



CMS Guidance Puts Millions of Americans with Pre-Existing Conditions at Risk

Leading National Patient and Consumer Organizations Urge CMS to Withdraw Guidance That Would Threaten Patients' Ability to Access Lifesaving Care

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 24, 2018 — *More than 25 patient and consumer groups representing millions of people nationwide with pre-existing health conditions issued the following statement in response to administration guidance issued on October 22nd that gives states greater ability to skirt patient protections included in the Affordable Care Act:*

“The guidance issued by the Administration gives states free reign to undermine critical protections for millions of Americans living with pre-existing conditions. Issued under the guise of “state flexibility”, the guidance allows states to approve the sale of cheap, inadequate health insurance plans that can eliminate coverage of pre-existing conditions, charge premiums based on health status, or reject patients altogether. This guidance also greenlights changes that are likely to make it harder for patients and consumers to distinguish between comprehensive coverage and products that do not cover prescription medications, maternity care, or other critical services. Further, states will also be able to use taxpayer dollars to subsidize the purchase of these substandard insurance plans.

“This dangerous action could take us back to the days when people with pre-existing conditions were openly discriminated against and blatantly denied access to lifesaving care.

“Our organizations advocate for everyone with pre-existing conditions to have access to healthcare that is **affordable**, **adequate**, and **accessible**. We are deeply disappointed that this guidance undermines protections for people with pre-existing conditions, and we urge the Administration to withdraw it immediately.”

Adult Congenital Heart Association
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Liver Foundation
American Lung Association
Arthritis Foundation
COPD Foundation
Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Epilepsy Foundation
Global Healthy Living Foundation
Hemophilia Federation of America
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Lutheran Services in America
March of Dimes
Mended Little Hearts
Muscular Dystrophy Association
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship
National Health Council
National Hemophilia Foundation
National Organization for Rare Disorders
National Patient Advocate Foundation
National Psoriasis Foundation
Susan G. Komen
United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc.
United Way Worldwide
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease

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