

From: Jane Yank <janeyank@visi.com>

Date: September 12, 2016 at 5:45:54 PM CDT

To: <stefan.gildemeister@state.mn.us>

Subject: Prairie Care request to expand hospital beds

Dear Mr. Gildemeister,

I would like to express support for Prairie Care's request to expand its inpatient bed capacity for children and adolescents. I work for several hospital emergency departments. It is not unusual for an adolescent to spend four or more days in the emergency department while we are waiting for a bed to open. Sometimes we simply give up because keeping an adolescent in a small Emergency Department room without exercise or therapy (since we have no mental health services and no psychiatry associated with our hospitals) seems cruel and harmful.

In addition to the typically developing adolescent, we are seeing increased numbers of patients on the autistic spectrum that families cannot handle, particularly as they grow in size and strength. Hospital emergency departments without associated psychiatric services are often ill-equipped to serve the mental health needs of this group, particularly if the patient is non-verbal or has limited verbal abilities, and the patient's needs cause delays for other critical care patients.

For these reasons, I strongly support the request by Prairie Care to expand inpatient bed capacity. I am not associated with Prairie Care in any way; I make these remarks because I see the need for more services for children and adolescents in general and in particular for services targeted to a more acute population of children and adolescents.

Thank you very much for reading my remarks, and best wishes for success on the difficult work you do for our citizens in Minnesota.

Kind regards,
Jane Yank