

July 19, 2022

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

The Honorable Chiquita Brooks-LaSure
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Becerra and Administrator Brooks-LaSure,

As organizations committed to children's health and supporting organizations for the Advancing Care for Exceptional Kids Act (ACE Kids, Public Law 116-16), we are excited about implementation of the law later this year and the opportunity to better support coordinated and integrated care for children with medical complexity and their families. We ask that you place a priority on the release of timely guidance to states that is consistent with congressional intent and includes a national definition to identify children with medically complex conditions who would be eligible for ACE Kids.

As you know, ACE Kids creates a state option under Medicaid to implement health homes for children with medically complex conditions. These children and their families face barriers accessing coordinated and timely care. The ACE Kids health homes would streamline physical and behavioral health services and coordinate across providers.

One of the main features of ACE Kids, and a main goal of its congressional champions, is the establishment of a national definition of eligible children. The intent of this provision is to have a consistent definition applied across states that will produce improved data to allow for the identification of any gaps in care, patient and family characteristics, equity challenges, appropriate payment models and quality metrics. Implementation of a national definition is critical to the success of this program for children and families as it would provide national data that could then drive quality improvements.

We know you share our goal of improving health outcomes for children with medical complexities. We urge you to release timely guidance that includes a national definition of children who would qualify for ACE Kids, as Congress intended. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with you to improve care for these children and their families.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work
American College of Cardiology
American Heart Association
American Physical Therapy Association

Autism Society of America
American Society of Echocardiography
Autism Speaks
Children's Cancer Cause
Children's Hospital Association
Epilepsy Foundation
Family Voices
March of Dimes
Mended Little Hearts
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
Pediatric Congenital Heart Association
Tricare for Kids
Vizient, Inc.

Cc: Mr. Daniel Tsai, Director, Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services