

March 20, 2023

Senator Wiklund and Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee,

I am writing in strong support of SF1951, a bill to offer medical assistance coverage to recuperative care services.

When I think of recuperative care, I first think of a patient I treated last fall during their admission on the cardiac/renal unit. My patient was being treated for an acute heart failure exacerbation. It was their third admission that month for the same condition.

My patient was in a time of transition, staying in a homeless shelter while simultaneously working with a case manager to obtain affordable housing. While at the shelter, my patient had inconsistent access to restrooms which made it difficult to take their prescribed diuretic – a medication that plays an important role in managing heart failure by getting rid of excess sodium and fluid through the urine. However, the lack of access to a restroom led them not to take their diuretic and ultimately led to the three readmissions. My patient shared their understandable frustration with the situation, knowing they would likely end up back in the hospital if they were discharged to the shelter again.

While my patient felt fortunate to be in the process of obtaining housing, the shelter was not the appropriate place to recover during the interim. This patient, like many patients I see, would have benefitted greatly from a recuperative care facility, where they could resume medications with reliable access to basic resources, like a restroom. This would help them get on a healthy road to recovery, rather than a repeat hospital admission.

This story is not uncommon. Along with many of my colleagues, I see patients in similar circumstances far too often, many of whom are in worse condition than the patient I referenced earlier. SF1951 would offer my patients the needed opportunity to recover in a stable situation, thus reducing the rates, and associated healthcare costs, of readmission.

On behalf of the countless patients I meet who are experiencing housing insecurity, while also managing ongoing health problems, I ask that you support SF1951.

Sincerely,



Brooke Hendricks, MD  
Hennepin Healthcare