

Media Statement

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California's Physician Groups Urge State and Federal Leaders to Avoid Delays and Swiftly Enact Coordinated Care Demonstration Project for Medi-Cal/Medicare Patients

Background: California's Medi-Cal program and the federal Medicare program are partnering to launch a three-year, eight-county demonstration starting in 2013 that would promote coordinated health care delivery to seniors and people with disabilities who are eligible for both programs. The proposed demonstration aims to create a seamless service delivery experience for dual eligible beneficiaries, with the ultimate goals of improved care quality, better health and a more efficient delivery system.

The California Association of Physician Groups (CAPG) strongly supports the goals of this program and recently sent a letter to the federal Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office and California's Health and Human Services Agency strongly urging them not to delay the implementation of moving California's Dual Eligible population into managed care in accordance with the guidelines of California Coordinated Care Demonstration Project. Below are excerpts from the letter as well as additional comment from CAPG president and CEO, Don Crane.

"This patient population has languished in a fragmented, unaccountable system of care for far too long and it's imperative to move these patients into an accountable coordinated care system as soon as possible. The sooner these patients are moved into this new system, the faster we can provide better service to them in an accountable and cost-effective manner that will provide greater fiscal sustainability for the Medi-Cal and Medicare systems.

CAPG represents virtually all of California's capitated, accountable, multispecialty physician groups who in turn provide care to approximately 20 million Californians. Our members have served the voluntarily-enrolled dual eligible patient population under the Medicare Advantage program for years and are best poised to serve the incoming beneficiaries in the coordinated care model proposed by the DHCS. We are ready, willing, and able to provide significantly better care to this population and see no reason why the program should be delayed or diminished.

We are confident that these Dual eligible patients will fare far better inside our coordinated care delivery system than in a fragmented, fee-for-service based system. Any short term challenges in implementing this Demonstration will be outweighed by the higher quality, lower cost care these patients will receive."

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About CAPG

The California Association of Physician Groups (CAPG) represents 150 groups that employ or contract with nearly 60,000 California doctors and provide care to 18 million Californians. CAPG is committed to improving healthcare for Californians and supports a progressive and organized system of healthcare delivery, which focuses on coordinated treatment plans and comprehensive coverage, including the most current preventive services and exams. This allows physicians to focus on illness prevention and proactive management of patients in order to maintain their optimum level of health. www.capg.org.