



April 18, 2024

Dear Chair Noor and Members of the Human Services Finance Committee,

We are thankful for your ongoing efforts to build a human services budget that will promote the health and well-being of all Minnesotans. **We write to you today to request the inclusion of a provision in the original House File 5280 (Article 1, Section 9) that would allow for disability waiver services during acute care hospital stays.**

In March of 2020, the federal CARES Act was passed which included a provision authorizing states to reimburse certain home and community-based Medicaid services during short-term hospital stays. During the 2021 legislative session, many of our organizations successfully worked together in support of legislation directing Minnesota’s Department of Human Services to develop this new covered service, and we hope for the advancement of this important issue in this legislative session.

Many providers of disability services already provide this support due to the overwhelming benefits: more successful hospital stays, direct care staff learning from hospital staff the cares needed for successful transition to home, and decreased fear and stress for patients. However, it is increasingly difficult to provide this support when the service is not reimbursed, especially during a severe workforce shortage. Creating a reimbursement pathway will protect this essential support, improve collaboration between individuals receiving care and their providers, and help people receive person-centered, continuous, and culturally responsive care.

Thank you for this opportunity to uplift the importance of direct support in hospitals for people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Erin Sutton
Senior Director of Advocacy
Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

Dena Belisle
Minnesota First Provider Alliance

Sara Grafstrom
Senior Director of State and Federal Policy
ARRM

Marnie Falk
Director of Public Policy
Gillette Children’s

Trevor Turner
Public Policy Director
MN Council on Disability
Policy Committee Chair
Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities

Tina Rucci
Public Policy Director
The Arc Minnesota