



LD 1064, An Act to Advance Palliative Care Utilization in the State

April 1, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Laurie Belden and I serve as the executive director of the Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine -- a membership organization representing home care, home health care and hospice providers across the State.

The Alliance is a network of home care and hospice providers across our State delivering home-based care to older adults and disabled individuals of all ages - allowing them to stay in their home and community. Annually, our provider members deliver care to more than 45,000 clients in their residences across Maine, traveling more than 20 million miles. Collectively, home care, home health care and hospice members employ more than 15,000 staff --making our sector of the healthcare continuum a large contributor to Maine's economic growth and prosperity.

While a few concerns were raised with the original language of LD 1064, Representative Craven was gracious and supportive of offering amended version of this bill which the Alliance leadership fully supports. Thank you, Representative Craven serving with compassion and integrity.

Palliative care is *patient* and *family* centered that provides an interdisciplinary team approach to pain and symptom management, as well as emotional, practical, social and spiritual support. Palliative care can be provided at any stage of an illness, from diagnosis through the end of life---making this discipline a natural complement to home health care and hospice services. We thank Rep. Craven for her continued advocacy work on this important pillar of care.

The members of the Alliance applaud the bill's requirement of establishing a reimbursement rate for the palliative care interdisciplinary team who deliver this vital care to MaineCare beneficiaries. And instead of reinvent the proverbial wheel, relies on the National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care Clinical Practice Guidelines for Quality Palliative Care to shape the rule for reimbursement.

We once again thank Rep. Craven for being a champion for hospice and palliative care ---and support the amended version of LD 1064. Thank you.

Laurie Belden
Executive Director
Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine
laurie@homecarealliance.org
www.HomeCareAlliance.org