

PEDRO R. PIERLUISI
Member of Congress
(PR, 2009-2016)
1000 Ashford Ave., Apt. 9
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March 5, 2018

Hon. Alex Azar
Secretary
The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Re: Request for Action to improve the funding for Medicare beneficiaries in Puerto Rico

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As the immediate past Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico in Congress, I respectfully urge CMS to use the full scope of its authority to assist the Medicare Advantage (MA) beneficiaries in Puerto Rico.

The MA program is one of the most important pillars of Puerto Rico's healthcare system. Specifically, it currently serves more than 580,000 MA beneficiaries, including over 280,000 dual eligible (Medicaid & Medicare) Platino beneficiaries and more than half of the dialysis patients on the island. Accordingly, the funding of the MA program in Puerto Rico should be either comparable to the average funding of the program in the states or, at the very least, equal to the level provided to the neighboring U.S. Virgin Islands.

Taking swift and bold action to stabilize Medicare coverage in the aftermath of the passing of Hurricanes Irma and María through Puerto Rico will (1) enhance the quality of care for the most vulnerable beneficiaries, (2) motivate island residents and healthcare providers to forgo migrating to the US mainland and (3) encourage investment in Puerto Rico's health care system infrastructure when it is most needed. Our senior citizens were adversely affected by these hurricanes and the MA program should be a key component of the ongoing federal and state recovery efforts.

For all the foregoing reasons, I fully endorse the proposals submitted to CMS by the Medicaid and Medicare Advantage Product Association (MMAPA) and the Puerto Rico Healthcare Community.

I look forward to your continuing attention to the healthcare needs of the MA beneficiaries in Puerto Rico.

Sincerely,



Pedro R. Pierluisi