

Talking Points for Mike Lillestol, MD,

Practicing Internal Medicine in Fargo, ND since 1983, prior to that in Mpls/St Paul since 1977

Graduated NDSU Pharmacy, UND school of Medicine, and University of Minnesota

Residency at Abbott Northwestern Hospital/University of Minnesota

I have been a patient advocate for the last 44 years and have first hand seen the value of continuity of care in people lives

I oppose anything that is disruptive to that continuity of care such as restrictive access

I have personally experienced it all from my time in Minneapolis, with the birth of the HMO's, PPO's and all their variations, and I have not seen any of them that enhanced patient care, and many times to the contrary

What is the rationale for restricting patient access? Is it to improve healthcare? I say no. It is all about control of the patient, so that referrals from the primary care group can be controlled, so the patients are referred within the system to the high reimbursement areas, cardiology, CV surgery, general surgery, interventional radiology, and the hospital itself. Why, because those are the high profit areas.

As an independent physician I am not bound to refer to a particular system. I can chose the best provider for my patient, regardless of the system, and after 44 years I know who they are, the same physicians I or my family would see. Why is that important, good doctors have good outcomes, and deliver by far the most cost effective care.

I support this bill because, I think it will help maintain continuity, and provide good care for my and other primary care patients

Aa a former pharmacist, I am familiar with the attempts by the State of North Dakota be keep pharmacists in charge of the pharmacies, and not the store manager for a large chain, I think this is a good thing because I know they also care about their patients.

I think large institutions in the state do deliver good medical care, and I think working in collaboration with the independent providers in the state would only make that care better. I see no good medical reason why patients should be restricted from the provider of their choice. Having independent practices creates more competition, I am happy to compete for patients on the basis of service and good care, and that should be everyone's goal, without barriers.