

May 8, 2020

The Honorable Alex Azar  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

Our nation is facing an unprecedented public health threat that has strained and, in some cases, overwhelmed the health care system. Every aspect of the health care delivery system has had a role in responding to the COVID 19 pandemic. During this time, providers are experiencing immense financial strain. For providers that serve a high number of Medicaid enrollees and operate on very small financial margins while delivering high quality care to a very needy population, that strain has been overwhelming. We are encouraged by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) recent outreach to states to collect preliminary data. Our organizations are writing to impress upon you the urgency of expeditiously delivering federal financial relief to Medicaid providers and to offer our ongoing assistance to determine the optimal path for doing so.

We recognize and appreciate that CMS typically does not have a financial relationship with Medicaid providers. Those relationships exist with the states, territories and the District of Columbia that operate and oversee their unique Medicaid programs – whether through Medicaid managed care plans or directly with providers. However, each sector of the Medicaid provider community is facing a challenging set of circumstances that must be addressed. Yet, for providers who rely significantly on Medicaid reimbursement federal funding relief is not reaching them.

During this unprecedented time in our nation's history, we must think collaboratively and find new solutions to support the providers who are on the frontline caring for some of the most vulnerable patients. We stand ready to assist the Department of Health and Human Services and CMS to expeditiously distribute emergency federal funding provided by Congress to support Medicaid providers, including through the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund.

Sincerely,

American Health Care Association/  
National Center for Assisted Living

Association for Community  
Affiliated Plans

America's Health Insurance Plans

Children's Hospitals Association

Medicaid Health Plans of America

National Association of  
Community Health Centers

National Association of Medicaid  
Directors

National Council for Behavioral  
Health



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