September 17, 2019

Lindsay P. Barnette
Director, Models, Demonstrations, and Analysis Group
Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21244

RE: Request to Expand the Illinois Medicare-Medicaid Alignment Initiative Demonstration Statewide

Dear Ms. Barnette:

The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services ("Department") formally requests to expand the Medicare-Medicaid Alignment Initiative (MMAI) demonstration statewide effective January 1, 2021, an option that became available to the state through the April 24, 2019 State Medicaid Director’s Letter (SMDL #19-002).\(^1\) Expanding the MMAI demonstration statewide would make care coordination available to all full dual eligible beneficiaries across the state, leverage the Department’s managed care infrastructure, create additional alignment in managed care program options throughout Illinois, and build on the state’s experience partnering with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to implement the MMAI program.

The Department implemented the Managed Long-Term Services and Supports (MLTSS) program statewide effective July 1, 2019, but MLTSS-eligible beneficiaries currently can only choose between the MLTSS program and the more integrated MMAI program in the Greater Chicago and Central Illinois Regions. Expanding the MMAI program statewide would provide all full dual eligible beneficiaries in Illinois with the opportunity to receive their Medicare and Medicaid benefits, along with care coordination, through an integrated Medicare-Medicaid Plan (MMP) under the MMAI program. In a November 2018 report, an independent evaluator of the MMAI program found that the demonstration had a statistically significant impact on a variety of utilization measures, including a 14.8 percent decrease in inpatient admissions, a 7.4 percent decrease in monthly ER visits, a 9.8 percent decrease in preventable ER visits, and a 8.6 percent decrease in skilled nursing facility admissions from March 1, 2014 through December 31, 2015.\(^{ii}\) Additionally, in the same report, the independent evaluator noted that most MMAI beneficiary focus group participants said their quality of life and/or health was better since enrolling in the MMAI program.\(^{iii}\)
The Department welcomes the opportunity to further discuss this request and the state’s continued commitment to care coordination, quality patient-centered care, and stakeholder engagement with the CMS Medicare-Medicaid Coordination Office. Please contact Laura Phelan at 312-793-1587 or laura.phelan@illinois.gov if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Robert Mendonsa
Deputy Administrator for Care Coordination
Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services

cc: Doug Elwell
Laura Ray
Laura Phelan
Pam Winsel
Pam Bunch
Mary Doran
Kim Cox
Matthew Seliger

---


3 Ibid.