

December 11, 2009

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

DELIVERY VIA EMAIL

Dear Ms. Plouck:

On behalf of Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital I am writing to express our support for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services' proposal to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for pediatric quality improvement resources through federal CHIPRA Quality Demonstration Grants.

The Ohio proposal aims to significantly and measurably improve care and outcomes for children in Ohio covered by Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program. Ohio's proposed model utilizes an existing infrastructure of networks within Ohio throughout the entire spectrum of children's health care. These networks include our world class children's hospitals, pediatricians, perinatal providers, state agencies, professional organizations, family advocacy groups, and researchers. This is a group that has already delivered proven results through similar efforts and has the skill, experience, passion, and dedication to work effectively to measurably improve care and outcomes for children and families.

The proposed program builds upon past and current successful collaborative efforts among these organizations to create what we believe will become a national model for quality care for Ohio's youngest population. Through the systematic application of improvement science methods, the Ohio collaboration seeks to make Ohio a leader by achieving the best birth outcomes in the country, national developmental trajectories, and making Ohio the safest place in the country for children to receive health care. And, as mandated in the CHIPRA legislation, the proposal also involves experimentation and evaluation of several promising new ideas to improve the quality of children's health care and demonstrate improved outcomes.

University Hospitals of Cleveland is in a unique position to offer to the proposed program both UH Rainbow's clinical expertise in pediatrics as well as state-of-the art care in obstetrics and gynecology from UH MacDonald Women's Hospital, Ohio's only freestanding women's hospital. UH Rainbow's core team on this project includes specialists in neonatology, endocrinology, child development, mental health, critical care, health policy, ethics, and quality. The Center for Child Health and Policy at UH Rainbow, directed by Leona Cuttler, M.D. and managed by Ann Nevar, MPA, plays a central role in the initiative, facilitating communication with work groups throughout the state and advising on program content. Dr. Cuttler is on the leadership grant writing committee and is also co-leading the application's Quality Outcome Measures category. Anne Lyren, M.D. is leading the Solutions for Patient Safety initiative within category C for the program. Drs. Cuttler and Lyren are recognized as experts in these areas and will provide excellent leadership for these programs, throughout the state and based at UH Rainbow. Additionally, UH Rainbow's team is involved in the proposal's initiatives in perinatal health with Michele Walsh, M.D., mental health with Lolita McDavid, M.D., and child development with Robyn Strosaker, M.D.

We strongly support the vision your team has developed and believe it will build capacity and capability to ensure quality health care and outcomes for children covered by Medicaid in Ohio. You have our strong support.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Farrell
President
UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital and MacDonald Women's Hospital