

**G O V E RN OR OF P UERTO R I C O**

**R i c a r d o R o s s e l l 6 Nevares**

January5, 2018

Eric D. Hargan Acting-Sec ret ar y

Unit e d St a t es Depar tment of Health and Human Services

Admi nist rator Seema Verma

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Dear Secr etary Ha rgan and Administrator Verma:

I am writing on behalf of 3.4 American citizens that reside in Puerto Rico, 720,000 of which are Medicare beneficia ries, to request the adoption of ur gent admini strative meas ur es to address Puerto Rico's Medicare Advant a ge funding disparities. Decisive administrative action is now more vital th an ever, given the catastrophic effects of

 Hurrica nes Irma and Maria on the Island's healthcare system.

As you know, the Medicare Advant age (MA) program in Puerto Rico is one of t he pill ars 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 du al eligible beneficiaries with Medicare Part Aand B in the isla nd, as well as more than half of t he dialysis patients, are serviced through the MA platfor m, which provides much needed relief to the Medicaid program. While we recognize th at this admi nist ration has taken positive steps in the right direction, the curr ent sit uation is so dire that, now more th an ever, we need your leadership to ensure the wellbeing of hundreds of thousands of US citizens residin g in Puerto Rico.

As we approach the criti cal dates before completion of the ***..MA Advance Notice and Draft Call Letter for 2019,*** I ur ge you to exercise the full scope of your authorit y to admini stratively mitigate Puerto Rico's dispara te t reat ment and help our system get back on it s feet. Specifically, CMS should consider applyi ng an adjustment to tie MA rates in P uerto Rico to t he nat ional 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 th e nation al average as a proxy, or at a minimum USVI geographic factors.

**RICARDO ROSSELLO NEVARES**

**GOVERNOR**

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

**LA FORTALEZA**

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,



cc.

Mr. Alex Azar Secretary Nominee

United States Department of Health and Human Services