

UnityPoint Health – Federal

AGENDA

— 2016 —



Reform the Medicare Program

Reform is needed to save the Medicare Program. The Federal Government has little choice but to move Medicare into managed care settings.

UnityPoint Health believes that Medicare Advantage plans offer the best alternative for medical care to seniors, preferable to both FFS medicine and FFS combined with Medi-gap plans. Not all Medicare seniors will choose to pay extra premiums to be in a private plan. It is UnityPoint Health's opinion that FFS Medicare beneficiaries are best served by being members of a Provider Risk Based Plan, such as the Next Generation ACO. Further, we believe that Medicare Advantage plans and Provider Risk Based ACO programs must be aligned in structure, quality and outcome metrics.



Reform the Stark Law to Allow Health Care Providers to Collaborate in the New Payment World

For Provider Based Risk Programming like the Next Generation ACO to be successful it is necessary that doctors, hospitals and other ancillary partners can work together to lower the total cost of care and reach quality outcomes. Temporary waivers are not sufficient.

UnityPoint Health advocates for a whole-scale change to the Stark Law including technical corrections that make the law reasonable and predictable, a new broad exception for innovative payment methodologies and an exemption from the Stark Law when risk revenue reaches a certain level.



Site Neutral Payments Should Not Apply to Facilities That Were “Under Development” at the Time the Law Passed

Section 603 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 radically changes Medicare's payment to new off-campus, provider-based departments. While the provision grandfatheres existing facilities, this grandfather protection does not include facilities “under development.” UnityPoint Health has several facilities that were “under development” at the time this law was passed. We believe these facilities should be included in the grandfather provision.



Support of Telehealth as an Important Extender of Care in Rural Areas

UnityPoint Health supports legislation such as the CONNECT for Health Act, containing provisions that would eliminate existing restrictions on telehealth services within demonstration projects and Alternative Payment Models (APMs).

Address Drug Pricing to Reduce the Total Cost of Care

The price of prescription drugs needs to be addressed by Congress to curtail Medicare spending. UnityPoint Health advocates for principles, similar to Medicaid program 340B, to apply to the Medicare program, and, for Pharmaceuticals to be moved towards outcome-based payment.

Graduate Medical Education (GME) Funding Should Be Targeted to Areas of Need and Programs That Train in Population Health Methods

There is bottleneck in the area of medical residency funding. Federal funding for resident positions has been effectively frozen since 1997. More graduates of medical school are applying for residency positions than can be accommodated in first-year positions. UnityPoint Health advocates for increased public GME financing both at the state and federal levels programs that address regional and specialty-specific physician shortages and which have demonstrated accountability for the use of such funding to address those needs. We also advocate for GME funding to be tied to training in the area of population health that will support our professionals in the new payment world.



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Support the Advancing Care for Exceptional (ACE) Kids Act of 2015

UnityPoint Health supports the Advancing Care for Exceptional (ACE) Kids Act of 2015, which focuses on improving care for the very sickest children on Medicaid. The legislation builds on state efforts to improve care and promote seamless transitions, as well as help providers better serve families by facilitating shared care coordination and management responsibilities. It will also produce savings through increased efficiencies while providing the array of outpatient and community support medically complex children require.

Facts About Full Scale Repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA)

Full scale repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) would cause chaos in the Midwest. Providers have already implemented many provisions to comply with the ACA. These provisions in the areas of health IT, electronic health records, clinical practice, community benefit and fraud and abuse prevention have resulted in millions of dollars for local health systems in implementation and compliance with the law. UnityPoint Health believes any alternative system to the ACA needs to incorporate changes that have been made by health care providers.

