



July 19, 2021

Chiquita Brooks-LaSure
Administrator
Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244

Dear Administrator Brooks-LaSure,

On behalf of the nation's Medicaid Directors, NAMD is writing to share the overarching priorities of state Medicaid agencies for the coming year and beyond. We are looking forward to working with you and your teams within CMS to advance areas of mutual interest, improve the Medicaid program in a post-COVID environment, and further strengthen the state-federal partnership at the core of Medicaid.

NAMD is a bipartisan, nonprofit association representing the Medicaid Directors leading programs across the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the five U.S. territories. We provide the perspective of Medicaid Directors on federal policy issues, offer peer learning and networking opportunities for Medicaid Directors and their teams, and offer leadership development opportunities to our members.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Medicaid has been profound. States are still managing the pandemic, but also recognize that important work on non-COVID issues must continue. The issues we present in our regulatory priorities are built with focus on these non-COVID issue areas, with the recognition that COVID continues to cast a shadow over state and federal work.

We envision the priorities articulated in the attached document to serve as a mechanism for shaping future dialogue, working groups, and other state-federal engagement opportunities. These issues include a mix of short-term issues in need of action and longer-term areas for ongoing focus. We want to call out four areas of significant state interest over the long-term:

- **Advancing Equity in the Medicaid Program:** Improving equity is foundational to all of NAMD's priorities going forward. Opportunities to correct historical inequities in the program across all issues and domains should be an explicit focus of state and federal partnership going forward. Equity work should include a focus on racial and ethnic minorities, rural populations, Tribal populations, and other groups experiencing disparate health outcomes, with an understanding that inequities are multidimensional and often fall across multiple population characteristics or categories.
- **Social Determinants of Health:** Medicaid members have a wide array of needs beyond those addressed in medical settings. Housing stability, food security, and family caregiver supports are but a few examples of these needs. States are interested in identifying flexibilities within Medicaid authorities to design innovative programs to meet these member needs.
- **Delivery System and Payment Reform:** States are continually driving innovation in care delivery and financing models. As we look to support the Medicaid delivery system during and post-COVID, this work takes on increased importance across delivery systems and provider types.

There are also opportunities to increase alignment in reform initiatives across payers and enhance Medicaid's role in CMS-driven models developed through the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation.

- **Long-Term Services and Supports:** The impacts of COVID on Medicaid's long-term services and supports infrastructure were pronounced. As we consider recovery mechanisms, the longstanding work to rebalance service provision from institutions towards the community remains a critical consideration, as does quality improvement work across the full LTSS continuum.

NAMD and our members are eager to partner with CMS on these critical issue areas and to work collaboratively to address other areas of mutual concern. We look forward to engaging in more detailed discussions on all of the issues presented in the attached document.

Sincerely,



Jami Snyder
NAMD Board President
Director, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment
System



Allison Taylor
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Director of Medicaid, Indiana Family and Social
Services Administration

CC:

Dan Tsai, Director, Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services
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