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Senate Committee on Health and Welfare
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301
Senator Claire Ayer, Chair

My responsibilities in our organization include recruitment and retention of physicians, physician assistants, and advanced practice nurses. During the interview process, recently graduated APRNs universally express concern on whether they will have enough oversight from experienced colleagues. I am able to provide them with assurance, as our clinical leadership aligns the schedules of new APRNs with physicians and experienced APRNs. We have even invested in telemedicine at two locations to give additional oversight opportunity, particularly when difficult or urgent cases present. These effort come at a cost, although certainly worthwhile and important. Of note, I have had several associate providers turn down positions as well as leave the organization because of their desire to have more oversight than what we are able to provide, with the reason that they have discomfort due to lack of experience.

We continuously look at provider staffing with attention to providing high quality care at the lowest overhead cost. Similar to what you may imagine, we have strategy and planning sessions, with individual names and experience level. Administrators – most often not providers themselves – know that there is the requirement to have experienced providers readily accessible to new APRNs. Without the requirement, I am concerned that administrators will place new APRNs in clinical situations unfair to them and unfair to patients, lacking the support they need to increase their knowledge base and comfort level. I actually know this to be the case, again, based on my experience in planning provider coverage in various locations of our organization. That is not what we need in medicine. We need colleagues to be practicing to their highest level of comfort, knowledge, skill set, and experience. We want to give individual providers the opportunity to thrive in their career growth, not to be placed in situations too early, causing unnecessary stress and burnout.

Trey Dobson, MD