



**Testimony of Sarah Calder, MaineHealth
In Support of LD 712 As Amended
March 25, 2025**

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Meyer and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Sarah Calder, Senior Government Affairs Director at MaineHealth, and I am here to testify in support of LD 712 as amended.

MaineHealth is an integrated non-profit health care system that provides a continuum of health care services to communities throughout Maine and New Hampshire. Every day, our over 24,000 care team members support our vision of “Working Together so Our Communities are the Healthiest in America” by providing a range of services from primary and specialty physician services to a continuum of behavioral health care services, community and tertiary hospital care, home health care and a lab.

While our hospital-based clinicians make every effort to coordinate with palliative care clinicians, there are instances where it is not always possible for the hospital to do so, including in emergencies or when the palliative care clinician cannot be reached. And it was for that reason that we opposed LD 712 as originally introduced. With that said, we share the sponsor’s desire to increase access to palliative care and are in full support of LD 712 as amended.

In October 2023, MaineCare [announced](#) that it was initiating the rate determination process for Palliative Care Interdisciplinary Team Services as a result of [LD 1064](#). It was only earlier this month that MaineCare [announced](#) that it was holding a “kick off” meeting with providers to discuss the timeline of the rate review.

LD 712, as amended, would ensure that the Department finalizes the rules to implement a rate by December 31, 2025 – over four years after the original law passed and two years after MaineCare announced it was starting the rate review process.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

DRAFT Language Palliative Care Language

Whereas PL 2021, ch 438 became law in 2021 directing the Department of Health and Human Services to provide reimbursement under the MaineCare program for palliative care for the entire interdisciplinary team as appropriate to the plan of care, regardless of setting, including hospitals, nursing homes, outpatient clinics and home care providers.

Whereas the Department of Health and Human Services is required to adopt rules regarding palliative care including but not limited to reimbursement policies and quality control measures that ensure and promote high-value palliative care under the MaineCare program.

Furthermore The department shall use national standards for quality palliative care in the development of the routine technical rules

Therefore the Department of Health and Human Services shall publish a MaineCare final rule for palliative care for the entire interdisciplinary team as appropriate to the plan of care, regardless of setting, including hospitals, nursing homes, outpatient clinics and home care providers by December 31, 2025.

Summary

This bill directs the Department of Health and Human Services to publish a MaineCare final rule for palliative care interdisciplinary reimbursement by December 31, 2025