



FRESENIUS MEDICAL CARE

March 11, 2019

Representative Brenda Landwehr, Chair
House Health & Human Services Committee
Room 546-S
300 SW 10th Avenue
Topeka KS 66612-1504

RE: Support for SB 193

Dear Representative Landwehr and Committee Members:

On behalf of Fresenius Medical Care North America (FMCNA), I ask your support for SB 193, which would make amendments to the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board for social workers. FMCNA is a large dialysis organization, operating in every state except North Dakota. In Kansas, we provide dialysis services to over 1,200 patients with kidney failure at 24 outpatient dialysis facilities. These individuals are a chronic and complex patient population with multiple conditions such as diabetes and hypertension, the leading causes of kidney failure, as well as congestive heart failure, cardiovascular disease, and emotional and psychiatric issues. They must undergo dialysis treatments at least three times each week. Under the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) Conditions for Coverage for End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) facilities, each dialysis patient is assigned a Masters level dialysis social worker.

Our dialysis social workers often work at multiple dialysis facilities, some of them across state lines. Because it is highly specialized work, it is not unusual for a social worker to have to hold multiple licenses (KS, MO, OK, NE) to serve the dialysis patients in her/his geographical area. Having similar licensure requirements state by state would make it easier for social workers to apply and hold licenses in more than one state as necessary.

In addition to SB 193 making it easier to attract Masters level social workers to serve dialysis patients by making licenses more accessible and portable, it would also help in times when we need a social worker to fill in for another temporarily, such as during family/maternity leaves. Because we operate in multiple states, we could borrow social workers from other states to help out during leaves or staffing shortages.

For these reasons, we hope you will support SB 193. Thank you for the opportunity to comment about this issue.

Sincerely,

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