



NAMI OHIO

Ohio's Voice on Mental Illness

December 30, 2009

Tracy Plouck, State Medicaid Director
Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services
Office of Ohio Health Plans
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Columbus, Ohio 43215

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Dear Ms. Plouck:

I am pleased to provide my enthusiastic support 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).

NAMI Ohio is the statewide association that serves as the voice on mental illness for Ohio. Our organization is comprised of thousands of family members, consumers, advocates and professionals working together to ensure that Ohioans with mental illness and their loved ones receive the treatment and support they need. Your proposal, which focuses on improving outcomes for children in Ohio who are covered by Medicaid and their families by providing integrated care across the pediatric lifespan complements NAMI Ohio's mission "to improve the quality of life, ensure dignity and respect for persons with serious mental illness and to support their families."

We applaud ODJFS for your interest in making integrated healthcare services available to Ohio's children and families served by Medicaid. We trust that this initiative will serve as a role model for other behavioral and physical healthcare providers in Ohio that are considering moving toward integration. In light of the fact that Ohioans with mental illness are dying an at least 25 years earlier than the general population, NAMI Ohio strongly supports efforts to integrate services to ensure that those with mental illness, young and old, have easy access to a full array of health care services.

We are very impressed by the group of organizations that have been assembled to carry out this work. The skills, experience, passion, and dedication of these group to effectively and measurably improve care and outcomes for children and families is unquestionable. I 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. You have my strong support.

Sincerely,

James C. Mauro
Executive Director