

March 13, 2013

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-221 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Capitol Building, S-128
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-230 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Capitol Building, S-128
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Minority Leader McConnell, Chairwoman Mikulski, and Ranking Member Shelby,

On behalf of the National Transitions of Care Coalition (NTOCC), we are writing today in strong support of Senator Tom Harkin's amendment to the Continuing Appropriations Act of 2013 which would restore funding for many important Labor-HHS programs, including the 40% cut to the Community-based Care Transitions Program (CCTP) currently in the proposed Senate Continuing Resolution.

We believe the 40% cut to the CCTP is short-sighted and will halt the significant progress being made across the country to improve patient outcomes, decrease the number of avoidable hospital readmissions, and reduce unnecessary health-related expenses through targeted care transition programs.

Those who require care — particularly the elderly and individuals with chronic illnesses— face significant challenges when moving from the hospital to home, from a care facility to the hospital, or between other care settings. Poor transitions of care can result in medication errors, duplicative tests, and other mistakes that frequently cause hospital readmissions, raise costs of care, and diminish the quality of patient outcomes. In many cases the reasons for hospital readmissions are well outside of the scope of what hospitals and outpatient physician practices can address. CCTP was created to foster partnerships between hospitals and community-based organizations that have the experience and expertise to address the breadth of challenges faced by older adults. CCTP is a critical resource for advancing improved transitions, and reductions to program funding pose grave threats to important and cost-effective improvements — those initiatives that are occurring, and more that are needed — aimed at patient transitions and related care.

We encourage you to preserve this important funding authorized in the Affordable Care Act by voting for Senator Harkin's Labor-HHS amendment to the Continuing Appropriations Act of

2013. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Lindsay Punzenberger, Policy Director for NTOCC, at 202-466-4721.

Sincerely,



Cheri Lattimer
Executive Director
National Transitions of Care Coalition

About the National Transition of Care Coalition

The National Transitions of Care Coalition is a 501(c)(4) dedicated to addressing a serious U.S. health care issue: filling the gaps that occur when patients leave one care setting and move to another care setting. These transitions include patients moving from primary care to specialty physicians; moving or transferring patients from the emergency department to intensive care or surgery; or when patients are discharged from the hospital to home, assisted living arrangements, or skilled nursing facilities. The U.S. health care system often fails to meet the needs of patients during these transitions because care is rushed and responsibility is fragmented, with little communication across care settings and multiple providers.