

June 8, 2017

The Honorable Thomas E. Price  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Price:

The undersigned 269 organizations are writing to urge you to protect the Medicare Part B program for reimbursing providers for drugs and biologics administered by physicians. The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC), Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI), and others have recently recommended policies to change Part B that would jeopardize access to care, force community clinics to close, and could even increase costs for seniors. The common theme in these proposals is that all would further diminish patient access, drive health care consolidation, and impede physicians' ability to practice medicine and provide personalized care. We urge you to reject these proposals and others that would undermine the Medicare program and harm patients.

As you know, Medicare Part B is vital to maintaining the health of seniors and individuals with disabilities. Not only does the program cover routine medical care provided in a doctor's office, it also covers medications administered in an outpatient setting. These medications are administered to some of the most vulnerable patients enrolled in Medicare since they typically treat serious conditions including cancer, macular degeneration, hypertension, rheumatoid arthritis, mental illness, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, and primary immunodeficiency diseases. These medications are essential for the seniors who use them, and reflect a very small percentage of Medicare spending, just three percent.

The Part B program is working well to give patients and doctors the flexibility they need. In addition, Part B providers are transitioning to new value-based payment systems. The new Quality Payment Program provides incentives for physicians to participate in qualifying Alternative Payment Models (APMs). Physicians are already participating in APMs that include Part B drug spending (e.g., Oncology Care Model). Layering on additional programmatic changes to Part B would impede efforts to transition to these new payment models.

We greatly appreciate the leading role you played last year to raise awareness of the harmful impact that the Obama Administration's Part B Drug Payment Model "experiment" would have had on physicians and patients. This model is problematic for many reasons, including pushing mandatory, disruptive, and near-nationwide policy changes under the guise of a "demonstration" that could have significantly hurt the sickest and most vulnerable patients. While the "experiment" was abandoned last year due to the strong opposition from patients and physicians and strong, bipartisan opposition from you and your colleagues, we urge you to formally withdraw the Part B Drug Payment Model to ensure that patients cannot be subject to these harmful policies.

Given the large opposition to the Part B Drug Payment Model last year, we were deeply disappointed and concerned to see MedPAC approve recommendations on Part B in April 2017 that could make it more difficult for physicians, particularly those in small practices and in rural settings, to administer Part B medications in their communities, further driving consolidation. Some patients already face access challenges because the budget sequester has eroded reimbursements to physicians, and MedPAC's

recommendations would exacerbate these problems. As outlined in our April 3, 2017 letter to MedPAC, patients would be left with fewer locations where they could receive care, resulting in less access and higher costs. A growing number of patients would then have to seek care in a hospital, which may require traveling a longer distance to receive care and would result in higher out of pocket costs, particularly in rural communities. Further, changes to payment structures could necessitate altering treatment plans that are currently working well for patients, creating an unnecessary and damaging burden. In particular, MedPAC's "Drug Value Program" would create a middleman between doctors and their patients by placing new restrictions on treatment decisions that currently do not exist within Part B. We urge you to reject the use of the MedPAC proposals and any such proposals that over-bureaucratize Part B.

Due to the harm the Part B Drug Payment Model and similar recommendations from MedPAC could mean for patients, we urge you to establish strong patient protections within the CMMI, such as limiting the size and scope of future demonstrations, engaging with patients, providers, and other stakeholders prior to launching demonstrations, keeping them voluntary, and including safeguards for patients to access the therapies they need.

Medicare is an incredibly important program, and overseeing it is a monumental, difficult and critical duty that you have been appointed to perform. We greatly appreciate the commitment you have shown to patients through every phase of your professional career – as a doctor, a Member of Congress, and now Secretary of Health and Human Services. We look forward to working with you to protect the Part B program and urge you to withdraw the Part B Drug Payment Model, eschew harmful proposals like MedPAC's, and implement safeguards to ensure the principles of patient protection extend beyond your tenure.

Sincerely,

1 in 9: The Long Island Breast Cancer Action Coalition

Action CF

ADAP Advocacy Association (aaa+)

Advocates for Responsible Care (ARxC)

AIDS Response Seacoast

Alabama Academy of Ophthalmology

Alabama Cancer Congress

Alabama Society for the Rheumatic Diseases

Alaska Rheumatology Alliance

Alliance for Patient Access (AfPA)

Alliance for the Adoption of Innovations in Medicine ("Aimed Alliance")

Alliance of Specialty Medicine

Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (AAAAI)

American Academy of Ophthalmology

American Association of Clinical Urologists

American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association (AARDA)

American Behcet's Disease Association

American College of Rheumatology

American Gastroenterological Association

American Senior Care Centers, Inc.

