



Media contact:

Allison MacMunn, American Lung Association, Media@Lung.org, 312-801-7628

Patient Groups Express Strong Opposition to Medicaid Block Grants

Proposals for Block Grants or Per Capita Caps in Medicaid Would Harm Patients with Serious and Chronic Health Conditions

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 18, 2019)—Today, 27 patient groups submitted a [letter](#) to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Administrator Seema Verma expressing strong opposition to policies that would allow states to apply for block grants or per capita caps for their Medicaid programs. The Administration’s “State Medicaid Director Letter: Medicaid Value and Accountability Demonstration Opportunity” is currently under review at the Office of Management and Budget. In addition, the groups released the following shared statement:

“As patient and consumer organizations, we represent and support millions of individuals facing serious, acute and chronic health conditions. Affordable and quality healthcare is essential for the health and lives of our patients, including many individuals who rely on Medicaid for their healthcare coverage. Our organizations are deeply concerned about potential guidance that would encourage, invite or allow states to apply for block grants or per capita caps for their Medicaid programs.

“Per capita caps and block grants are designed to reduce federal funding for Medicaid, forcing states to either make up the difference with their own funds or make cuts to their programs that would reduce access to care for the patients we represent. As the gap between the capped allotment and actual costs

of patient care increases over time, states will likely limit enrollment, reduce benefits, lower provider payments or increase cost-sharing for patients. States like Utah and Tennessee are already moving forward with deeply troubling proposals in anticipation of new federal guidance promoting these capped financing arrangements.

“Simply put, block grants and per capita caps will reduce access to quality and affordable healthcare for patients with serious and chronic health conditions and are therefore unacceptable to our organizations. We strongly oppose policies that would allow states to apply for block grants or per capita caps for their Medicaid programs.”

Alpha-1 Foundation
ALS Association
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Liver Foundation
American Lung Association
Arthritis Foundation
Chronic Disease Coalition
COPD Foundation
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Epilepsy Foundation
Family Voices
Hemophilia Federation of America
Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
Lutheran Services in America
March of Dimes
Muscular Dystrophy Association
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship
National Hemophilia Foundation
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization for Rare Disorders
National Patient Advocate Foundation
Pulmonary Hypertension Association
Susan G. Komen
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