



April 1, 2020

Allison Taylor, JD

402 W Washington St., W461

Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Director Taylor,

The Indiana State Medical Association (ISMA), the largest physician organization in the State, along with the Indiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (INAAP), which represents more than 900 pediatricians and pediatric trainees in the State, applaud the Indiana Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning's dynamic response to this unprecedented crisis. In recognition of that response, we write today to request specific relief for the independent community primary care practices, many of whom serve the pediatric population as they struggle to stay economically viable.

Not only are community-based primary care practices addressing COVID-19, we are doing our best to continue both sick and well-care for children and adolescents including critical vaccination services that will prevent other outbreaks during this vulnerable time. While these practices are proactively postponing non-essential visits, many are currently operating at one-half to one-third of their normal volumes. This is an essential step to take for public health, but it has caused massive struggles for practices operating on razor-thin margins.

Independent primary care practices need to be open and have staff available to administer vaccinations and provide other essential services through the duration of this crisis. Otherwise, our hospitals will truly be overwhelmed. Absent additional economic relief, these financial challenges are threatening our ability to continue operations through this crisis

To that end, ISMA and INAAP are requesting that the State provide financial assistance to Hoosier physicians through Medicaid in a manner analogous to the relief provided by the federal government through Medicare. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has expanded their Accelerated and Advance Payment Program to a

broader group of Medicare providers for the duration of the public health emergency to help ensure that Medicare providers have the resources they need to maintain their focus on patient care (CMS fact sheet attached).

Unfortunately, many of Indiana's primary care physicians, specifically the pediatric and adolescent medicine community, serve very few if any Medicare patients. Consequently, our practices will not receive any relief as a result of the federal action. These practices do however serve the Indiana's Medicaid population and could benefit from similar relief through Medicaid. ISMA and INAAP welcome the opportunity to work with the State to implement the requested relief and are available to provide further information on the challenges currently faced by Indiana's community-based physicians as we work to address COVID-19 while maintaining access to other important health care services.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signature of Lisa D. Hatcher, MD, in black ink.

Lisa Hatcher, MD
President
Indiana State Medical Association

Handwritten signature of Tony GiaQuinta in black ink.

Tony GiaQuinta, MD, FAAP
President
Indiana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics