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The mission of the Alaska Nurses Association is to advance and support the profession of nursing in Alaska.

Testimony

CS HB 134, An Act Requiring Medicaid payment for medication compliance package.

March 19, 2013

Dear Mr. Chairman,

I want to speak today in support of the committee substitute for HB 134. As a nurse who has spent most of my nursing career working in a community setting, I know the importance of medication compliance packaging of medications. These packages are immensely helpful to patients with mental challenges, and to patients with very complex medication regimes.

I am thankful that in this committee substitute the eligibility for this service has been changed. There are individuals in the community with complex medication regimes who are being cared for by their families. These individuals should be eligible for this service along with individuals living in licensed facilities.

I also want to address the frequency the medication compliance packages are made. As you know medications these days are outrageously expensive. Once medications are placed in a mediset they cannot be reused. If there is a medication change then there can be a lot of wasted medication. Making up mediset every one to two weeks helps avoid a lot of this waste.

With pills taken by mouth we do not think that a pharmacist has to be on call 24/7. Extended hours into the evening and on weekends is fine. When an individual goes into a pharmacy to purchase their medications the pharmacist isn't available 24/7. This is no different.

It is very important that the pharmacist report compliance issues directly to the healthcare provider. As a provider I don't want to have my patient tell me they said something to the pharmacist about a medication and that concern was not relayed back to me.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of CS HB 134.

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