



March 13, 2023

Chair Liebling and members of the House Health Finance and Policy Committee,

My name is Jessica Gervenak and I serve as the Human Resources Generalist for Astera Health. I write to you on behalf of Astera Health in support of HF 2090 (Reyer) and its proposed increase in funding for the Minnesota Department of Health Summer Health Care Internship Program (SHCIP).

**CLINICS**

Bertha  
Henning  
Ottertail  
Sebeka  
Verndale  
Wadena

Through direct financial support for paid summer internships, SHCIP seeks to continue addressing health care workforce shortages by introducing secondary and postsecondary students to careers in health care in a non-classroom environment dedicated to their learning. SHCIP helps fund at least one-half the costs of employing the secondary and postsecondary summer health care interns working in hospitals, clinics, nursing facilities and home care providers. This is a valuable resource as health care

**HOSPITALS**

Wadena

organizations continue to suffer financially from increased costs, such as workforce and continuing impacts from COVID-19.

Astera Health, formally known as Tri-County Health Care, has participated in SHCIP and has employed multiple interns over the years we have participated in the program. SHCIP interns at our care facilities directly engage with the care process by shadowing a multitude of departments, both patient and non-patient facing. This opportunity gives students a valuable insight into the health care field and helps to develop interest in the field from an early age. Our facility greatly benefits from this program as we are able to engage local students from surrounding counties, earn early interest, and even open the door to job opportunities upon graduation. We have first hand experience of this program being beneficial to us, as we have had previous SHCIP students return for clinical rotations while in their medical programs at the college level. This program not only helps us, but also benefits our surrounding colleges as students will go on to study nursing, information technology, health care administration, coding, and many more programs.

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) currently estimates over 50,000 open health care jobs across our state. This is a crisis, and it is not sustainable for the care that all Minnesotans deserve. Multiple steps must be taken at the legislature to address this shortage, including increased funding for SHCIP.

We urge you and this Committee to support HF 2090 (Reyer) and increase the ability of Astera Health to foster interest amongst our states secondary and postsecondary students in pursuing a health care career and expand the pipeline for Minnesota's health care workforce.

Thank you for your consideration for my comments.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Gervenak".

Jessica Gervenak