

March 21, 2023

Senator Melissa Wiklund  
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 2107  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: **SF1951 (Morrison) Medical assistance coverage of recuperative care services requirement**

Dear Chair Wiklund and committee members,

On behalf of Allina Health, we are writing to express our strong support for SF1951, which would require medical assistance coverage for recuperative care services.

Allina Health is a fully-integrated health system with 11 hospital campuses, 65 primary care clinics, and 14 urgent care centers across the Twin Cities, and central and southern Minnesota. We provide services throughout the continuum of care, including providing mental health and addiction care for more than 100,000 patients through inpatient services in geriatric, adult and adolescent programs, outpatient services in ambulatory care, adult day treatment, and adolescent partial-hospital treatment. United Hospital, part of Allina Health, is a proud partner with Catholic Charities as well as other healthcare systems, on the creation and operations of the medical respite unit at the Higher Ground facility located in St. Paul. The creation of this unit filled a critical gap in the care continuum that existed for homeless people who were in need of additional support to treat their medical conditions after being discharged from the hospital.

Requiring medical assistance coverage for recuperative care services is an important step in supporting the continuum of care in Minnesota. Access to appropriate levels of care and the opportunity to recuperate in a safe and supportive environment can help reduce the probability that a patient will be readmitted to the hospital. Research has shown that patients that are unhoused who participate in medical recuperative care programs are 50% less likely to be readmitted to a hospital at three months and twelve months post-hospital discharge. This means that the patient needing recuperative care is receiving appropriate services, but it also means that hospitals and emergency departments are free to care for other patients in need of hospital-level care.

Overall, this proposal increases access to care and improves health outcomes throughout the entire continuum by reducing avoidable emergency department visits and ensuring all patients are receiving appropriate levels of care.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and thank you for your support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Jill Ostrem  
*President, United Hospital*  
Allina Health