

TESTIMONY OF NATHAN BRADLEY

TENDER HEART ADULT DAY CARE

MEDICAID COMMISSION

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My name is Nathan Bradley, and I am the Program Director for Tender Heart Adult Day Care in Reisterstown, Maryland. I would like to thank the Commission for the opportunity to testify here today and am pleased to have Maryland's own Tony McCann, our Secretary of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, as a Commission member.

First, I want to commend the Commission for putting together a Chairman's Mark and draft report that take a close look at the serious challenges we face related to long-term care. As the Commission recognizes in both of these documents, adult day care services are one of the key alternatives to nursing home care that Medicaid beneficiaries and their families should have available to them, and states should be given as much flexibility as possible in providing such options to their citizens.

As an employee of Tender Heart, I am proud to help provide Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) to seniors and individuals with disabilities. Our program provides services to over 150 Medicaid individuals per year. These individuals range in age from 23 to 82. We provide these individuals with wrap-around support services that help stabilize the individual and decrease hospital and other institutionalized care inpatient stays. These services include nursing supervision and treatments, nutritional services, podiatry services, transportation to and from the center and to doctors' appointments, individual and group psychiatric services, two meals and a snack daily, and a structured therapeutic activity program. We often admit individuals who have a long history of frequent inpatient hospitalizations. Once at Tender Heart, the interdisciplinary team provides the individual with an array of services aimed at stabilizing the individual. The specialized services that Adult Day Programs provide help save the health care system money by decreasing the number and duration of inpatient stays for the individuals we serve.

What is Adult Day Health Care?

Adult Day Health Care (or Adult Day Care Services) is a cost-effective alternative to nursing home care and a preventive health care service for frail elders or adults with chronic, disabling conditions who are at risk of institutional placement. Almost every state authorizes and regulates the provision of some type of ADHC, usually through a Home and Community-Based Services 1915(c) Medicaid waiver. However, the following nine innovator states have been offering it as an optional benefit under their Medicaid state plans since the mid-1970s: Maryland; California; Massachusetts; New

Hampshire; New Jersey; New York; Texas; Washington; and Nevada. Together, these states currently serve approximately 100,000 Medicaid beneficiaries in ADHC programs.

These model, innovative ADHC programs provide eligible individuals with individualized programs that manage chronic conditions. They also comport with Secretary Leavitt's goal of providing expanded choices and enhanced access to health care services in home- and community-based settings. Thus, the programs offered in Maryland and the other eight states reduce the risk factors for more expensive nursing home placement, institutional care, and emergency room visits by providing services such as skilled nursing care; therapeutic activities and socialization; individualized dietary and nutrition services; physical, occupational, and speech therapy; and social work services.

How Do ADHC Services Save the Medicaid Program Money and Make It More Sustainable in the Long Run?

First, a beneficiary's alternative to ADHC is a nursing home, which is a far more costly set of services for the Medicaid program to provide. Second, ADHC is economically efficient by providing multiple services for one rate under one roof. If purchased separately, ADHC medical services would be far more expensive. Third, ADHC also improves health care outcomes for chronically ill or elderly beneficiaries.

Commission Request

In light of the above, I respectfully request that the Medicaid Commission accept Secretary McCann's amendment to Long-Term Care Recommendation Number Two. This amendment, while making very limited changes to the text of the Chairman's Mark, goes a long way toward recognizing the tremendous contributions that adult day care services programs currently offered under Medicaid state plans have made to the health care of Medicaid beneficiaries and the long-term sustainability of the Medicaid program.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony to the Commission. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance on adult day care services or other Medicaid-related issues.

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