



Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton

August 3, 2016

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

Secretary Burwell,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Healthy Ohio Program 1115 Demonstration Waiver. Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton's mission is, "Improving lives by providing quality primary and preventive health care services to those in need, regardless of ability to pay". As such, we serve 14,950 patients, 70% percent of which are currently enrolled in the Medicaid Program. Our comprehensive care team includes 98 dedicated professionals that provide such services as primary medical, behavioral health, and oral health care services. Additionally, our health center has received Level 2 PCMH designation.

While our community will always have a medical home at Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton (CHCGD) regardless of insurance status or ability to pay, we see firsthand how patients' access to health insurance – or lack thereof – can literally change their lives. Shortly after Medicaid Expansion started a married couple met with our Outreach & Enrollment staff for assistance to complete an application and they were approved. They came back when it was time for their recertification and the husband shared how grateful he was to have Medicaid. He stated that he had not seen a doctor for many, many years due to lack of insurance. Since the time that we first met with him, he had gone to the doctor and found that he had a tumor on his brain. He had successful surgery to remove the tumor and was now cancer free. He suspected that he could have died had it not been for having Medicaid because he probably would have continued not seeing a doctor or may not have been seen in enough time to have a successful surgery.

As more of our patients have connected to health insurance, we have seen a significant impact on our operations and our ability to provide comprehensive care to our community. For example, in March 2014, CHCGD renovated and reopened the East Dayton Dental Center. The space sat empty for five years until CHCGD secured public and private grant funding to totally gut and renovate the space. CHCGD would not be able to sustain the ongoing operations of the dental center without the expansion of Medicaid.

Our health center is supportive of encouraging preventative care and promoting healthy behaviors, however we believe **changes to Ohio's Medicaid program should only increase access to quality care and improve health outcomes**. As it is proposed, the Healthy Ohio 1115 Waiver will put much of our gains over the past few years in jeopardy.

On behalf of the 14,950 patients we serve, thank you allowing us to share our concerns about the Healthy Ohio Program 1115 Demonstration Waiver and its negative impacts on our community.

Respectfully,



Gregg Hopkins
Executive Director