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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Study Shows Home Health Care Shortage Increases Costs and Length of Hospital Stays for Children with Medical Complexities

St. Paul, Minn. – PHS Medical Director Roy Maynard, MD, recently collaborated with local health care providers on a 12-month study of children with medical complexities discharging to home health care. The objective was to determine the causes for delayed discharge and how a shortage of home care nurses impacted the outcome.

The study reveals that a home care nursing (HCN) shortage is the primary cause of delayed hospital discharge for children discharging to home care for the first time. Delayed Discharge (DD) occurred, due to multiple causes in 68.5% patients new to home care, and 46.3% of new patients had DD due to not having available home care nursing. Lack of HCN was the most frequent cause of DD, increasing costs and directly accounting for an average length of stay increase of more than 53 days for new patients. Of the 1,432 DDs in new patients, 94% were directly attributed to lack of HCN availability. Prolonged hospitalization, while waiting for home care nurses to be hired, significantly raises costs and affects the quality of life for the patient and their family.

The study also shows medical setbacks, not failed home care, account for most nonelective 90-day re-admissions. More than 97% were due to medical setbacks and readmissions occurred in approximately half of patients.

“Our findings clearly demonstrate the negative impact the shortage of home care nurses has on this population. Waiting for home care nurses to be hired prolongs hospitalization of technology dependent children,” said Dr. Roy Maynard. “More must be done to attract caregivers to this profession, so these children have the opportunity to thrive at home with their family.”

Dr. Maynard’s video summary and written abstract may be found at the [Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics](#). **Interview and photo requests** may be directed to Katlyn Bourget, Sr. Digital & PR Specialist at PHS at 651-789-0937 or kjbourget@pediatrichomeservice.com

About Pediatric Home Service

Based in St. Paul, Minn., with an office location in Pewaukee, Wisc., Pediatric Home Service is an independent pediatric home care company that helps children with medical complexities and technology dependencies live safely and successfully where they're most comfortable, at home with their families, rather than in a hospital. Pediatric Home Service has been partnering with health care professionals and family caregivers for nearly three decades to deliver compassionate, specialized, high-quality care to children with special medical needs.

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