



March 1, 2023

Dear Chair and Members:

We, on behalf of the Zumbro Valley Medical Society (ZVMS), Olmsted County, and Mayo Clinic, write to ask you to support HF 2081/SF 1951, Medicaid support for recuperative care services.

Recuperative care (called “respite care” in other states) provides services to patients experiencing houselessness who are “discharged to home,” but lack a dry, clean, and safe place to recover and convalesce. Recuperative care can include medication management, wound care, and rest. The ZVMS Street Medicine Initiative, Olmsted County Housing Stability Team, Mayo Clinic, and other homelessness service agency partners have begun exploring the development of recuperative care in Olmsted County. We look forward to continuing these discussions as the legislature reviews this important proposal.

The local need for recuperative care to ensure continuum of care for patients is acute. Currently, discharged patients frequently arrive at the Dorothy Day Hospitality House or the Rochester Community Warming Center in a taxi without details about their hospitalization, medical condition, follow up appointments, or medications. In the mornings, they must make their way to The Landing MN, Salvation Army, Rochester Public Library, or outdoor setting until the time they are able to return to an overnight shelter. This disruption in their recovery and the fractured coordination among hospital and community resources can lead to return visits to the emergency room and readmissions to the hospital.

We are pleased that the proposed bill includes data collection and reporting. Statewide data will help inform what we do locally. Data collection will allow us to capture our most local needs and gaps and thereby help us identify recommendations for improvements to current services and future programs.

With Medicaid support for recuperative care, discharged patients will not have to try to recover in tents, under bridges, or in 12-hour shelters – leading to poor outcomes and likely hospital readmissions – and instead will have supportive places to go and services to receive.

Thank you very much for your ongoing commitment to improving the lives of your constituents.

Sincerely,

Thomas C. Kingsley, MD, MPH
President, ZVMS
Hospital Internal Medicine, Mayo Clinic

Gregory Wright, Chair
Olmsted County Board of Commissioners