



April 5, 2024

Dear Members of the Human Services Policy Committee:

There are two reports from DHS regarding the number of children being placed out of state. The one before you today looks at the total number of children placed out of state and the total placement costs.

NAMI Minnesota strongly believes that children should access care as close as possible to their family home. For children with serious mental illnesses this is critically important to ensure family visitation, weekends at home, and good discharge planning.

There are several questions that would be helpful to know the answers to:

- What cities and states are the residential programs in?
- How many of these placements were in border states? For some children, care in a border state may be closer to their home than a facility in Minnesota.
- What are the names of facilities/programs used in other states and what specialized services do they provide?
- What were the barriers to placing children in residential facilities in Minnesota?
- What were the demographics of children placed out of state?
- The total numbers went down from previous years. Do we know why? Did the opening of PRTFs help in any way?

We know that ensuring access to PRTFs through public and private insurance can help increase access to services in Minnesota. We are concerned that health plans are only including one PRTF in their network and concluding that this meets network adequacy – which in our view it does not.

We hope that the legislature will continue to dig deeper into this issue and develop and implement recommendations for keeping children close to their family homes and increasing access to intensive services in the community to prevent the need for residential treatment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sue Abderholden".

Sue Abderholden, MPH
Executive Director