

May 14, 2020

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: FY 2021 Medicaid Provider Rates

Dear Governor Hogan,

The signatory organizations and the families and individuals we serve want to thank you for your leadership during this crisis and for the support you have provided the health care community throughout your Administration. We applaud these efforts and request your continued support by ensuring that the Fiscal Year 2021 budget contains the mandatory 4% rate increase designated for community behavioral health, developmental disabilities, complex medical needs, and senior care services.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many providers in the behavioral health, developmental disability, medically complex, and senior care communities were at a crossroads. Due to chronic underfunding coupled with rising costs, providers were either operating in the negative or with very small margins. Unlike other businesses that can pass added costs on to consumers, these programs do not have this option. The Marylanders they serve are either on Medicaid, which reimburses at a set rate that must be used to cover all expenses; receive subsidies through the State grant program; or pay out-of-pocket on fixed incomes and cannot afford higher fees.

As is the case with hospitals and other essential service providers, these professionals have been upended by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is unclear how these community organizations will withstand this challenge and whether the provider network will be sufficiently robust to meet a steady or increased demand for critical services after this crisis has passed. Providing the full 4% rate increase in the Fiscal Year 2021 budget is essential for the ongoing viability of these provider organizations and for the health and safety of the individuals they serve. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated a workforce crisis that was near a breaking point *before* the outbreak. Adequate service rates are essential to maintaining skilled staff in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis and in ensuring there will be sufficient staffing levels to serve our friends and family members post-crisis.

We appreciate the budget challenges the State will face going forward and understand that there will undoubtedly be reductions in current budget allocations for Fiscal Year 2021. However, we collectively request that as you move forward with your budget evaluation and decision making there remains a commitment to maintain the full 4% rate increase for these essential services. It is not only the viability of the provider community that is at stake but also the State's ability to continue to reduce unnecessary emergency department and inpatient utilization throughout the pandemic and beyond. This public health emergency has made it clear that critical health care services must not be taken for granted or jeopardized by lack of sufficient funding. Seniors, people with complex medical needs and developmental disabilities, and those who rely on behavioral health services, will have nowhere to turn if budget cuts decimate these vital services.

Sincerely,

Abilities Network
Adventist HealthCare Behavioral Health and Wellness Services
Alzheimer's Association of Greater Maryland
Appalachian Crossroads
Archway Station
Ardmore Enterprises
Arrow Child & Family Services
Arundel Lodge
Aspire Wellness Center, Inc.
Athelas Institute
Baltimore City Substance Abuse Directorate
Baltimore Crisis Response, Inc.
Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition
Behavioral Health Partners of Frederick
Behavioral Health System Baltimore
Bello Machre
Benedictine
Board of Child Care
CALMRA
Calvert County Behavioral Health
Caroline Center
Carroll Co. Youth Svc Bureau
Catholic Charities
Catholic Charities of Baltimore
Center for Children
Center for Social Change
Cerentiy, Inc.
Channel Marker
Charles Co. Freedom Landing
Chesapeake Care Resources
Chesapeake Center
Chesapeake Home Health Care
CHI
Chimes, Inc.
Community Connections
Community Living, Inc.
Community Options
Community Residences
Companions, Inc.
Compass
Cornerstone Montgomery
Corsica River Mental Health Services
Creative Options, Inc.
Crossroads Community
Delmarva Community Services
Eastern Shore Behavioral Health Coalition

Maryland Association of Adult Day Services
Maryland Association of Community Services
Maryland Coalition of Families
Maryland Coalition on Mental Health and Aging
Maryland Community Connection
Maryland Inclusive Housing Corporation
Maryland Psychiatric Society
Maryland Rural Health Association
Maryland Senior Citizen Action Network
Maryland-DC Society of Addiction Medicine
Maryland-National Capital Homecare Association
MedSource Community Services
Mental Health Association of Maryland
Mentor Network
Mid Shore Behavioral Health
Mid-Atlantic Human Service Corp.
Mosaic Community Services
National Alliance on Mental Illness, Maryland
National Association of Social Workers, Maryland Chapter
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Maryland Chapter
NCIA
New Horizons Supported Services, Inc.
NorthStar Special Services, Inc.
Omni House, Inc.
On Our Own of Maryland
Parker Psychiatric Services Inc
Pathways, Inc.
PDG Rehabilitation Services, Inc.
Penn-Mar Human Services
People Encouraging People
Powell Recovery Center
Pressley Ridge
Progress Unlimited, Inc.
Prologue, Inc.
Providence Center
Psychotherapeutic Treatment Services, Inc.
Ray of Hope
Regeneration Project
Rehabilitation Systems, Inc.
Resource Connections Inc.
Richcroft
San Mar Children's Home
Service Coordination, Inc.
Shared Support Maryland

EBED Community Improvement
eMerge
EPIC
EveryMind, Inc.
Families First Counseling
Family Services Foundation
Family Services, Inc.
Flying Colors of Success
Forward Visions
Friends Aware
Gallagher Services
Garrett County Lighthouse
Goodwill Ind. of the Chesapeake (STEP)
Goodwill Industries of Monocacy Valley
Greater Washington Society for Clinical Social Work
Harford Belair Community Mental Health Center
Head Injury Rehabilitation and Referral Services
Hope Health Systems
Horizon Foundation of Howard County
Humanim
Inspired Options Inc.
Institute for Behavior Resources
Itineris
Jewish Community Services
JSSA
Jubilee Association of Maryland
Key Point Health Services
L.I.F.E. Inc.
La Clinica del Pueblo
Langton Green
Latter Rain
Leading By Example, LLC
Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors of Maryland
Life Renewal Services
LifeSpan Network
Linwood Center
Lourie Center
Lower Shore Clinic
Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy Institute
Maryland Addictions Directors Council
Maryland Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence

Sheppard Pratt Health Systems
Shura
Somerset Community Services
Southern Maryland Community Network
Spectrum Support
Spring Dell Center
St. Peter's Adult Learning Center
Star Community
Sunrise Community of Maryland
Target Community
The Arc Baltimore
The Arc Carroll County
The Arc Central Chesapeake Region
The Arc Maryland
The Arc Montgomery County
The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region
The Arc of Frederick County
The Arc of Howard County
The Arc Prince George's County
The Arc Southern Maryland
The Arc Washington County
The Center for Life Enrichment
The Children's Guild
The Coordinating Center
The Harford Center
The League for People with Disabilities
The Maryland Clinical Social Work Coalition
The Mental Health Center of Western MD
The National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, Maryland/DC Chapter
The Prince George's County Provider Council
The Rock Creek Foundation
Therapeutic Living for Families
Thrive Behavioral Health, LLC
UMMC - Div. Community Psychiatry
Unified Community Connections
United Community Supports of Maryland
Upper Bay Counseling & Support Svcs
Vesta, Inc.
Volunteers of America/Chesapeake
Way Station, Inc.
Wicomico Co. Health Dept.
WIN Family Services, Inc.
Work Opportunities Unlimited

cc: Boyd K. Rutherford, Lieutenant Governor, State of Maryland
Robert R. Neall, Secretary, Maryland Department of Health
David R. Brinkley, Secretary, Maryland Department of Budget and Management
Diane M. Croghan, Deputy Chief of Staff, Governor's Office