

February 12, 2014

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius  
Secretary  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20201

RE: Ryan White Program Payment of Qualified Health Plan Premiums

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

We are writing on behalf of the HIV Medicine Association (HIVMA) and the Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition (RWMPC) to strongly urge you to take immediate action to require Qualified Health Plans (QHPs) to accept third-party premiums payments from Ryan White/AIDS Drug Assistance Programs on behalf of qualified low-income patients.

We are very concerned that QHPs in Louisiana and North Dakota and possibly other states are refusing to accept premium payments from Ryan White insurance purchasing programs. A primary intent of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) was to end the discriminatory and adverse selection practices that health plans employed in the past to deny health coverage to people with HIV and others with chronic and disabling conditions. Without swift federal action, more QHPs are likely to begin refusing Ryan White premium assistance payments to avoid appealing to enrollees with HIV.

The promise of the ACA, and its landmark expansion of health insurance coverage, will be lost for many of our low income patients if they are denied access to Ryan White premium assistance. Our patients often live on very low incomes with competing medical and basic living needs. Without assistance, it will be very difficult for them to afford the monthly premium and cost sharing required to access the care and treatment that keeps them healthy, prevents disease progression and reduces their risk of transmitting the virus.

Thank you for your steadfast leadership in implementing the ACA. Please help us to ensure that the health coverage and access to health care that it offers is available to our patients with HIV by requiring QHPs to accept premium assistance from Ryan White Programs. Please contact the HIVMA executive director Andrea Weddle at [aweddle@hivma.org](mailto:aweddle@hivma.org) or (703) 299-0915 or the RWMPC convener Jenny Collier at [jennycollierjd@yahoo.com](mailto:jennycollierjd@yahoo.com) or (202) 295-7188.

Sincerely,



Joel Gallant, MD, MPH, FIDSA  
Chair, HIVMA Board of Directors



Barbara Gripshover, MD  
Co-Chair, RWMPC Steering Committee

Cc:

Gary Cohen, Deputy Administrator and Director, Center for Consumer Information and Oversight

Caya B. Lewis, Counselor to the Secretary for Science and Public Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Leon Rodriguez, Director, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Office of Civil Rights

Laura Cheever, Associate Administrator, Human Resources and Services Administration – HIV/AIDS Bureau

Heather Hauck, Director, Division of State HIV/AIDS Programs, Human Resources and Services Administration – HIV/AIDS Bureau