



**Hayward Area  
Memorial Hospital  
& Water's Edge**

*Right here in the place we love.*

December 6, 2022

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To the members of the Legislative Study Committee on Occupational licenses:

The delay Wisconsin professionals are experiencing to receive required licenses to do their jobs is having a significant impact on healthcare professionals and organizations. The licensing delays which have been a problem for years became much worse during the pandemic and continue to be a burden.

According to our Medical Staff Coordinator, we are currently waiting as long as six to nine months to receive application approvals for physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and certified registered nurse anesthetists. Other licensed professionals such as pharmacists, social workers, registered nurses, radiology technicians and physical therapists have also experienced delays.

Over the past several years Hayward Area Memorial Hospital & Water's Edge have been growing to meet the needs of our community. Since 2018, we have made significant investments to expand and improve our facilities to accommodate the addition of many specialty services and maintain our ability to provide obstetric services. Our growth during this time period has required a 23% expansion of our workforce, many of which are licensed professionals. At times opening new services has been difficult as we have had to wait for providers to obtain licenses when coming from out of state.

Nursing licensure for new graduates is also challenging due to delays in receiving authorization to sit for the licensing exam. As you can imagine the examination delays have created a lot of frustration for these new professionals who have made significant investments of time and money to pursue and earn a healthcare degree. Now more than ever, we should be doing everything we can to support those who have chosen to start a career in healthcare. Allocating resources to improve and expediate the professional licensing and exam certification process would be positive investments to support our skilled healthcare workforce.

Improvements have been made since May, when the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) transitioned from a manual, paper application process to an electronic process. The agency also improved their ability to answer inquiries and phones around that same time. However, additional work is needed to continue to reduce the regulatory burden on healthcare.

Hayward Area Memorial Hospital and Water's Edge support the work of this committee to find solutions either by allocating resources or targeting reforms to the licensure process that help improve and expedite professional licensure. As a member of the Wisconsin Hospital Association, we also appreciate the Committee including a representative of WHA to serve on this committee.

Supporting our healthcare professionals and organizations is crucial to our ability to care for our communities. We appreciate your consideration and support in improving the state licensing and examination process.

Respectfully,

Luke Beirl

President/Chief Executive Officer

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