

Medicaid Access Coalition of Pennsylvania

May 4, 2022

The Honorable Tom Wolf

Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

The Honorable Meg Snead

Acting Secretary of Human Services
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
625 Forester Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Wolf and Acting Secretary Snead,

We are extremely concerned that hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvanians who rely on Medical Assistance for health care coverage, many of whom we serve, work with, and employ, will soon be denied access to their chosen providers. This problem emanates from harmful “work stoppage” language contained in the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services’ Physical Health Medicaid Managed Care Organizations’ (MCOs) agreements.

We strongly oppose this provision and request that it be removed.

Imagine you have a disability, are an expecting mother, or the parent of a child with complex needs and a well-established relationship with your physician. You have received continuing care and long-term treatments at the same place and with the same people for many years. Then, suddenly you are told that you have to find a new provider that is in-network or keep your same provider at out-of-network costs. It may be difficult to find convenient in-network care that is accepting new patients, which clearly creates a crisis for you and your family.

Now, imagine that you are trying to find a new doctor, dentist, or hospital at a time when the health care system has already been stretched to capacity, with workforce availability and shortages getting worse by the day. By barring access to a wide swath of previously eligible facilities, you may go without care for months or decide to forego care altogether.

Beyond the immediate impact this contract language would have on patients, many of whom have complex health care needs, it would further exacerbate the inequity in our health care system. Those with commercial insurance would continue receiving the care of their choice, while those on Medicaid would face the burden of having to find new in-network providers in an already stressed system or pay out-of-network costs.

While your administration has been a champion for expanding health care coverage, that effort will be called into question if access to critical care is not available to those who need it most. Regrettably, for hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvanians, this provision undercuts the crucial gains you have fought to secure.

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On behalf of Pennsylvanians who rely upon Medicaid and wish to keep their provider, we urge you to remove the inclusion of the “work stoppage” language in the Commonwealth’s MCO agreements.

Sincerely,

Access Mob Pittsburgh
Achieva
Aimed Human Services
The Arc of Pennsylvania
Autism Connection of PA
Bethlehem Haven
Bucks County Women's Advocacy Coalition
Connexus Human Service Network
Disability Options Network, Center for Independent Living
East End Cooperative Ministry
Healthy Start, Inc.
Interim HealthCare of Pittsburgh
LEND Center (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities)
March of Dimes
PA APSE (Association of People Supporting Employment First)
Pennsylvania Association of Home and Community Based Service Providers
People's Emergency Center
TRAIL
Transition Consults
Transitional Paths to Independent Living
UDSF (United Disabilities Services Foundation)
Voices for Independence
Women and Girls Foundation of Southwest Pennsylvania
Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh

cc: Elena Cross, *Chief of Staff, Governor Wolf*
Tara Piechowicz, *Deputy Chief of Staff, Governor Wolf*
Senator Patrick Browne
Senator Jake Corman
Senator Kim Ward
Senator Jay Costa
Senator Vincent Hughes

Sally Kozak, *State Medicaid Director*
Representative Kerry Benninghoff
Representative Bryan Cutler
Representative Stanley Saylor
Representative Joanna McClinton
Representative Matt Bradford