

Senator Jim Abeler, Chair
Human Services Reform Policy and Finance Committee
Minnesota State Senate

Dear Chair Abeler and Committee Members,

The Human Development Center (HDC) is a community mental health center and Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) providing integrated behavioral health and addictions services to the residents of Carlton, Lake, Cook and Southern St. Louis counties in Minnesota and Douglas County, Wisconsin. Established in 1938 as a private, non-profit agency, HDC offers a comprehensive array of services provided by an integrated team of professionals for children, adolescents, adults, and seniors across a variety of settings. On January 1, 2008, HDC merged with its long-time affiliate corporation, HRC Mental Health Center. HDC serves the region's most at-risk, chronically stressed children, families, and adults with mental illness.

HDC's mission is to foster hope, resilience, and recovery by providing integrated, culturally respectful mental health and addiction services. Since its inception, HDC has successfully partnered and collaborated with local, state, and federal entities as well as with numerous nonprofit organizations to provide comprehensive mental health and substance abuse services. I am writing to ask for your support of SF 3010 – behavioral health homes rate structure.

HDC is a certified Behavioral Health Home (BHH) since May 2020. Our BHH ensures improved access through coordinated care with primary care, behavioral health and social needs for children, families, and adults.

Behavioral Health Home Services is an integrated and comprehensive healthcare service delivery model that is recovery-oriented, and person and family centered. BHH Services staff provide services through coordination by the client and a Case Manager - Systems Navigator, Registered Nurse - Integration Specialist, and Community Peer Specialist - Qualified Health Home Specialist. HDC's goals are to provide holistic care in helping clients live in the community, while reducing use of hospitals and emergency services to meet their needs.

HDC supports this bill (SF 3010) as BHH has provided an important role in providing services to the community such as – Comprehensive Care Management, Care Coordination, Health and Wellness promotion, Comprehensive Transitional Care, Individual and Family Support, and Referral to Community and Social Support Services. BHH provides comprehensive care to individuals who would otherwise be ineligible for Case Management services. Therefore, the services that BHH provides are invaluable to the community and the individuals served. Unfortunately, with the current rate structure in the BHH program, HDC has found it difficult to grow and sustain this program. BHH, each year, has provided a financial loss to our agency. HDC is committed to continuing the program; however, we are unable to grow and provide services to the number of those who need it, if we continue at the current rate structure.

We know the model of care works! But we need the payment for BHH to be more accurate to the cost of providing the service. This is more important now than ever as we struggle to meet rapidly growing mental health needs of our communities during this workforce and sustainability crisis.

We believe the rate proposal in SF 3010 will improve BHH access to more clients each year. A new sustainable payment for BHHs is a major step in keeping providers from continuing to lose money providing this service and being forced to consider closing it.

We ask for your support of this bill to strengthen access to this very important piece of our mental health services continuum.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jaime LaGraves", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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