



January 5, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Reid,

Thank you for your tireless efforts to enact meaningful health care reform legislation. We are contacting you about Medicaid quality measurement provisions that are included in both the House and Senate health care reform bills (House Sec. 1730, "Adult and Maternity Quality Measurement for Medicaid and CHIP," and Senate Sec. 2701, "Adult Quality Measurement for Medicaid"). Performance measurement is critical for achieving goals of improved health care quality and value.

As you finalize the legislation, we urge you to combine the best Medicaid quality measurement elements of both bills, including assurance that:

- Measures that are developed and issued include those that apply to newborns, and development is coordinated with CHIPRA;
- The Secretary is authorized to enter into agreements with qualified entities to develop needed measures;
- Measure development and public reporting processes are aligned with other elements of the bill relating to using endorsed measures and obtaining multi-stakeholder input;
- Processes assure that States are consulted on reporting formats; and
- Dedicated funds are appropriated.

Most specifically, as women's and maternal-child health organizations, we urge the negotiators to include in the final bill the language specifying "Maternity Care Quality Measures" from Sec. 1730 of the House legislation. The intent is to prevent the large vulnerable population of newborns from falling through the cracks between the new legislation and CHIPRA child health quality provisions. It is essential to include newborns in this new quality measurement program because prenatal through postpartum "maternity care" impacts both childbearing women *and* newborns. As care and well being of these two populations are intertwined and newborn Medicaid data are available through their mothers' Medicaid numbers, the same performance measurement program should cover both childbearing women and newborns.

We also believe that the Medicaid quality measurement provisions should be strengthened in several ways and recommend that:

- Providers receive confidential performance reporting (with risk-adjustment as appropriate) for improvement purposes,
- Providers have the opportunity to confirm data accuracy prior to any public reporting, and
- Development and implementation dates are extended to provide adequate time for the measure development process.

Thank you again for your leadership on health care reform. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Maureen Corry, Executive Director, Childbirth Connection, at 212 777-5000 x4 or corry@childbirthconnection.org.

Sincerely yours,

American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
Childbirth Connection
National Women's Health Network
Raising Women's Voices
Our Bodies Ourselves

Cc. The Honorable Max Baucus
The Honorable Tom Harkin
The Honorable Chris Dodd
The Honorable Charlie Rangel
The Honorable Henry Waxman
The Honorable George Miller