



February 9, 2024

The Honorable Xavier Becerra  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Ave, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

**Re: Kentucky TEAMKY 1115 Demonstration Amendment**

Dear Secretary Becerra:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on Kentucky's TEAMKY 1115 Demonstration Amendment.

The undersigned organizations represent millions of individuals facing serious, acute and chronic health conditions. We have a unique perspective on what individuals and families need to prevent disease, cure illness and manage chronic health conditions. The diversity of our organizations and the populations we serve enable us to draw upon a wealth of knowledge and expertise that is an invaluable resource regarding any decisions affecting the Medicaid program and the people that it serves. We urge the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to make the best use of the recommendations, knowledge and experience our organizations offer here.

Our organizations are committed to ensuring that Kentucky's Medicaid program provides quality and affordable healthcare coverage. We applaud the state's work to improve health equity in this waiver and support the inclusion of pre-release coverage for justice-involved populations. Our organizations urge CMS to approve this request.

Our organizations support Kentucky's proposal to provide a targeted set of Medicaid services for incarcerated individuals who are otherwise eligible for Medicaid for up to 60 days prior to release. The state estimates that around 23,567 adults and 168 youth would benefit from this proposal.<sup>1</sup> This is consistent with the goals of Medicaid and will be an important step in improving the continuity of care. This proposal will help these high-risk populations access critical supports needed to treat physical and behavioral health conditions. For example, studies in Washington and Florida reported that people with

severe mental illness and Medicaid coverage at the time of their release were more likely to access community mental health services and had fewer detentions and stayed out of jail longer than those without coverage.<sup>2</sup>

Our organizations support Kentucky's efforts to improve equitable access to quality and affordable health coverage. We urge CMS to approve the state's request to improve access to care for the justice-involved population. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
American Lung Association  
Child Neurology Foundation  
Hemophilia Federation of America  
National Bleeding Disorders Foundation  
National Patient Advocate Foundation  
Pulmonary Hypertension Association  
Susan G. Komen  
The AIDS Institute  
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
WomenHeart

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<sup>1</sup> Kentucky Department for Medicaid Services. Section 1115 Reentry Demonstration. December 30, 2023. Available at: <https://www.medicaid.gov/sites/default/files/2024-01/teamky-reentry-formr-ky-health-demo-pa.pdf#page=22>

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Morrissey et al. Medicaid Enrollment and Mental Health Service Use Following Release of Jail Detainees with Severe Mental Illness. *Psychiatric Services* 57, no. 6 (June 2006): 809-815. DOI: 10.1176/ps.2006.57.6.809, and Joseph Morrissey et al. The Role of Medicaid Enrollment and Outpatient Service Use in Jail Recidivism Among Persons with Severe Mental Illness. *Psychiatric Services* 58, no. 6 (June 2007): 794-801. DOI: 10.1176/ps.2007.58.6.794.