

January 30, 2024

Chiquita Brooks-LaSure  
Administrator  
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 445-G  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Administrator Brooks-LaSure,

We write to express our strong support for the Medicare Advantage (MA) program. It is essential to ensure there is stability in the program to uphold access to affordable, high-quality care for every American senior, regardless of their race or ethnicity.

The MA program has proven instrumental in dismantling barriers to consistent and high-quality care. Removing these barriers has been vital for diverse populations, as approximately 54% of Medicare beneficiaries from African American, Latino, and Asian Pacific Islander communities choose MA.<sup>1</sup> The MA program aims to provide high-quality, better-targeted benefits to seniors in our communities, addressing a longstanding need in traditionally underserved areas with limited access to quality healthcare options.

Studies highlight the positive impact of MA, with enrollees experiencing better outcomes, especially those managing chronic conditions in diverse and lower-income populations.<sup>2</sup> The program's supplemental benefits, care coordination, and focus on detecting and treating preventable diseases at earlier stages have contributed significantly to improved health outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

With over 32 million current enrollees and projected growth, the MA program is a lifeline for many, offering specialized supplemental benefits like wellness programs, financial protections, and improved health outcomes, crucial in managing chronic conditions.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, MA has exhibited high beneficiary satisfaction, offering affordable coverage with reported annual savings of over \$2,400 on out-of-pocket costs and premiums compared to traditional Medicare.<sup>5</sup> As our communities navigate complex healthcare decisions, it is paramount to protect the MA program from any instability that could reduce benefits or increase cost-sharing for millions of beneficiaries already enrolled.

Therefore, we request your full and fair consideration of the significant consequences of potential instability to the MA program. Preserving the choice, affordability, and quality improvements that MA offers is essential to our dedication to advancing health equity and ensuring that every American senior receives the deserving care.

Sincerely,

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<sup>1</sup> AHIP Medicare Advantage Demographics Report. January 2024

<sup>2</sup> Powers, B., Yan, J., Jingsan, et al. The Beneficial Effects of Medicare Advantage Special Needs Plans for Patients with End-Stage Renal Disease. *Health Affairs* 39(9): 1486–1494. September 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Landon, B., Zaslavsky, A., Saunders, R., et al. A Comparison of Relative Resource Use and Quality in Medicare Advantage Health Plans versus Traditional Medicare. *American Journal of Managed Care* 21(8): 559-566. August 2015.

<sup>4</sup> CMS Fact Sheet on 2024 premiums

<sup>5</sup> ATI Advisory, Medicare Advantage Beneficiaries Spend Less on Health Care Premiums and Out-of-Pocket Costs than Fee-for-Service Beneficiaries, March 2023.