

February 20, 2023

To: Madam Chair Liebling and Health Finance and Policy Committee

Re: FASD Prevention Grants

On behalf of Sanford Health of Northern Minnesota, please accept this **letter of support for an increase in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Prevention Grants to make prevention services available to more people in more communities.**

An expansion of FASD Prevention Grants from a base of \$750/year to \$1.25 million per year would provide additional grants to additional partners in Minnesota, providing access to services/resources in additional geographical regions of Minnesota.

For example, there is a need for FASD Prevention Grants in our region. Beltrami county is one of the poorest counties in the state of Minnesota resulting in a high need for community and support services especially when it comes to substance abuse. As a result, the concern for substance use disorders remains high. From 2017-2019, the Northwest Region of Minnesota where Beltrami County is located, ranked the second highest in the state for drug overdose deaths. After a period of relative stability, drug overdose deaths in the Northwest Region reached their highest number in 2019 of 32 deaths. The age distribution of drug overdose deaths in the Northwest region has shifted younger. From 2011-2013, 35-44 and 45-54-year-old Minnesotans from the Northwest region experienced the largest number of drug overdose deaths.

With an FASD Prevention Grant, Sanford could use grant funds to continue the existing regional collaborative to provide community-based long term recovery support services for individuals with a history of substance use disorders. This funding would allow us to continue funding a full time Case Worker at Beltrami County that specializes in assisting individuals in addressing social determinants of health that exist as barriers to compliance with treatment and long-term recovery plans. As part of this request, we use funds to continue providing incentives for patients to participate in the community-based program that ultimately leads to positive health outcomes.

In addition to the funding support for the community worker and patient incentive program, Sanford Health of Northern Minnesota would also request funding for education and outreach. We seek to launch a community-based education program to educate the community about substance use disorders and long-term recovery programs.

Thank you for your efforts and for your work on behalf of all Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth M. Johnson

Elizabeth M Johnson (Feb 24, 2023 12:12 CST)

Lisa (Elizabeth) Johnson,
Sanford Health of Northern Minnesota