



December 15, 2009

Tracy Plouck
State Medicaid Director
Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services
Office of Ohio Health Plans (Medicaid)
50 W. Town
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Tracy,

I am pleased to provide the enthusiastic support of the Ohio Head Start Association for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services' proposal in response to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services request for applications for the CHIPRA Quality Demonstration Grants. The Ohio proposal describes an excellent model that will establish and evaluate a national quality system for children's health care which encompasses care provided through the Medicaid program and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

The Ohio proposal aims to significantly and measurably improve care and outcomes for children in Ohio who are covered by Medicaid through working at multiple levels of the health care system to provide integrated systems and continuity that address children's and families' needs across the pediatric lifespan. The proposed model utilizes an existing infrastructure of networks within Ohio--the children's hospitals, perinatal providers, successful collaborative efforts involving primary care practices—and involves state agencies, professional organizations, family advocacy groups, and researchers affiliated with state universities and children's hospitals. Through the systematic application of improvement science methods, this statewide collaboration seeks to achieve best in nation results for birth outcomes, developmental trajectories, and safe hospital care for children. And, as mandated in the CHIPRA legislation, the proposal also involves experimentation and evaluation of several promising ideas to improve the quality of children's healthcare and demonstrate improved outcomes.

The Ohio Head Start Association will serve in a leadership role on the state-wide level and will connect the initiative with our local grantees to provide representation in individual communities. Our access to a strong network of Ohio's Head Start and Early Head Start grantees will give the initiative access to structural supports for identifying and engaging Ohio's most vulnerable families. We look forward to working with you to improve Medicaid children's access to and receipt of developmental related care and services and coordination of care for Ohio's children and families.

We strongly recommend the vision that your group has developed and believe it will build capacity and capability to ensure quality healthcare and outcomes for children covered by Medicaid in Ohio, and we look forward to working with you to improve Medicaid children's access to and receipt of developmental related care and services and coordination of care for Ohio's children and families.

Sincerely,

Barbara Haxton, Executive Director