

House Health & Human Services  
Chairwoman Landwehr and Committee Members  
March 8, 2022

**Senate Bill 453 - allowing unlicensed employee training courses to be taught and evaluated by professional licensed nurses**  
**Proponent as amended**

Medicalodges, Inc. is an employee owned, Kansas based provider of long term services. We have been providing services to some of Kansas most vulnerable citizens for over 60 years across 24 locations. I graduated from Wichita State University's nursing program and have spent my entire nursing career caring for those in Kansas, and the last 20 years in long term care services. I can honestly say this is the most difficult period we have experienced in being able to hire an adequate workforce, especially registered nurses and certified nurse aides. We never imagined there would be such a time where there would be a need to displace residents from their nursing home in order to ensure their personal care needs were met. And yet, unfortunately in August of 2021 Medicalodges made the excruciating decision to evacuate residents from one of our homes in rural Kansas to another nearby home in order to have enough personnel to provide the care these residents required and deserved. There were simply not enough licensed nurses and certified aides to provide care around the clock. What staff we did have were beyond exhausted. We are unable to admit to our homes all those that are seeking our long term and rehabilitative services, especially those that have the most need because of the workforce crisis and our limited licensed nurses and certified nurse aides.

At Medicalodges, we have experienced a dramatic decline in the number of licensed nurses and certified nurse aides we employ despite a variety of efforts to attract, hire, retain and develop our own individuals, including certified nurse aides. In some locations we have willing individuals but no available nurse aide training courses due to a lack of registered nurse instructors. In some locations we have our own registered nurses filling multiple, even triple duties including serving as a nurse aide training instructor when they are not providing direct care. All of our locations have multiple certified nurse aide vacancies. Our need to rely on agency staffing and the associated costs have exploded. The supply of certified nurse aides is limited and the demand is high. Medicalodges currently employs 345 certified nurse aides and certified medication aides and has 80 vacant positions in Kansas, a more than 23% vacancy rate.

**Agency Hours and Costs**

Cost Report Year	Agency Staffing Hours	% in Hours Utilized Change	Agency Staffing Costs	% in Cost Change
2018	58,642	N/A	\$ 1,509,232	N/A
2019	51,620	-12%	\$ 2,301,404	52%
2020	50,745	-2%	\$ 2,382,061	4%
2021	107,591	112%	\$ 5,020,566	111%

Medicalodges supports SB 453 as one approach to address the certified nurse aide shortage. Allowing licensed practical nurses to serve as instructors in certified nurse aide training programs has the potential to exponentially

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increase the availability of training courses and as a result the number of certified nurse aides available in the workforce. Where one registered nurse is currently limited to supervising 10 students during the clinical portions of the course, imagine if one registered nurse was now able to oversee five licensed practical nurses each instructing 10 students. Instead of adding 10 certified nurse aides upon completion of the course, now there are 50.

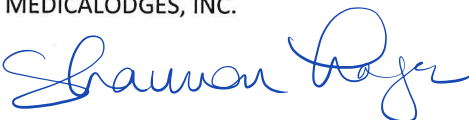
Where there is concern the quality of training and education of certified nurse aides by a licensed practical nurse may be compromised or diluted, please consider the following:

- There is no subject or skill within the certified nurse aide training program that is outside the scope of practice of a licensed practical nurse.
- The current course instructor requirements allow for the registered nurse experience criteria (two years) to be met by including experience as a licensed practical nurse.
- The current course instructor requirements allow for the registered nurse to have no actual experience in long term care services by completing a course in person centered care in an adult care home.
- The current course instructor requirements allow for the registered nurse to have no experience in supervising aides by completing a course in supervision or adult education or having experience in teaching adults.
- Current course requirements allow for the use of qualified ancillary health professionals to assist in conducting training under the supervision of the registered nurse course instructor.
- Licensed practical nurses routinely supervise, teach and train certified nurse aides in long term care service settings.
- The Secretary for Aging and Disability services retains the authority for developing guidelines for preparation and administration of the certified nurse aide training courses, including a list of skills in which competency must be demonstrated.
- Demonstration of competency in skills would continue to be evaluated by a registered nurse.

Including licensed practical nurses as instructors in nurse aide training courses is a win for everyone, for those that desire to enter into healthcare by providing greater availability of training courses, for licensed practical nurses as an additional work opportunity, for the pipeline of future licensed nurses that often start their career as certified nurse aides, but most importantly for the individuals receiving long term care services who deserve a sufficient workforce of well trained care givers.

Thank you and I'll stand for questions at the appropriate time.

MEDICALODGES, INC.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shannon Lager". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Shannon Lager, RN BSN  
Executive Vice President & Chief Operations Officer