



March 22, 2022

**Subject: Hospital Inpatient Services Modernization Act**

Dear Members of the California Congressional Delegation:

California hospitals' experiences with the acute hospital care at home (AHCAH) waiver have provided a unique opportunity to demonstrate that at-home hospital care can be a reliable and impactful way to deliver effective care and a meaningful part of the continuum of patient care. As we prepare to move beyond the current public health emergency (PHE), the continued operation of AHCAH will contribute to an essential transformation of patient care.

On behalf of our more than 400 hospitals and health systems, the California Hospital Association (CHA) is pleased to support the Hospital Inpatient Services Modernization Act (H.R. 7053/S. 3792), which will provide for an extension of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) AHCAH waiver.

The current AHCAH model was developed in the context of the COVID-19 PHE, as the Department of Health and Human Services Secretary took steps to provide hospitals and health systems with greater flexibility to ensure the continued delivery of safe and effective care in our communities. Specifically, CMS waived certain nursing requirements in the hospital conditions of participation. Waiving these requirements using a provider-specific approval process has allowed qualified patients the opportunity to receive care in their homes while maximizing inpatient bed capacity at hospitals and limiting potential COVID-19 exposure for practitioners and non-COVID-19 patients.

Under the AHCAH waiver, CMS developed a comprehensive and detailed set of requirements to address critical components of hospital care, including patient eligibility criteria, frequency of on-site and virtual clinical visits, and patient and caregiver communication with the medical team. Hospitals interested in providing AHCAH must receive prior approval from CMS and must demonstrate how they will meet these requirements for patients in their homes. CMS has also established a regular reporting process to ensure that the quality of patient care and outcomes are not adversely affected.

The programs established during the PHE have demonstrated their ability to provide safe and effective care, while maintaining optimal outcomes and high patient satisfaction. For example, one CHA member was among the first health systems in the country to receive CMS approval for AHCAH and has been operating AHCAH in six hospitals throughout the state since early in the pandemic. This health system reports that, between May 2020 and December 2021, it has cared for more than 1,000 patients, while reducing 30-day re-admission rates and maintaining high patient satisfaction.

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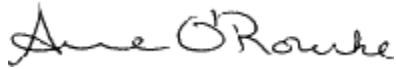
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We urge you to support the bipartisan Hospital Inpatient Services Modernization Act. This important legislation would extend the existing AHCAH waiver program for two years beyond the end of the COVID-19 PHE and allow these innovative programs to continue delivering high-quality care to patients in their own homes while providing CMS with data to inform the potential development of a permanent version of the program.

Sincerely,



Anne O'Rourke  
Senior Vice President, Federal Relations

cc: The Honorable Earl Blumenauer  
The Honorable Brad Wenstrup  
The Honorable Tom Carper  
The Honorable Tim Scott