



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Ted Strickland/Governor

Alvin D. Jackson, M.D./Director of Health

December 29, 2009

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

Dear Tracy,

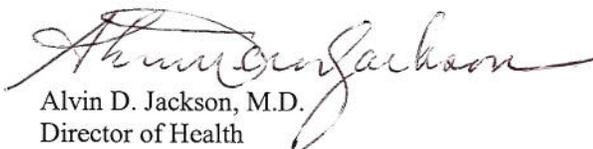
I am pleased to provide my enthusiastic support for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services' proposal in response to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services request for applications for the CHIPRA Quality Demonstration Grants. The BEACON proposal describes an excellent model that will 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 by 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 Title V Maternal and Child Health Program, administered through the Ohio Department of Health, is also committed to the improvement of children's health outcomes and sees the BEACON initiative as a significant strategy in achieving that vision. The department has long-standing relationships with key safety net providers including the Federally Qualified Health Centers, the Rural Health Clinics, Critical Access Hospitals, Maternal and Child Health Clinics, Ryan White providers, and others that collectively serve a large number of children participating in Medicaid. We are fully committed to actively engaging this group of providers in applying improvement science methods to achieve marked improvements in children's health care and outcomes.

You have assembled a group that has the skills, experience, passion, and dedication to work effectively to measurably improve care and outcomes for children and families. As the Director of Health, I would be honored to serve as the co-chair of the BEACON Council as proposed in this application. 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,



Alvin D. Jackson, M.D.
Director of Health