

Yingya Vang

From: Andrea Bue <a.t.bue2@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 6, 2022 6:55 PM
To: Yingya Vang
Subject: HF 3100

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Dear Members of the MN House Human Services Finance & Policy Committee;

I am writing to you to advocate for passage of HF3100 in order to increase wages for group home direct care professionals.

My 42 year old adult daughter, Allison, has multiple disabilities and lives in a Waiver group home. Allison requires total physical care except that she can feed herself with adaptive utensils. Her housemates' needs vary, but all use wheelchairs for mobility and most use a lift for transfers, so all need a high level of physical care. Her group home agency, along with all other group home service providers, struggles to maintain the needed number of direct care staff. I assume you are aware, things have never been worse with agencies closing group homes because they are unable to hire and maintain sufficient staff. This is truly a crisis.

These are recent examples of lack of staff issues affecting Allison: On 2-27-22 a staff person informed me they were completing a 24 hour shift of working alone. At Allison's group home, overnight staff are required to stay awake due to the medical fragility of the residents. Even when two staff are present, these jobs are very demanding.

On 3-1-22 I was informed that because there will not be sufficient staff when a current staff person leaves for a better paying job on 3-10-22 to get all the residents to their medical appointments, I may need to accompany Allison to her appointments without a staff person. I can do this with the support of accessible transportation funded by MA, but I feel this compromises Allison's care. I find that staff can better implement the physician's recommendations if they are present to be a part of the discussion regarding Allison's needs. If I were not able to accompany Allison to her appointments, necessary medical care and monitoring could be delayed. For example, Allison gets Botox injections for spasticity and has pain and stiffness when the injections are delayed.

On 3-2-22 Allison informed me that she didn't get a shower on her shower day as the group home didn't have enough staff to do it.

Allison attended her day program for over 22 years prior to the pandemic. She now has a virtual class. The day program does not have sufficient staff to provide care for her due to her need for "total" physical care. Quality of life for persons who have disabilities and need residential & day program services has decreased in Minnesota.

If Allison's group home had to close, I cannot care for her at my home and neither can other family members due to her need for an accessible residence and 24/7 care. She is currently 30 to 40 minutes away from me. I usually visit Allison three times/week so that I can monitor her services, assist with her exercises and interact

with her. She recently told me that I am “hardly ever there” as I saw her daily when she was in a nursing home. If Allison had to move farther away from me, it would be difficult for me to see her due to my own physical limitations.

Please do all that is needed to give a competitive wage increase to direct care staff so that Minnesota providers can again provide quality services for persons who have disabilities.

Thank you

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