



Wisconsin Health Care Association

Wisconsin Center for Assisted Living

## **WHCA COMMENT ON ASSEMBLY BILL 148**

*The Wisconsin Health Care Association represents skilled nursing facilities across Wisconsin. Throughout the COVID-19 health crisis, nursing facilities have worked in concert with acute care partners to find solutions to hospital surge capacity concerns. One issue acute and post-acute providers have worked to address is a situation where a skilled nursing facility has open beds but is unable to admit new patients due to current COVID-19 outbreak status, workforce shortages, and other issues often outside of the control of the facility.*

*Fortunately, due to COVID-19 vaccine access through the federal Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program implemented in Wisconsin, nursing facilities have seen a steep decline in COVID-19 outbreaks among residents and staff. The availability of COVID-19 vaccines in nursing facility settings has functionally addressed the previous concern of COVID-related admissions prohibitions in post-acute care.*

*WHCA questions the need for the implementation of a brand new payment system under AB 148, as the problem it intends to address has already been functionally resolved via vaccine access in long-term care. WHCA is currently seeking feedback from nursing facilities across Wisconsin on whether there is still difficulty in admitting patients ready for discharge from acute care settings.*