

SB 2012 (2023 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY)
SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION
HONORABLE DICK DEVER, CHAIRMAN
JANUARY 25, 2023 2:00 P.M.
TESTIMONY OF BRUCE MURRY FOR ELEVATE NURSING

Chairman Dever and members of the Human Resources Division of the Appropriations Committee, I am Bruce Murry, Lobbyist #330, representing Elevate Nursing, LLC, of Bismarck North Dakota. My wife Lisa Murry, RN, is the principal proprietor of Elevate Nursing. Elevate Nursing is primarily a Qualified Service Provider agency under the Home and Community Services Waiver administered by the Aging Services Section of the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services.

This Assembly has for many years treated QSPs with equity in inflationary increases, compared to other Medicaid HCBS providers. Because Elevate Nursing competes with Developmental Disability Providers and Nursing Facilities for staff, we ask that such equity continue. We therefore ask that all Medicaid providers receive the same inflationary increase, probably the same as state employees. An increase of 5% of current QSP agency rates would lead to approximately \$1.25 per hour in increased gross wages to a personal-care QSP employee. This allows for very limited overhead, supervision, and profit for the agency of about \$2.00-4.00 per hour, depending upon the service.

Elevate Nursing appreciates that the Department has adjusted various rates within this HCBS waiver and the related Services Payment for the Elderly and Disabled program. In addition, we ask the Department consider:

- Funding emergency HCBS such as nursing and personal care pending formal authorization of services following nursing facility discharge, upon errors by guardians, and when issues related to multiple QSP agencies lead to lapsed authorizations;
- Increase funding for Homemaker HCBS to the level of Personal Care or Chore services to avoid a disincentive to Homemaker services;
- Authorize snow removal and yard care services at a substantially higher rates when the client is not able to provide necessary equipment and fuel;
- Boost public guardian support to avoid lapses in decision making that hurt clients;
- The Department should seek a relationship with the Public Service Commission and other regulators to ensure electrical utilities prioritize people with disabilities, provide notice of interruptions, and offer any available help with uninterrupted backup power, especially for life support, mobility, and minimal heating and cooling;

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today. I am happy to address any questions today or as they arise.