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Mike Foley

**Pediatric Intensive Care**

Children's MN  
Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare  
North Memorial Health

**Pediatric Pulmonary**

2530 Chicago Ave S, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
(612) 813-3300

310 N Smith Ave, Suite 460  
St. Paul, MN 55102  
(651) 220-7000

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing regarding the "Hospital to Home Care Nursing Pilot Program," to be heard in the House Human Services Finance Committee. The ultimate goal of the program is to decrease hospitalization length by providing safe care in the patients' homes. As a pediatric pulmonology group, we care for many patients who require expert care at home. This includes patients who rely on artificial airways and ventilator support, among other life-sustaining equipment. These patients require expert home care. Without such care, they cannot remain at home. As home care has become scarce, more and more of these patients are requiring long term inpatient hospitalization.

Currently, the median discharge time from the hospital for our trach/vent dependent patients is over 150 days. This is up from a median of 108 days when looking at similar patients between 5-10 years ago. Because of the current scarcity of skilled home care providers (RNs primarily), these patients are now spending 1.5 months more in the hospital.

This is not optimal for several reasons. Hospital care costs more. Hospitalized patients are at increased risk of contracting more infections, specifically those caused by resistant organisms. Children thrive at home.

In today's market, skilled nurses can choose where they work. Improving the home care environment, including increased wages for nurses, will attract more nurses, and frankly, better nurses. If that does not occur, I see no end to this problem. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Michael R. Shreve, M.D.

Pediatric Pulmonologist, Children's Respiratory and Critical Care Specialists  
President, Children's Respiratory and Critical Care Specialists  
Pulmonary Clinic Director, Children's Respiratory and Critical Care Specialists  
Chairman of Peer Review, Children's Hospital of Minnesota  
Medical Director of Respiratory Therapy, Children's Hospital of Minnesota  
- St. Paul campus  
Director of Pulmonology and Respiratory Therapy, Gillette Children's Hospital