



Maryland
Hospital Association

October 20, 2020

Tequila Terry, MBA, MPH
Principal Deputy Director, Payment Reform & Provider Alignment
Health Services Cost Review Commission
4160 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Dear Ms. Terry,

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's 61 member hospitals and health systems, we support the Health Services Cost Review Commission's (HSCRC) recommendation to invest \$165.4 million over five years to build the behavioral health crisis infrastructure and to reduce the impact of diabetes on Marylanders. As the lead entities, hospitals were required to partner with community organizations to implement the programs. We were pleased that nearly 200 partners are named in the grants. These investments and partnerships, along with other private and state-led strategies, are essential to ensure Maryland meets the targets that will be set in the Statewide Integrated Health Improvement Strategy (SIHIS).

Regardless of whether the State names a third population health priority in the SIHIS, HSCRC should award the full \$225 million in Regional Partnership funding approved in November 2019. Requests for the behavioral health and diabetes partnership grants exceeded the awarded amount by more than \$100 million. This demonstrates the magnitude of unmet need and shovel-ready diabetes and behavioral health projects that will go unfunded. With \$165.4 million recommended for behavioral health crisis and diabetes prevention and management, and \$10 million in Long-Term Care Partnerships approved earlier this year, about \$49.6 million remains. In addition to the behavioral health and diabetes needs, work groups are identifying interventions that need to expand to lessen disparities and improve maternal and child health.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this worthwhile grant funding program. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Traci LaValle, Senior Vice President

cc: Adam Kane, Esq., Chairman
Joseph Antos, Ph.D., Vice Chairman
Victoria W. Bayless
Stacia Cohen, RN, MBA

John M. Colmers
James N. Elliott, M.D.
Sam Malhotra
Katie Wunderlich, Executive Director