



February 22, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Leader McCarthy, and Leader McConnell:

The Partnership for Medicaid Home-Based Care (PMHC)¹ urges Congress to appropriate additional funding for the Provider Relief Fund in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 omnibus appropriations legislation. Given the increased costs associated with retaining and recruiting an adequate Medicaid home care workforce, Congress should direct the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to allocate this funding to Medicaid providers to account for staffing expenses exclusive of and in addition to any preexisting federal or state funding. HRSA's Provider Relief Fund distributions to date have not accounted for the Omicron variant and its effect on Medicaid home care providers' ability to retain and recruit an adequate workforce at a time when consumer demand for home care continues to increase.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated the benefit of home-based care, the ability of Medicaid home care providers to increase wages for their workforce is constrained by the Medicaid payment rates set by states. Federal support to adequately recruit and compensate our workforce is critical to Medicaid providers' efforts to meet the demand for home-based care.

PMHC is comprised of providers, associations, managed care organizations, other payers, and technology solutions companies united in improving the quality and integrity of cost-effective Medicaid home and community-based services (HCBS). Home care workers, also known as direct care workers or caregivers, provide essential care and supports to the most vulnerable populations, including seniors, individuals with disabilities, and medically complex children, to help them with activities of daily living so they can remain in their homes.

The COVID-19 pandemic deeply exacerbated the Medicaid home care staffing shortages, and Medicaid HCBS providers report turning away as many as 50 percent of referrals due to a lack of

¹ Members of PMHC include: Addus Homecare, AlayaCare, Aveanna Healthcare, Axxess, BAYADA Home Health Care, BrightSpring Health Services, CareCentrix, Caring Associates, CellTrak Technologies, Centene Corporation, Council of State Home Care and Hospice Associations, Help at Home, HHAeXchange, Home Assist Health, LHC Group, Sandata Technologies, Simplura Health Group, TEAM Public Choices, Tendercare Home Health Services, and Thrive Skilled Pediatric Care.

workers. Without additional Federal funding for the Medicaid HCBS workforce, Medicaid beneficiaries' options to receive care in their homes will be limited.

Congress must keep in mind the lessons that have been learned in the last two years to inform the longer-term vision for how care is delivered to Medicaid beneficiaries. In particular, the pandemic has shown the value of enabling individuals to remain in their home with the support of home care rather than in an institutional setting. Providing supports to people to enable them to remain in their homes is beneficial to the individuals and their families and can save taxpayer dollars.

PMHC appreciates your thoughtful consideration of this funding request to address the unique workforce challenges facing Medicaid HCBS providers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Esmé Grewal', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Esmé Grewal
Chairman of the Board
Partnership for Medicaid Home-Based Care

cc: Chair Rosa DeLauro, House Appropriations Committee and House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Chair Patrick Leahy, Senate Appropriations Committee
Chair Patty Murray, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Ranking Member Kay Granger, House Appropriations Committee
Ranking Member Richard Shelby, Senate Appropriations Committee
Ranking Member Tom Cole, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Ranking Member Roy Blunt, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies