



Indiana Dental Association

September 19, 2014

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

Dear Madame Secretary:

The dental needs of many of Indiana's disadvantaged citizens are significant, yet some of the most vulnerable have no dental insurance, limiting their access to care. Unfortunately, these citizens often turn to hospital Emergency Departments for their care. An Indianapolis area hospital states that a dental diagnosis is one of the top four reasons why a patient is seen in the Emergency Department and a recent study done by the Anderson Economic Group concluded that the average stay for a "dental" hospitalization was \$12,448 in 2011.

While we applaud the Pence Administration's efforts to recognize the dental need that exists and their effort to provide dental benefits for through the HIP Plus program, we disagree on how the benefit will should be administered. The State intends on carving dental into medical managed care organizations which will subcontract the administration of the dental benefit. Historically, medical managed care organizations do not represent, provide, or recognize the standards of care of all dental specialty organizations and the American Dental Association.

While the dental benefit administration would be subcontracted by the medical managed care organizations, these subcontractors have a history of placing cumbersome policies in place for providers and patients that delays or denies care for the patient. Delaying or denying care is not an oral health strategy or in the best interests of the patient.

In summary, the Indiana Dental Association supports the Pence Administration's Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP) 2.0, but encourages continued collaboration with the dental profession regarding how the program will be administered. Together, we can develop a comprehensive oral health policy that focuses on prevention, cost effectiveness and administrative efficiencies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven J. Holm, DDS". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Steven J. Holm, DDS
President

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