

**CANCER LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
EXPRESSES OPPOSITION TO CMS GUIDANCE
ON MEDICAID BLOCK GRANTS**

WASHINGTON, DC. (January 30, 2020) – The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) earlier today issued a guidance to state Medicaid programs that allows the states to cap spending on the portion of their Medicaid program expanded under the Affordable Care Act. The Cancer Leadership Council issued the following statement regarding the negative impact of Medicaid block grants on people with cancer.

“Our organizations represent people with all forms of cancer, providers who care for them, and researchers who develop new treatments for cancer. We object to the guidance document released today providing states advice about transforming a portion of their Medicaid programs – the Medicaid expansion authorized by the Affordable Care Act – into a block grant or capped program. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has given its effort a new name, the Healthy Adult Opportunity, but the program offers little opportunity for quality health care for adults with cancer who are in Medicaid expansion.

“Block grant programs are designed to reduce federal spending on Medicaid. States that embrace a block grant program will trim their Medicaid rolls, reduce benefits for those who retain Medicaid eligibility, reduce provider payments, or increase cost-sharing for patients. In short, Medicaid block grants – even for only a portion of the program – will seriously hinder cancer patient access to quality care.

In recent years, as the result of enhanced access to health insurance including Medicaid, we have seen improvements in timely access to cancer care. As a result, more Americans with cancer are enjoying the benefits of the health care system and the advantages of American medical innovation. We oppose the movement to block grants because capping Medicaid will likely undermine this progress.

“Our organizations will communicate to policymakers and the public the potential negative effects of the block grant guidance on patients, cancer survivors, and their families. We will also underscore the importance of protecting people with pre-existing conditions and ensuring their access to quality health care.”