American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy  
American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (ASPEN)  
American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery  
American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)  
American Society of Nuclear Cardiology  
American Urological Association  
AmerisourceBergen  
Arizona Bioindustry Association, Inc. (AZBio)  
Arkansas Rheumatology Association  
Arthritis and Rheumatology Clinics of Kansas  
Arthritis Foundation  
Association of Black Cardiologists  
Association of Community Cancer Centers (ACCC)  
Association of Idaho Rheumatologists (AIR)  
Association of Northern California Oncologists (ANCO)  
Association of Women in Rheumatology (AWIR)  
Asthma & Allergy Foundation of America, New England Chapter  
Axis Advocacy  
Bio Nebraska Life Sciences Association  
BioForward Wisconsin  
BioKansas  
BioNJ  
Bioscience Association of West Virginia  
Biotechnology Innovation Organization (FKA Biotechnology Industry Organization)  
Brain Injury Alliance of Arizona  
Brain Injury Alliance of Nebraska  
California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons  
California Hepatitis C Task Force  
California Life Sciences Association (CLSA)  
Cancer Support Community Arizona  
CancerCare  
Caregiver Action Network  
Caregiver Voices United  
Cascade AIDS Project  
Celiac Disease Foundation  
Center for Healthcare Innovation  
Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY  
Charleston Parkinson's Support Group  
CNY HIV Care Network  
COA Patient Advocacy Network (CPAN)  
Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations (CSRO)  
Colorado BioScience Association  
Colorado State Grange  
Community Access National Network (CANN)  
Community Health Action Network  
Community Health Charities of Nebraska  
Community Liver Alliance  
Community Oncology Alliance (COA)

Community Oncology Pharmacy Association  
Connecticut Hemophilia Society  
Connecticut Rheumatology Association  
Cutaneous Lymphoma Foundation  
Delaware Academy of Ophthalmology  
Delaware BioScience Association  
Digestive Disease National Coalition (DDNC)  
Digestive Health Physicians Association (DHPA)  
Easter Seals Colorado  
Easter Seals Iowa  
Easter Seals Massachusetts  
Easterseals Nebraska  
Epilepsy California  
Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Chicago  
Epilepsy Foundation of Western Wisconsin  
Florida Society of Rheumatology  
Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
Gastroparesis Patient Association for Cures and Treatments, Inc.  
Georgia Bio  
Georgia Society of Rheumatology  
Global Colon Cancer Association  
Global Pneumonia Prevention Coalition  
H.E.A.L.S of the South (Hepatitis Education, Awareness and Liver Support)  
Hawaii Society of Clinical Oncology  
Health Coalition, Inc.  
Healthcare Institute of New Jersey (HINJ)  
HealthyWomen  
Hematology Oncology Associates, PC  
Hemophilia Alliance of Maine  
Hepatitis Foundation International  
ICAN, International Cancer Advocacy Network  
Illinois Biotechnology Innovation Organization  
Illinois Medical Oncology Society  
Indiana Health Industry Forum (IHIF)  
Indiana Oncology Society  
INDUNIV Research Center, Inc. - BioAlliance Puerto Rico  
International Foundation for Autoimmune & Autoinflammatory Arthritis (IFAA)  
ION Solutions  
Iowa Academy of Ophthalmology  
Iowa Biotechnology Association  
Iowa Oncology Society  
Iowa Osteopathic Medical Association  
Iowa State Grange  
Kansas City Area Life Sciences Institute  
Kansas Society of Clinical Oncology  
Kentucky Life Sciences Council  
KidneyCancer.org  
Large Urology Group Practice Association (LUGPA)

Life Sciences Pennsylvania  
Lung Cancer Alliance  
LUNGevity  
Lupus Alliance of Upstate New York  
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.  
Lupus Foundation New England  
Lupus Foundation of America  
Lupus Foundation of America, Wisconsin Chapter  
Lupus Foundation of Colorado  
Lupus Foundation of Florida, Inc.  
Lupus Foundation of Northern California  
Lupus Foundation of Southern California  
Lupus LA  
Lupus Society of Illinois  
Maryland Society for the Rheumatic Diseases (MSRD)  
Massachusetts Association for Mental Health  
Massachusetts Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (MSEPS)  
Massachusetts, Maine & New Hampshire Rheumatology Association (MMNRA)  
MassBio  
Matthew25 AIDS Services  
McKesson  
Medical Alley Association  
Medical Oncology Association of Southern California, Inc. (MOASC)  
Medical Society of the State of New York  
Mental Health America of Louisiana  
Mental Health America of Montana  
Metro Denver Oncology Nursing Society  
Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce  
Michigan Biosciences Industry Association (MichBio)  
Michigan Rheumatism Society  
Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (MiSEPS)  
Michigan Society of Hematology and Oncology (MSHO)  
MidWest Rheumatology Society  
Mindful U Arizona  
Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology  
Minnesota Rural Health Association  
Minnesota Society of Clinical Oncology  
Mississippi Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons  
Missouri Oncology Society  
Montana BioScience Alliance  
Montana Society of Clinical Oncology  
Multiple Sclerosis Resources of Central New York  
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)  
National Alliance on Mental Illness Alabama (NAMI)  
National Alliance on Mental Illness Buffalo & Erie County (NAMI)  
National Alliance on Mental Illness Central Suffolk (NAMI)  
National Alliance on Mental Illness Greater Des Moines (NAMI)  
National Alliance on Mental Illness Iowa (NAMI)

