



2025 HB 1012

Senate Appropriations – Human Resources Division

Senator Dick Dever, Chairman

March 27, 2025

Chairman Dever and members of the Committee, my name is Tim Blasl representing the North Dakota Hospital Association (NDHA). Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the proposed amendment in House Bill 1012 to support behavioral health solutions in nursing and basic care facilities.

The amendment which allocates \$2 million for a specialized behavioral health program in skilled nursing and basic care settings, is the result of a collaborative effort among the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (NDDHHS), NDHA, the North Dakota Long Term Care Association (NDLTCA), the North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (NDDOCR), the Alzheimer’s Association, and other key stakeholders.

In the working group, we learned long-term care providers lack the proper resources and training to manage patients with complex behavioral health needs due to workforce constraints, regulatory requirements, reimbursement limitations, and limited access to specialized providers. As a result, long-term care facilities cannot admit these patients, leaving hospitals responsible for their care. This leads to extended hospital stays, further straining capacity and resources within the acute care system.

NDHA supports efforts to enhance care for individuals with complex needs. The initiative would provide an opportunity to strengthen care coordination and support providers in addressing behavioral health challenges. Similar programs in other states have demonstrated benefits such as improved patient stabilization and reduced reliance on emergency departments.

By supporting behavioral health services within long-term care facilities, North Dakota can help ensure patients receive care in the most appropriate setting while also promoting efficiency within the healthcare system.

We appreciate the committee’s consideration of this issue and encourage support for this funding request to help address behavioral health challenges in North Dakota.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tim Blasl, President
North Dakota Hospital Association