



Maryland  
Hospital Association

April 22, 2021

Erin Schurmann  
Chief, Provider Alignment and Special Projects  
Health Services Cost Review Commission  
4160 Patterson Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Dear Ms. Schurmann,

As the advocate for Maryland's hospitals, MHA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft *Recommendation on the Use of Maternal and Child Health Funding*. We support using the remaining Regional Partnership Catalyst Grant set aside of \$10 million in each of fiscal years 2022-2025 to further maternal and child health goals in the Statewide Integrated Health Improvement Strategy.

We would note, however, the recommendation misses the mark in its goal of fostering hospitals' relationships with community partners. It is vital that this funding, which is derived from payments for hospitals services, be used to support and further hospitals' partnerships within the community. Better connections before and after pregnancy engender trust and communication that is critical for good maternal outcomes. Hospitals should have a role as it is crucial that they are not viewed just as the point of care during delivery or when serious complications arise.

Furthermore, nearly all the funding is directed to Medicaid for efforts that are already in practice or are in the planning stages. Such interventions are important to reduce longstanding disparities in maternal and child health, yet when they are implemented by the Medicaid program they should be funded directly by the State.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this worthwhile grant funding program.

Sincerely,

Traci LaValle  
Senior Vice President, Quality & Health Improvement

cc: Adam Kane, Chairman  
Joseph Antos, Ph.D., Vice Chairman  
Victoria W. Bayless  
Stacia Cohen, RN

John M. Colmers  
James N. Elliott, M.D.  
Sam Malhotra  
Katie Wunderlich, Executive Director