

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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April 18, 2023

Ms. Sophia Tripoli
Director of Health Care Innovation
Families USA
1225 New York Avenue N.W., Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Tripoli:

Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Health on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, to testify at the hearing entitled, "Lowering Unaffordable Costs: Examining Transparency and Competition in Health Care."

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. The format of your responses to these questions should be as follows: (1) the name of the Member whose question you are addressing, (2) the complete text of the question you are addressing in bold, and (3) your answer to that question in plain text.

To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions and requests with a transmittal letter by the close of business on Tuesday, May 2, 2023. Your responses should be mailed to Jolie Brochin, Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515 and e-mailed in Word format to Jolie.Brochin@mail.house.gov.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,



Brett Guthrie
Chair
Subcommittee on Health

cc: Anna Eshoo, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Health

Attachment 1—Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers

1. I was encouraged to read in the 2023 Medicare Trustees Report that CMS actions, including the removal of hip and knee procedures off the “inpatient only list” and allowing patients to receive and doctors to perform additional services in the more efficient and less expensive outpatient setting, have reduced total Medicare expenditures and contributed to extending the program’s solvency a little longer through 2031. How should Congress think about additional actions to enhance patient and provider choices by encouraging more services to be safely administered in the outpatient setting?
 - a. Would allowing more procedures to be done in outpatient settings, like Ambulatory Surgery Centers, enhance competition among providers and encourage hospitals to compete with ASCs and other hospitals who offer outpatient services?
 - b. Does research and existing data suggest patients would still be able to receive quality and safe care for certain additional services in outpatient settings?

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.

Hospital mergers and acquisitions have been increasing. 90 percent of metropolitan hospital markets in the U.S. are highly concentrated, and many regions are dominated by a single system. Studies suggest health care industry consolidation is driving up the prices of health care services for families.

1. Can you describe some of the trends you are seeing and explain the incentives for growing industry consolidation?
2. Can you briefly describe how consolidation impacts affordability and quality of care for consumers?
3. Recent investigations into hospital closures have raised concerns about the role of private equity in health care. Can you describe how private equity arrangements may impact affordability and patient access to care?

The Honorable Robin Kelly

1. Can you discuss how the final rule can help policymakers better understand the drivers of healthcare costs and implement policies to improve affordability?
2. What are some examples of industry gaming that is clouding the pricing data?

The Honorable Angie Craig

According to a recent analysis published in the Minneapolis Star Tribune entitled, *A Minnesota family's desperate search for care reveals state's mental health crisis*, reimbursement for mental health generally is lower than for other diagnoses.

1. Can you explain this trend?
2. That same analysis suggests that health plans for people in Medicaid paid significantly less than commercial health insurers for mental health diagnoses. Can you explain that?
3. How can we increase competition across the health care sector to bring down costs for patients?
4. As I am sure you are well aware, medical debt can be crushing, and Minnesotans are feeling the weight just as many other Americans are. How can comprehensive health care price transparency give my constituents financial certainty and peace of mind that they won't be bankrupted by their care?