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Media Contacts:

American Academy of Pediatrics: Jamie Poslosky (202-724-3301; jposlosky@aap.org)

Leading Children's Health Groups Oppose New Federal Guidance on Medicaid

Block grants and per capita caps would cause parents to lose coverage and put children and families' health at risk

Washington, DC—The American Academy of Pediatrics, Children's Defense Fund, Children's Hospital Association, Family Voices, First Focus on Children, Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, March of Dimes and National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners issue the following joint statement opposing guidance issued today by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) proposing drastic changes to Medicaid and their detrimental impact on children and families:

“Our organizations represent children, pregnant women, families, medical professionals and advocates across the country, and we speak with one voice to oppose the CMS guidance on Medicaid unveiled today. Medicaid is a children's program. The full impact of this guidance on children remains unknown, which is of grave concern, particularly at a time when children's uninsurance is on the rise.

This guidance fundamentally alters how Medicaid is financed by capping federal funding and offering states the option to use block grants and per capita caps for low-income adult populations, which includes parents with young children. When parents lose coverage, their children are more likely to lose coverage as well.

Medicaid provides affordable, comprehensive care for 37 million children nationwide. The program already offers flexibility to states, allowing each state to meet the needs of its Medicaid population when a natural disaster, public health crisis like the current coronavirus outbreak, or economic recession increases the number of people who need Medicaid. Unlike many private health insurance plans, Medicaid also guarantees specific benefits designed especially for children, known as Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT), which allows health problems to be diagnosed and treated appropriately and as early as possible. Today's guidance allows states to opt out of providing EPSDT to some populations, jeopardizing this critical benefit.

In short, our organizations are united in opposition to any threat to Medicaid that would dismantle a pillar program millions of families rely on. At a time when child uninsurance is already on the rise, this guidance

makes it even harder to guarantee children can get the care they need. We urge CMS to immediately rescind the guidance and keep Medicaid strong.”

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About the American Academy of Pediatrics

The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 67,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults. For more information, visit www.aap.org and follow us on Twitter @AmerAcadPeds.

About the Children’s Defense Fund

The Children’s Defense Fund (CDF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit child advocacy organization that has worked relentlessly for more than 40 years to ensure a level playing field for all children. We provide a strong, effective and independent voice for all the children of America who cannot vote, lobby or speak for themselves. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor children, children of color and those with disabilities. CDF educates the nation about the needs of children and encourages preventive investments before they get sick, drop out of school, get into trouble or suffer family breakdown.

About the Children’s Hospital Association

The Children’s Hospital Association is the national voice of more than 220 children’s hospitals, advancing child health through innovation in the quality, cost and delivery of care.

About Family Voices

Family Voices is a national, nonprofit, family-led organization promoting quality health care for all children and youth, particularly those with special health care needs. Working with family leaders and professional partners at the local, state, regional, and national levels since 1992, Family Voices has brought a respected family perspective to improving health care programs and policies and ensuring that health care systems include, listen to, and honor the voices of families. For more information, visit familyvoices.org and follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

About First Focus on Children

First Focus on Children is a bipartisan advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families the priority in federal policy and budget decisions. First Focus on Children leads a comprehensive advocacy strategy, with its hands-on experience with federal policymaking and a commitment to seeking policy solutions.

About the Georgetown University Center for Children & Families

The Georgetown University Center for Children & Families (CCF), part of the Health Policy Institute at the McCourt School of Public Policy, is an independent, nonpartisan policy and research center with a mission to expand and improve high-quality, affordable health coverage.

About March of Dimes

March of Dimes leads the fight for the health of all moms and babies. We support research, lead programs and provide education and advocacy so that every baby can have the best possible start. Building on a successful 80-year legacy of impact and innovation, we empower every mom and every family. Visit marchofdimes.org or nacersano.org for more information. Visit shareyourstory.org for comfort and support. Find us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

About the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

The National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP) is the nation’s only professional association for pediatric nurse practitioners (PNPs) and their fellow pediatric-focused advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) who are dedicated to improving the quality of health care for infants, children,

adolescents and young adults. Representing more than 9,000 healthcare practitioners with 19 special interest groups and 50 chapters, NAPNAP has been advocating for children's health since 1973 and was the first NP society in the U.S. Our mission is to empower pediatric-focused PNs and their interprofessional partners to enhance child and family health through leadership, advocacy, professional practice, education and research.