



GOVERNOR OF PUERTO RICO

Ricardo Rosselló Nevares

January 5, 2018

Eric D. Hargan
Acting Secretary
United States Department of Health and Human Services

Administrator Seema Verma
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Dear Secretary Hargan and Administrator Verma:

I am writing on behalf of 3.4 American citizens that reside in Puerto Rico, 720,000 of which are Medicare beneficiaries, to request the adoption of urgent administrative measures to address Puerto Rico's Medicare Advantage funding disparities. Decisive administrative action is now more vital than ever, given the catastrophic effects of Hurricanes Irma and María on the Island's healthcare system.

As you know, the Medicare Advantage (MA) program in Puerto Rico is one of the pillars of our healthcare system, serving close to 580,000 beneficiaries, including almost 280,000 who are dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid. In fact, 98 percent of all the dual eligible beneficiaries with Medicare Part A and B in the island, as well as more than half of the dialysis patients, are serviced through the MA platform, which provides much needed relief to the Medicaid program. While we recognize that this administration has taken positive steps in the right direction, the current situation is so dire that, now more than ever, we need your leadership to ensure the wellbeing of hundreds of thousands of US citizens residing in Puerto Rico.

As we approach the critical dates before completion of the *MA Advance Notice and Draft Call Letter for 2019*, I urge you to exercise the full scope of your authority to administratively mitigate Puerto Rico's disparate treatment and help our system get back on its feet. Specifically, CMS should consider applying an adjustment to tie MA rates in Puerto Rico to the national average as a proxy, or at least have Puerto Rico MA rates at the level of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Likewise, MA ESRD benchmarks should use the national average as a proxy, or at a minimum USVI geographic factors.

I fully support the health community efforts lead by organizations such as MMAPA, which has worked closely with my administration during Puerto Rico's crisis and has presented current data and memoranda to support these requests.

I remain committed to working with President Trump and this administration to make sure we rebuild Puerto Rico stronger and better. I stand ready to meet with you to have a conversation about this essential step for the appropriate economic recovery of Puerto Rico.

Sincerely,



Ricardo Rosselló Nevares

cc.

Mr. Alex Azar
Secretary Nominee
United States Department of Health and Human Services