

March 10, 2022

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
U.S. House of Representatives
1111 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brad Wenstrup
U.S. House of Representatives
2419 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Blumenauer and Wenstrup:

On behalf of our nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, our clinician partners – including more than 270,000 affiliated physicians, 2 million nurses and other caregivers – and the 43,000 health care leaders who belong to our professional membership groups, the American Hospital Association (AHA) is pleased to support the Hospital Inpatient Services Modernization Act (H.R. 7053), which provides an extension of the acute care hospital at home program.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Health and Human Services Secretary authorized the execution of a wide array of waivers to provide hospitals and health systems with the flexibility to manage the increased strain on our health care system. In accordance with this directive, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) took action aimed at addressing capacity issues while ensuring that care could continue to be delivered to all patients as safely and effectively as possible.

This critical work included waiving certain nursing requirements to allow hospitals and health systems to apply for and establish acute hospital care at home programs for Medicare beneficiaries throughout the course of the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE). The programs allow qualified patients the opportunity to receive care in their homes while maximizing inpatient bed capacity at hospitals and limiting potential COVID-19 exposure for practitioners and non-COVID-19 patients.

These hospital at home programs have been and continue to be reliable and impactful vehicles to deliver effective care, lead to high patient satisfaction, and, for some patients, result in shorter recovery times.

Your bipartisan bill would extend the existing acute hospital care at home waiver program for two years beyond the end of the COVID-19 PHE. While the COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating, it had the unexpected benefit of being a catalyst for transformations in the way health care can be delivered.



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As you consider action beyond the two year waiver extension set forth in your legislation, we would welcome the opportunity to work with you and CMS to establish and implement a permanent version of the program that enables qualified patients to receive safe and effective hospital-level care in the comfort and safety of their home.

We thank you for your leadership in introducing the Hospital Inpatient Services Modernization Act, and we stand ready to work with you to ensure its passage.

Sincerely,

/s/

Stacey Hughes
Executive Vice President