



July 24, 2014

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Burwell:

I write on behalf of CHE Trinity Health in support of the State of Indiana's July 2, 2014 application to expand the Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP) under a Section 1115 demonstration waiver. We are one of the nation's largest Catholic health systems, serving patients and communities in 20 states including Indiana, where Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center has a number of facilities clustered in and around South Bend, Mishawaka and Plymouth.

With a belief that health care is a basic human right and expanding access is both a moral and practical imperative, CHE Trinity Health has long advocated that expanding access and coverage is an essential element of health care transformation. Indeed, no issue has resulted in more advocacy engagement by CHE Trinity Health ministries than this one. Accordingly, CHE Trinity Health worked hard toward enactment of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and is now working assiduously to ensure successful implementation, including the law's Medicaid expansion.

CHE Trinity Health's ministry leaders have worked with policymakers and stakeholders in multiple states, including Georgia, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania, in support of Medicaid expansion, and to influence the policies contained in Medicaid demonstration waivers. Specifically, we have helped achieve coverage expansions in Michigan and Iowa, where the result has been not only more people covered, but a more efficient Medicaid program. Importantly, Medicaid expansion creates an excellent opportunity for Medicaid innovation.

In Indiana, Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center leaders have met with state officials and other stakeholders to stress the need for both innovation and expanded coverage in the Medicaid program, and shared the Medicaid expansion experiences and waiver approaches that other CHE Trinity Health states have taken. In addition, our leaders have worked to build grassroots momentum for expansion by engaging business leaders in the state.

Indiana's waiver application — dubbed "HIP 2.0" — builds on the tremendous success of HIP during the past six years. As noted in the State's application, "HIP members have consistently sought primary and preventive care at higher rates than traditional Medicaid members and have utilized hospital emergency departments for non-urgent care less often than their Medicaid counterparts. Member satisfaction surveys consistently report an overwhelming majority of HIP members — approximately 95% in 2012 — are satisfied with the program, and 98% indicated they would re-enroll if they left the program but became eligible again."

HIP 2.0 would augment Indiana's existing waiver by offering HIP to individuals previously excluded from the program due to eligibility restrictions and enrollment caps. It seeks to replace traditional Medicaid by offering a broader set of consumer-driven health care choices, and would expand HIP to those who fall below 138% of the federal poverty level.

With this expansion, approximately 350,000 individuals from working families will have access to coverage. Until then, the inequitable “doughnut hole” for working adults making too much to qualify for today’s Medicaid, but not enough for health insurance exchange products, will continue.

CHE Trinity Health believes that approving HIP 2.0 will not only improve the well-being of hardworking Hoosiers who are currently unable to access health coverage, but will also have a positive economic impact on the State of Indiana. This expansion will allow Indiana to offer cost-effective health care services to those who would otherwise go without. In addition, HIP 2.0 builds on the successful consumer-driven model of HIP that incentivizes patients to assume greater personal responsibility and accountability, and which has improved the health of Indiana residents.

Again, CHE Trinity Health strongly supports Indiana’s efforts to expand HIP under a Section 1115 demonstration waiver and urges you to approve the application expeditiously. CHE Trinity Health is committed to health care transformation, of which expanding access and coverage is an essential element.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact Tina Grant, Vice President of Public Policy and State Advocacy at (734) 343-1375 or granttw@trinity-health.org, with questions or for additional information.

Sincerely,



Paul G. Neumann
Executive Vice President and General Counsel

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