



John Ryan  
PrairieCare  
12918 63<sup>rd</sup> Ave N  
Maple Grove, MN 55369

Dear Mr. Ryan:

On behalf of NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) I am writing to support the proposal by PrairieCare to provide long-term acute psychiatric services for children at their Maple Grove location. These services are desperately needed to serve children in our state who have complex needs.

The legislature approved this session, the addition of 150 psychiatric residential treatment beds. These beds would provide a step-down from hospital level care and a step-up from our current residential treatment providers. While these beds are being developed, the Department of Human Services wanted to have "contract beds" in acute care psychiatric hospitals to serve children who needed to stay longer than the typical hospital stay. NAMI Minnesota and others objected to the contract bed idea because this would have created a shortage in available beds for children who needed a typical length of stay.

We are greatly appreciative of the willingness of PrairieCare to step in to this role by using the beds at the Maple Grove hospital to meet this need when their current short-term patients move to the new building. They will be serving children who otherwise would have been sent out of state. The needs of these children are complex, often involving co-occurring disabilities or health conditions. Their needs are not being met by our current system of care in Minnesota.

NAMI Minnesota has always been cautious about expanding the highest cost most intensive services in our mental health system. In this particular situation, we believe it is in the public's interest to develop these beds. We strongly support their proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sue Abderholden".

Sue Abderholden, MPH  
Executive Director