



*Wisconsin Association for Home Health Care*

## **TESTIMONY BEFORE THE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE**

*STATE BUDGET BILL PUBLIC HEARING – Virtual Hearing  
APRIL 28, 2021*

Good morning, Co-chairs Marklein and Born and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on a critical budget bill issue that will impact the future of home health care in Wisconsin.

My name is Tyer Baures, and I serve as the Director of Therapy for Aveanna Healthcare. I am also a member of the Wisconsin Association for Home Health Care, a statewide association committed to promoting home health care as a quality, cost-effective health care option in Wisconsin.

Home health care can mean different things to different people. But what I would like to discuss today is **skilled** home health care, which offers a wide range of services provided in a patient's home to treat illness or injury. These services are provided by skilled non-physician practitioners, such as nurses and physical therapists.

Based on my experience, patients would rather receive care in the comfort of their own homes, where they can recover more quickly and have better outcomes. Home health care also offers patients more convenience and is often less expensive than care provided in an institutional setting. Our services can reduce the cost of overall care, which is particularly important for the Wisconsin Medicaid program.

Despite the benefits of home health care, the Medicaid reimbursement rate for home health skilled nursing has not been increased in over a decade. This threatens the long-term survival of the industry due to the significant workforce retention and patient access challenges it creates.

With that in mind, I would encourage this committee to adopt a budget motion to increase the reimbursement rate for home health skilled nursing to \$94.10 per visit – from the current rate of \$85.54. Even that modest additional investment would strengthen the home health care workforce, increase access to care, and reducing overall health care costs.

In closing, thank you again for the opportunity to testify and for considering my request to increase the Medicaid rate for skilled home health care.