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To whom it may concern,

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I am writing this letter in hopes to shed light onto a major gap in our healthcare system that Mother's Helper Home Healthcare, Inc has identified. I stand by this agency and affirm that there is a major need to support this population I am about to discuss.

I have been a NICU nurse for over 25 years. My love and passion is working with neonates. Throughout my career and experience, I've seen many instances where stable and relatively healthy newborns were kept in the hospital longer than they should have for a condition that could easily be monitored and managed by an experienced RN in the home. An example of a manageable condition is a baby born with non-hemolytic jaundice or physiologic jaundice, which occurs in about 50% of newborns. If the newborn was sent home, photo therapy (bili-blanket) along with bilirubin lab draws can be done by a nurse in the home to monitor the newborns progress. Newborns with failure to thrive issues could also be sent home with a nurse who can follow the baby's weight, as well as, educate and assist the mother with breast or bottle feedings. Education and management of newly placed feeding tubes could also be provided for these newborns. There are also many instances where a child has to have an extended stay in the hospital due to IV antibiotic therapy. These babies are relatively healthy and stable, so I've always wondered to myself, "Why not provide these services in the home with a PICC (peripheral intravenous central catheter)?" An RN can perform these skilled nursing tasks along with lab draws and catheter care.

There are many advantages to discharging a child as early as possible. Maternal-child bonding is not interrupted and the baby is less likely to contract MRSA or any of the many hospital-acquired infections. Early bonding with the child is crucial to newborn development and well-being. I have seen the struggles and the tears that moms go through leaving their precious baby in the hospital while they are forced to go home. All of this could be avoided if the family had the proper resources to enable them to go home and minimize the stress on the hospital as well as the family.

Healthcare is constantly evolving and there is always room for improvement. I hope that my experience will shed some light onto these issues. Mother's Helper has the passion and vision to help support this population that I hold dear to my heart.

Best Regards,

Vicki deDeugd, RNC (Registered Nurse Certified in level II neonatal nursing)