

FOIA MARKER

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ISDA - Infections Disease Society of America

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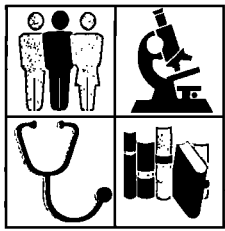
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December 3, 1999

Nancy Ann Min De Parle
Administrator
Health Care Financing Administration
Room 413 G Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Ms. DeParle:

I am writing on behalf of the HIV Managed Care Network of the Infectious Diseases Society of America to underscore our strong belief that federal Medicaid managed care regulations should reference federal HIV treatment guidelines as the standard of care for HIV/AIDS adult and pediatric patients receiving care under state Medicaid managed care programs.

As you know, HIV is a disease of significant and growing complexity. Moreover, failure to appropriately treat HIV-infected patients has negative implications for the public health in addition to serious medical consequences for individuals. The current federal HIV treatment guidelines are evidence-based, which is still relatively rare in medicine. And there is research that clearly demonstrates that clinical expertise in managing HIV/AIDS patients translates into better outcomes relative to the frequency and duration of hospitalizations, number and severity of disease complications, and improvements in survival. Without a requirement that each state Medicaid program provide the federal standard of HIV/AIDS care to Medicaid beneficiaries living with HIV/AIDS, we expect there to continue to be great variation among state Medicaid programs in regard to the quality of HIV care available.

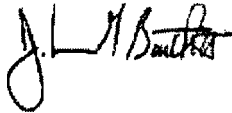
The October 6th communication from HCFA to state Medicaid directors underscored the importance of the federal treatment guidelines and experienced providers to HIV care. We strongly support the guidance offered in this letter, but are doubtful that all states will comply with its advice. Some state Medicaid programs have been so unresponsive to the cost and complexity of HIV care that experienced providers have been forced from the program and the care of HIV-infected beneficiaries has clearly been compromised.

The Medicaid managed care regulations provide the best opportunity to raise the bar for quality HIV care under the Medicaid program and to eliminate the gap between the HIV care available to Medicaid beneficiaries compared to individuals insured by private third-party payors. Equally as important, federal regulations on HIV care standards will make an important contribution to eliminating the sharp differences in HIV care that exist

between state Medicaid programs and will create an environment where the best practices adopted by a few Medicaid programs become the models for all.

Please don't hesitate to contact the Network's staff director, Christine Lubinski, or me if you have additional questions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. G. Bartlett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Bartlett" clearly distinguishable.

John G. Bartlett, M.D.
Chair
HIV Managed Care Network

CC: Tim Westmoreland, Director
Center for Medicaid and State Operations

Rachel Block, Deputy Director
Center for Medicaid and State Operations

Todd Summers, Deputy Director
White House Office on AIDS Policy