

January 24, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221, Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader Schumer, and Leader McConnell:

We are writing to request that Congress prioritize extending the Acute Hospital Care at Home (AHCAH) waiver program as part of the next government funding package on February 18th. Many seniors needing acute-level care, and their caregivers, have been able to receive services at home during the pandemic. Temporarily extending the program will allow for additional data collection and lessons learned, as well as the time necessary for a legislative process to establish a permanent Acute Care at Home program for Medicare patients.

The AHCAH program has been extremely popular, and as of January 20th, there are 90 health systems and 197 hospitals in 34 states participating in the program.¹ The success of the AHCAH waiver builds on decades of evidence generated by Acute Care at Home programs in the United States. Research shows that these programs are at least as safe as facility-based inpatient care and result in improved clinical outcomes, higher rates of patient satisfaction, and reduced health care costs.²

Importantly, patients have indicated that they want to receive care at home with the demand for services provided in the safety of a patient's home soaring during the pandemic. In fact, according to a recent survey, 85 percent of adults say it should be a high priority for the federal government to expand Medicare coverage for at-home health care.³ At the same time, an overwhelming majority of people who have received care in the home were satisfied (88 percent) and would be likely to recommend to family and friends (85 percent).⁴

Notably, home-based models enabled by the AHCAH waiver contribute to health equity by giving historically disenfranchised communities the option to conveniently receive care at home, which helps

¹ CMS. "Approved Facilities/Systems for Acute Hospital Care at Home." [Access Here](#).

² Hospital at Home Users Group. "The Science of Hospital at Home." [Access Here](#).

³ "New Public Opinion Poll Finds Strong Support for Home Health, Choose Home Care Act." (September 2021). [Access Here](#).

⁴ "Moving Health Home Fields National Survey of Consumers." (December 2021). [Access Here](#).

to reduce barriers to facility-based care such as access to transportation. Home-based care also promotes trust and communication between the patient and provider by removing institutional barriers and placing the interaction in a familiar setting.

As the Omicron and other COVID-19 variants persist as a continued threat, Congress must ensure that the time-limited AHCAH waiver does not abruptly expire. Therefore, an extender should be triggered by the conclusion of the PHE declaration. This will limit Medicare beneficiaries from experiencing gaps in care while providing current and potential participants more assurance in the future of the waiver.

By temporarily extending the AHCAH waiver, Congress effectively builds the bridge from successful implementation during COVID-19 to the post-pandemic experience while also allowing additional data to be collected and studied for the development of a long-term option for patients. **We ask that Congress extend the AHCAH waiver through the upcoming funding package while working to develop an innovative, permanent Acute Care in the Home program.**

Thank you for your continued support for care in the home for all Americans. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,

Acadian Ambulance Service
Ascension
BrightStar Care
Castell and Intermountain Healthcare
Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC)
CommonSpirit Health
Compassus
Contessa Health, Inc.
Corstrata, Inc.
Current Health
DispatchHealth
Elara Caring
Elder Aide Services
Emcara Health
Family Resource Home Care
FirstLight Home Care, LLC
Hackensack Meridian Health
Healing Hands Healthcare, LLC
Health Council of East Central Florida / Care-A-Medix
Healthcare Leadership Council
Home Instead, Inc.
LeadingAge
Little Black Bag House Calls, LLC
Love In Home Senior Care

Midwest Home Physicians Inc.
Moving Health Home
MultiCare Health System
National Association for Home Care & Hospice
National Committee for Quality Assurance
National Home Infusion Association
New Era Healthcare
Ochsner Health
Option Care Health, Inc.
Outset Medical
PharmAdva, LLC
Physician Housecalls, LLC
Right at Home
Sage Health Just For Seniors Inc.
Saint Luke's Health System
ScriptDrop, Inc.
Sprinter Health
Signify Health
Summit Healthcare Association
Telehealth Alliance of Oregon
Thundercloud LLC (PROCLE HEALTHWORKS)
UCHealth
Vitivity
8thSquare Co.