



Essentia Health

To: House Health and Human Services Finance Committee Chairs and Members

From: Essentia Health, Mayo Clinic, Sanford Health, St. Luke's & HealthPartners

Date: 3/28/2012

Re: Support Adopting the Nurse Licensure Compact in Minnesota

On behalf of Essentia Health, Mayo Clinic, Sanford Health, St. Luke's and HealthPartners, we are writing to express our support for adopting the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) in Minnesota. Twenty-four other states, including all of the states along Minnesota's borders, have already adopted the NLC. It is time for Minnesota to do the same.

As a leading importer of health care spending, adopting the NLC in Minnesota will remove critical barriers health providers currently face, improve follow-up patient care and enhance the practice of nursing, while keeping nursing standards high and protecting state authority.

The NLC allows a registered nurse, licensed practical nurse or vocational nurse within a NLC member state to hold one multi-state license in a primary state of residence and to practice in other compact states, both physically and electronically, while subject to each state's practice laws and discipline.

Currently, Minnesota nurses are restricted to practicing only in Minnesota. This poses a significant challenge for Minnesota health providers in providing follow up care to patients from other states. In Minnesota, we serve patients who come from throughout the Midwest, nationally and internationally seeking treatment from our high-quality health providers. Providing follow-up care to these patients across state lines when they return home is a growing health care delivery requirement and factor in reducing re-admissions. To continue to draw patients to Minnesota and keep Minnesota a leading importer of health care spending, we need to remove barriers to providing follow-up care to patients once they return home by adopting the NLC.

In addition, adopting the NLC in Minnesota would enhance the practice of nursing, while keeping nursing standards high. The NLC provides nurses in member states with greater career flexibility and enhances the value of their licenses, making them valid in more than one state. The NLC would also reduce nurses' compliance burdens and administrative costs. Meanwhile, nursing standards remain high. Nurses in all 50 states – including NLC member states – must still pass the NCLEX and graduate from an accredited school of nursing to obtain nurse licensure.

Despite their membership of a larger network, member states of the NLC maintain state authority. Under the compact, states maintain their right and authority to regulate nursing practices within their borders. Each state enforces its own Nurse Practice Act and maintains a Board of Nursing, and every nurse practicing in a NLC member state must comply with the practice laws of the state in which the patient is located at the time care is rendered.

Adopting the NLC in Minnesota will ensure Minnesota is a leader in health care delivery and help Minnesota health providers continue to provide high-quality care. For these reasons, we encourage you to support the adoption of the NLC in Minnesota.

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