

School-Linked Mental Health – with increased need for mental health support for children and youth, this model is key in helping students access needed help at school. We appreciate the House support in the Education Omnibus, and the Senate support in the HHS Omnibus.

Court-appointed Counsel for Child Protection Cases – all parents need effective representation to fully engage in the court process regarding their children and family, ***please support the Senate language.***

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Uniform Service Standards – incredibly important step forward to update and streamline statutes, rules and create a stable foundation focus on treatment over compliance.

Child Foster Care Background Studies – updates foster care licensing with broad consensus support, modernizing statute to be more responsive to relative caregivers in gaining licensure.

Background Studies and COVID waiver off-ramp – important to support provider organizations and wider systems in timely transitions from waiver flexibilities back to business as usual.

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) – safe transportation is fundamental to accessing treatment for many children and families served, a goal we continue to work on with NEMT providers and stakeholders; we are concerned that NEMT proposed savings of \$65 million will impact quality and availability and recommend continued review of this proposal.

Targeted Case Management Redesign – providers are working hard with DHS on a redesign process that assures continued quality care for Children’s Mental Health-TCM, more yet to do.

Thank you for your consideration of the priorities and recommendations shared here.

We appreciate many additional provisions before your Conference Committee on the Health and Human Services Policy and Finance, designed to make great improvements in services and supports for Minnesotans. As work on the 2021 HHS Omnibus proceeds, AspireMN is glad to provide any data or feedback that may be of value to the committee.

Warm regards,



Kirsten Anderson
Executive Director

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