



Greater New York Hospital Association

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Kenneth E. Rasko, President

August
Twenty-five
2005

The Honorable Michael Leavitt, Secretary
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Leavitt:

I am writing to express my deep concern about one of the key principles promulgated recently by the Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) regarding the reauthorization of the Ryan White CARE Act. Greater New York Hospital Association (GNYHA) represents more than 250 not-for-profit hospitals and continuing care facilities, both voluntary and public, in the metropolitan New York area and throughout the State, as well as in New Jersey, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Many of our members provide an extensive array of HIV- and AIDS-related services including those provided through outpatient clinics.

In the principle referred to as "Serving the Neediest First," the Administration, in effect, will penalize states such as New York that have already devoted substantial resources to treating people who are living with HIV and AIDS. Specifically, by basing the Severity of Need for Core Services Index on the availability of local, state, and Federal programs and support, the principle would reward states that have failed to invest their own funds in HIV/AIDS care by giving them a higher level of funding. In New York State, which provides many Medicaid benefits to people with HIV/AIDS, such a policy will serve as a powerful disincentive for the State, localities, and other programs to devote additional resources to addressing this pressing national epidemic.

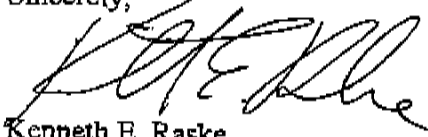
Although one of the states hit hardest by HIV and AIDS, New York, through early investment, has been able to lead the nation in developing cost-effective treatment programs and model systems for HIV and AIDS care. However, HIV and AIDS continue to affect metropolitan areas disproportionately, with one out of six AIDS patients in the United States living in New York City alone. It is imperative that states and localities continue to receive Federal funding in proportion to the extent of the epidemic in each of their jurisdictions. By unfairly directing financial support away from states and communities that are most affected by HIV and AIDS, HHS will be, in effect, punishing those areas that need the most support and that have made this issue a top priority.

As you continue to work with Congress on the Ryan White CARE Act reauthorization, I strongly encourage you to consider the devastating impact of adopting such a principle on the provision of care to HIV/AIDS patients. We support the President's acknowledgment that legislation be

"more flexible and responsive." Flexibility is precisely what states and localities must continue to have in order to effectively address the critical health care needs of Americans living with HIV/AIDS.

My best.

Sincerely,



Kenneth E. Raske
President

cc: The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, Member of the United States Senate
 The Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Member of the United States Senate
 The Honorable Gary L. Ackerman, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Tim Bishop, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Sherwood L. Boehlert, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Joseph Crowley, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Eliot Engel, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Vito Fossella, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Brian M. Higgins, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Maurice Hinchey, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Steve J. Israel, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Sue W. Kelly, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Peter King, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Randy Kuhl, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Nita M. Lowey, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Carolyn Maloney, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Carolyn McCarthy, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable John McHugh, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Michael R. McNulty, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Gregory W. Meeks, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Jerrold Nadler, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Major R. Owens, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Charles B. Rangel, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Thomas Reynolds, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable José Serrano, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Louise McIntosh Slaughter, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable John E. Sweeney, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Edolphus Towns, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Nydia M. Velázquez, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable James T. Walsh, Member of the United States House of Representatives
 The Honorable Anthony D. Weiner, Member of the United States House of Representatives