National Alliance on Mental Illness New Mexico (NAMI)  
National Alliance on Mental Illness New York City (NAMI)  
National Alliance on Mental Illness North Carolina (NAMI)  
National Alliance on Mental Illness Sioux Falls (NAMI)  
National Alliance on Mental Illness South Dakota (NAMI)  
National Alliance on Mental Illness St. Louis (NAMI)  
National Association for Rural Mental Health  
National Association of County Behavioral Health & Developmental Disability Directors (NACBHDD)  
National Association of Hepatitis Task Forces  
National Association of Social Workers, North Carolina Chapter  
National Blood Clot Alliance (NBCA)  
National Grange  
National Infusion Center Association (NICA)  
National Medical Association (NMA)  
National Minority Quality Forum  
National Osteoporosis Foundation  
Nevada Oncology Society  
New England Hemophilia Association  
New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc. (NJAMHAA)  
New Jersey Mayors Committee on Life Sciences  
New Jersey Rheumatology Association (NJRA)  
New Mexico Cancer Center  
New York State Rheumatology Society  
New Yorkers for Accessible Health Coverage  
NewYorkBIO  
NMBio  
North Carolina Biosciences Organization (NCBIO)  
North Carolina Oncology Association  
North Carolina Rheumatology Association (NCRA)  
Ohio Association of Rheumatology  
Ohio Hematology Oncology Society  
Ohio Ophthalmological Society (OOS)  
Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology  
Oklahoma Society of Clinical Oncology  
Oncology Nursing Society  
One in Four Chronic Health  
Oregon Bioscience Association  
Oregon Rheumatology Alliance  
Oregon Urological Society  
Pennsylvania Rheumatology Society  
Pennsylvania Society of Gastroenterology  
Physicians Advocacy Institute  
Prevent Blindness  
Prevent Blindness Texas  
Prevent Blindness Wisconsin  
Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate  
Psychosocial Rehabilitation Association of New Mexico  
RetireSafe

Rheumatism Society of the District of Columbia  
Rheumatology Alliance of Louisiana (RAL)  
Rheumatology Association of Iowa (RAI)  
Rheumatology Association of Minnesota and the Dakotas  
Rheumatology Association of Nevada  
Rheumatology Society of North Texas  
Rocky Mountain Health Network  
Rocky Mountain Oncology Society  
Rush To Live  
Sick Cells  
Sickle Cell Community Consortium  
Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc.  
South Carolina Oncology Society  
South Carolina Rheumatism Society  
South Dakota Biotech  
Southeast Texas Rheumatology Association  
Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation  
Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS  
State of Texas Association of Rheumatologists (STAR)  
StopAfib.org/ American Foundation for Women's Health  
Suicide Awareness Voices of Education  
Survivors Cancer Action Network  
Tennessee Association of Adult Day Services  
Tennessee Oncology Practice Society (TOPS)  
Tennessee Rheumatology Society  
Texas Healthcare and Bioscience Institute (THBI)  
Texas Ophthalmological Association  
Texas Society of Clinical Oncology  
Texas State Grange  
Thai Health And Information Services  
The Arizona Clinical Oncology Society  
The G.R.E.E.N. Foundation  
The Kim Foundation  
The Mended Hearts, Inc.  
The US Oncology Network  
The Veterans Health Council  
The Wisconsin Society of Pathologists  
U.S. Rural Health Network, Inc.  
United Ostomy Associations of America (UOAA)  
United Rheumatology  
Utah Ophthalmology Society  
Vietnam Veterans of America  
Vietnamese Social Services of Minnesota  
Virginia Association of Hematologists & Oncologists  
Visiting Nurse Association  
Washington Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons  
Washington State Prostate Cancer Coalition  
Washington State Urology Society

West Virginia Oncology Society  
West Virginia Rheumatology Society  
Wisconsin Association of Hematology & Oncology  
Wisconsin Association of Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons  
Wisconsin Rheumatology Association  
Wyoming Epilepsy Association  
ZERO - The End of Prostate Cancer

cc: Hon. Kevin Brady, Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee  
Hon. Richard Neal, Ranking Member, House Ways and Means Committee  
Hon. Pat Tiberi, Chairman, Ways and Means Subcommittee on Health  
Hon. Sander Levin, Ranking Member, Ways and Means Subcommittee on Health  
Hon. Greg Walden, Chairman, House Energy and Commerce Committee  
Hon. Frank Pallone, Jr., Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce Committee  
Hon. Michael Burgess, Chairman, Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health  
Hon. Gene Green, Ranking Member, Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health  
Hon. Orrin Hatch, Chairman, Senate Committee on Finance  
Hon. Ron Wyden, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Finance  
Hon. Patrick J. Toomey, Chairman, Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health Care  
Hon. Debbie Stabenow, Ranking Member, Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health Care  
Hon. Phil Roe, M.D., Co-Chair, GOP Doctors Caucus