



Department of Obstetrics
and Gynecology
College of Medicine

Faculty Office Tower
395 West 12th Avenue, Fifth Floor
Columbus, OH 43210

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

December 30, 2009

Dear Ms. Plouck,

I am pleased to provide a letter documenting 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. This proposal describes an excellent model that will establish and evaluate a national quality system for children's health care provided through the Medicaid program and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

The proposal intends to improve care and outcomes significantly for Ohio's Medicaid covered children by working at multiple levels of the health care system, beginning before birth and continuing throughout the pediatric lifespan. The model proposed will use an existing infrastructure of networks within Ohio, including children's hospitals, perinatal providers, primary care practices, and existing successful collaborative efforts such as the Ohio Perinatal Quality Collaborative (OPQC). It will also continue to engage 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 make Ohio a leader in achieving the best possible results for birth outcomes, developmental trajectories, and safe hospital care for children. As mandated in the CHIPRA legislation, the proposal includes experimentation and evaluation of several promising ideas to improve the quality of children's healthcare as measured by meaningful health outcomes.

As you know, I have been working with OPQC since its inception as the co-director for obstetrical projects. We have established a network of enthusiastic teams in the 20 Ohio maternity hospitals who participated in the first OPQC obstetrical initiative that successfully reduced scheduled births lacking documentation of a medical indication. Our success has created momentum at participating sites for new projects, and has generated interest in joining OPQC from other maternity hospitals in Ohio. In addition, OPQC and the Ohio March of Dimes are working together to improve Ohio birth outcomes. We look forward to building new collaborations in Ohio to reduce preterm birth and improve outcomes for preterm babies.

The applicant group has demonstrated the skills, experience and dedication necessary to improve outcomes for children and families. I strongly recommend the vision that your group has developed to ensure quality healthcare for children covered by Medicaid in Ohio. You have my strong support.

Sincerely yours,

Jay D. Iams MD
Frederick P. Zuspan Professor & Endowed Chair
Division of Maternal Fetal Medicine
Vice Chair, Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology
The Ohio State University Medical Center