

201 South Grand Avenue East  
Springfield, Illinois 62763-0002

**Telephone:** (217) 782-1200  
**TTY:** (800) 526-5812

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).<sup>i</sup> 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.<sup>ii</sup> 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.<sup>iii</sup>

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](mailto: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

---

<sup>i</sup> Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. (2019, April 24). Re: Three New Opportunities to Test Innovative Models of Integrated Care for Individuals Dually Eligible for Medicaid and Medicare. *State Medicaid Director Letter (SMDL #19-002)*. Retrieved from <https://www.medicare.gov/federal-policy-guidance/downloads/smd19002.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> Walsh E. (2018, November 15). Illinois Medicare-Medicaid Alignment Initiative: First Evaluation Report. *RTI International*. Retrieved from <https://innovation.cms.gov/Files/reports/fai-il-firstevalrpt.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid.