



Testimony presented April 18, 2024, before the House Committee on Health Policy, by Barry Cargill, President & CEO of the Michigan HomeCare and Hospice Association.

Senate Bill 449 and 450 - Establish Medicaid Separate Recognition and Policies for Complex Rehab Technology (CRT)

MHHA Position: Support

Please accept written comments in support of Senate Bills 449 and 450, on behalf of the Michigan HomeCare and Hospice Association (MHHA).

Thank you, Chairwoman Rogers and members of the Committee. We are very appreciative of Senators Daley and Irwin for their bipartisan sponsorship for this important legislation and the opportunity to share our strong support for Senate Bill 449 and 450 today. My name is Barry Cargill, I'm the President & CEO of the Michigan Home Care and Hospice Association (MHHA). In addition to our role as the state association for home care and hospice organizations, we are also the state trade association for home medical equipment, including Complex Rehab Technology, also referred to as CRT.

Combined, SB 449 and 450 will establish a separate recognition under Michigan Medicaid for Complex Rehab Technology (CRT) so that access to these critical services will be protected for the children and adults with significant disabilities. Improved policies and provider standards will result in stronger safeguards and better outcomes for our State Medicaid program and its patient beneficiaries.

Complex Rehab Technology is different than standard Durable Medical Equipment (DME). The traditional Durable Medical Equipment Medicaid benefit and related policies were created over fifty years ago to meet the needs of elderly and disabled individuals, and Medicaid policies have not kept up with the technology. Over time, technology has advanced to now include highly configurable manual wheelchairs, power wheelchairs, adaptive seating and positioning systems, and other specialized equipment such as standing frames and gait trainers. These products – called Complex Rehab Technology – are prescribed and individually configured to meet the unique needs of individuals with significant disabilities and chronic medical conditions.

Minimally, the provision of CRT usually involves a team consisting of the prescribing

Continued

physician, an occupational or physical therapist, and an Assistive Technology Professional. The process is service intensive from initial trial and evaluation through final assembly, delivery, adjustment, and training. Once the individually configured equipment is delivered it then must be supported by the CRT provider with ongoing maintenance, repairs, and modifications.

This small population of children and adults needing specialized CRT have disabilities such as ALS, Cerebral Palsy, Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy, Spina Bifida, Spinal Cord Injury, and Traumatic Brain Injury. They depend on this individually configured equipment to address their unique medical needs, maximize their function and independence, and minimize their health care costs.

Congress has acknowledged CRT products are unique and more specialized than standard Durable Medical Equipment (DME). It has passed legislation exempting CRT wheelchairs, seating systems, and accessories from the Medicare DME competitive bidding program recognizing such inclusion would jeopardize access to this individually configured technology. Nine states have established CRT Separate Recognition and policies.

Senate Bill 449 and 450 are not anticipated to increase state cost. The Senate Fiscal Agency established that the fiscal impact will be minimal. In fact, the implementation of stronger Medicaid safeguards and standards will provide better utilization controls and outcomes to help reduce State Medicaid health care expenses and improve quality of life for the disabled Medicaid population.

Our member organizations at the Michigan HomeCare and Hospice Association are strategically focused at promoting policies that help keep aging and disabled persons out of the hospital and safe at home. SB's 449 and 450 help to achieve that objective and for many, help disabled individuals be more productive members of society and fulfill their individual mobility dreams and goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. We have Complex Rehab Technology experts with us at the hearing today. Together we would be pleased to address any questions members of the Committee may have. Thank You!

###