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PCC Strongly Supports the Kids' Access to Primary Care Act

March 23, 2021

The Honorable Frank Pallone Jr.
Chair
Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Anna Eshoo
Chair, Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Pallone, McMorris Rodgers, Eshoo, and Guthrie,

The Primary Care Collaborative would like to express its strongest support for H.R. 1025, the “Kids’ Access to Primary Care Act of 2021”, one of the bills being discussed in the subcommittee hearing “Building on the ACA: Legislation to Expand Health Care Coverage and Lower Costs.” The bill calls for a policy fix—that Medicaid pay primary care no less than Medicare—that is straightforward and absolutely essential today, more than ever. As a multi-stakeholder coalition of 60+ organizational members representing clinicians, payers, purchasers, and patients, the Primary Care Collaborative (PCC) is committed to strengthening access to comprehensive primary care as the foundation of a high-value health system.

Right now that foundation is stronger for some more than others. Patients covered by Medicaid often have substantially less access to primary care in their communities. This is, in part, a consequence of the lower rates Medicaid pays practices relative to Medicare and private payers¹ for the preventive, acute, and chronic care management services primary care provides. H.R.

¹ Zuckerman, Stephen, Laura Skopec, and Marni Epstein, "[Medicaid Physician Fees after the ACA Primary Care Fee Bump](#)," Urban Institute, March 2017.

1025 offers a clear way to address these pay gaps by ensuring that primary care clinicians be paid no less than the Medicare rate.

We know such a solution can help to improve access to primary care for underserved communities. The Affordable Care Act mandated a two-year increase in Medicaid primary care payments to Medicare levels for 2013 and 2014. During that time, appointments for Medicaid enrollees became more available, with greater availability in states that instituted greater increases in reimbursement.^{2,3} Yet Congress did not reauthorize the pay increase after 2014.

Worse, vulnerable communities have been hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic, bearing a disproportionate number of virus-related deaths, along with economic hardship. Primary care plays a first-line role in diagnosing, triaging, and treating the disease, in addition to continuing to offer preventive care and chronic disease management. It also acts as a critical coordinator between behavioral health clinicians, other specialists, and community-based social care providers.

Now, more than ever, we need a robust foundation of primary care for all communities across the country, especially those most under-served by our health system. The Kids' Access to Primary Care Act ensures that Medicaid programs invest enough in primary care so that primary care can invest in their patients, regardless of health coverage, for the long-term.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support for H.R. 1025.

Sincerely,



Ann Greiner
President & CEO
Primary Care Collaborative

² Candon M, Zuckerman S, Wissoker D, et al. "[Declining Medicaid Fees and Primary Care Appointment Availability for New Medicaid Patients.](#)" JAMA Intern Med.2018;178(1):145–146. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2017.6302

³ Polsky, Daniel, Michael Richards, Simon Basseyn, Douglas Wissoker, Genevieve M. Kenney, Stephen Zuckerman, and Karin V. Rhodes. 2015. "[Appointment Availability after Increases in Medicaid Payments for Primary Care.](#)" New England Journal of Medicine. 372 (6):537-45.

PCC Executive Members

Below is a list of the Primary Care Collaborative's executive members that pay dues to the organization and support its mission. Membership does not indicate explicit endorsement of this letter.

AARP

Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC)

Alzheimer's Association

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP)

American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

American Academy of PAs (AAPA)

American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)

American Board of Family Medicine Foundation (ABFM Foundation)

American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation (ABIM Foundation)

American Cancer Society

American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP)

American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM)

American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFPP)

American College of Osteopathic Internists (ACOI)

American College of Physicians (ACP)

American Psychiatric Association Foundation

American Psychological Association

America's Agenda

Anthem

Ascension Medical Group

Black Women's Health Imperative (BWHI)

Blue Cross Blue Shield Michigan

Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield

Community Care of North Carolina

CVS Health

Geisinger Health

Harvard Medical School Center for Primary Care

HealthTeamWorks

Humana, Inc.

IBM

Innovaccer

Institute for Patient and Family-Centered Care (IPFCC)

Johns Hopkins Community Physicians, Inc.

Johnson & Johnson

Mathematica Policy Research

Mental Health America

Merck & Co.

Morehouse School of Medicine - National Center for Primary Care

National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions

National Association of ACOs (NAACOS)
National Coalition on Health Care
National Interprofessional Initiative on Oral Health (NIIOH)
National PACE Association
National Partnership for Women and Families
NCQA
Purchaser Business Group on Health (PBGH)
PCC EHR Solutions
Pediatric Innovation Center
Primary Care Development Corporation (PCDC)
Society of General Internal Medicine (SGIM)
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM)
SS&C Health
St. Louis Area Business Health Coalition
Takeda Pharmaceuticals U.S.A.
The Verden Group's Patient Centered Solutions
UPMC Health Plan
URAC
