



Friday, February 23, 2024

Dear Members of the Mississippi Legislature:

The Alliance for the Advancement of End-of-Life Care strongly supports the expansion of Medicaid in Mississippi and urges lawmakers to pass all necessary legislation to make this a benefit available to the citizens of the state.

The Alliance represents hospice and palliative care providers and professionals serving the needs of seriously ill and terminal patients throughout Mississippi.

Hospice care provides vital support and comfort to patients and their families during one of life's most challenging moments. However, many individuals facing terminal illnesses lack adequate insurance coverage to afford hospice services, leaving them and their loved ones without the necessary support and resources.

Expanding Medicaid in Mississippi would significantly improve access to hospice care for low-income individuals who currently face financial barriers to these essential services. By extending coverage to more individuals, we can ensure that all Mississippians have the opportunity to receive compassionate and dignified end-of-life care, regardless of their financial circumstances.

Moreover, Medicaid expansion would alleviate the financial strain on hospice providers, allowing them to focus on delivering high-quality care rather than navigating complex reimbursement systems or shouldering the burden of uncompensated care.

Medicaid expansion in Mississippi will mean payment for the 1 % of our currently non-funded patients enrolled into hospice each year in the state. We estimate that Mississippi hospice providers cared for 157 nonfunded patients in 2022, providing ~1,752 days of care and costing hospice agencies ~\$350,383.

<https://www.allianceforendoflifecare.org>

John Morgan Hughes

Mississippi State Director

johnmorgan@tenonestrategy.com

888-546-1500 – Extension 4

Aside from hospice care, Mississippi Medicaid expansion will assist in the development of less costly palliative care support for patients dealing with serious illnesses and chronic health conditions in the state.

Medicaid expansion will mean local hospitals will finally be paid for services provided to the non-funded working poor patients across the state. According to Mississippi University Research Center, Medicaid expansion will greatly improve healthcare for more than 200,000 people in the state, increase the state's gross domestic product by more than \$700 million a year over five years, increase personal income between \$539 million and \$812 during the same period, as well as increase the state's population between 3,300 and 11,500 annually over the same period.

Numerous national studies all conclude better healthcare in those states that have embraced Medicaid Expansion. This Alliance strongly urges Mississippi lawmakers to Expand Medicaid to provide better health outcomes for all the citizens of the state.

Sincerely

Mississippi Members of the Board of Directors

Tiwana O'Rear, Treasurer

Sanctuary Hospice, Tupelo

Pam Redd

Mid-Delta Hospice, Belzoni

Dan Campbell

Dignity Hospice, Brookhaven

Helen Strickland

Forrest General Hospice, Hattiesburg

Richard MacMillian

LHC Group (Baptist, Deaconess, Halcyon & Heart of Hospice)

<https://www.allianceforendoflifecare.org>

John Morgan Hughes

Mississippi State Director

johnmorgan@tenonestrategy.com

888-546-1500 – Extension 4