

October 8, 2015

Victoria Wachino
Director
Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
200 Independence Avenue, Southwest
Washington, DC 20201

Re: Washington Application for Medicaid Transformation Waiver

Dear Ms. Wachino:

On behalf of the Pierce County Accountable Community of Health (ACH), I am writing to express our strong support for Washington State's 1115 Global Medicaid Transformation Waiver application to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Pierce County is the second largest county in Washington State with a population of 813,600. It includes 23 incorporated cities and towns and is comprised of culturally and socioeconomically diverse urban, suburban, rural and island communities. Pierce County was identified as having one of the highest rates of diabetes, heart disease, and stroke; some of the highest health costs in the state; and significant number of communities lacking access to healthcare and other services. Furthermore, this region has greater levels of health disparities by race/ethnicity, geographic location, and income.

Our regional ACH planning body is called Pierce County Health Innovation Partnership (PCHIP) and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department serves as the administrative body. The mission of PCHIP is to improve the health of our community by collaboratively delivering integrated and cost-effective healthcare and human service solutions across Pierce County. Since early 2014, we have built on existing community coalitions and formed strong partnership with major health care systems, provider networks, payers, community-based organizations, business, and governmental agencies. Our ACH has a governance structure with 17 different sectors and strives to present multi-sectoral voices to transform the health care system and improve population health. We have identified a few key priority areas for health innovation to increase capacity for healthcare teams, integrate physical and behavioral health services, and build system infrastructure to be used across providers.

The 1115 Global Medicaid Waiver will enable us to further support the regional efforts to transform health system. It will bring substantial investments, resources, and flexibility to current and future projects to improve population health, accelerate transition to value-based payment, and reduce avoidable intensive service utilization by improving care coordination.

The Pierce County ACH serves an important role as a coordinating entity. With the approval of the Global Medicaid Waiver, our ACH will be able to collaboratively work across systems of care, build clinical-community linkages, implement strategies to improve population health, and develop innovative payment mechanisms. We are ready to partner with the State to support delivery system transformation and better serve Washingtonians.

Thank you for your consideration of Washington's 1115 Global Medicaid Transformation Waiver application. We look forward to continuing to work with the Washington State Health Care Authority to transform the healthcare system and improve the health of the community.

Sincerely,



Anthony L-T Chen, MD, MPH

Director of Health

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

Backbone Organization for the Pierce County Accountable Community of Health