



April 21, 2020

The Honorable Alex M. Azar  
Secretary  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

Netsmart is the technology partner -- and bridge to the rest of healthcare -- for human services and post-acute provider organizations nationwide. We provide electronic health records, data analytics tools, care coordination and telehealth solutions, among others to more than 560,000 providers in 35,000 client organizations nationwide, helping them improve quality of life for more than 30 million persons each day.

We applaud and appreciate your rapid action that included home health and hospice providers in the initial distribution of \$30 billion from the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund (PHSSEF).

We are writing about the compelling need for funding for other providers from the remaining \$70 billion in PHSSEF funding. These providers serve the underserved -- high-risk patients that are often the most frequent utilizers of health services, many with chronic co-occurring health conditions that further heightens their risk from COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented financial crisis that threatens the sustainability of many of these providers with debilitating revenue losses and significant cash flow disruptions. For example, a survey by the National Council for Behavioral Health in conjunction with its state affiliates indicated that nearly half (47%) of behavioral health provider respondents in New Jersey have closed programs. Revenue reductions vary between 60% to 90%, with some providers reducing their staffs by half. The Ohio Council for Behavioral Health and Family Service Providers reported that 46% of its members have less than 30 days' cash on hand and 55% are using cash reserves to meet basic operational costs.

We concur with the request by the National Council for Behavioral Health and National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers for a \$38.5 billion infusion of emergency funds for community behavioral health organizations (CBHOs) to avert a large-scale public health crisis, with a significant portion of these emergency funds dedicated to CBHOs enrolled in Medicaid and providing mental health and substance use treatment and management services to some of the nation's most vulnerable persons.

We also concur with the recommendation of American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) to follow a similar model as the one established for Medicare by providing payments in amounts equal to 6.2% of providers' 2019 Medicaid revenue to providers of long-term care and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Thank you for your consideration for this urgent need to maintain and enhance an interoperable continuum of care in our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin Scalia".

Kevin Scalia  
Executive Vice President, Corporate Development  
Netsmart

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