

August 30, 2022

The Honorable Chiquita Brooks-LaSure
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

**RE: CMS-4203-NC – Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Medicare Program:
Request for Information on Medicare Advantage**

Dear Administrator Brooks-LaSure:

The Black Women's Health Imperative appreciates the opportunity to respond to the request for information on the Medicare Advantage program. As an organization dedicated to protecting and advancing the health and wellness of Black women, we strongly urge you to preserve and strengthen the Medicare Advantage program.

Medicare Advantage is helping to advance health equity among seniors. By offering innovative benefits and services not available under Medicare Fee-for-Service, Medicare Advantage has become an important choice for Black women and their families. We applaud CMS's commitment to health equity and believe strengthening the oversight of the Medicare Advantage program to ensure needed care is covered will assist the Biden administration in reaching its goals of addressing health disparities and ensuring equitable access and quality care for all Americans.

Medicare Advantage is already playing a key role in addressing the social determinants of health by focusing on both the medical and social needs of its beneficiaries. Medicare Advantage focuses on whole-person health by providing meals and nutrition services, as well as support for affordable housing.

By strengthening the Medicare Advantage program, CMS can help ensure that Black women have broad access to quality care and services that are not available under Medicare Fee-for-Service. Roughly 90 percent of Medicare Advantage plans include prescription drug coverage, and more than 90 percent of Medicare Advantage plans provide dental, vision, hearing and fitness or wellness benefits. Enhanced telehealth services are also available through more than 95 percent of Medicare Advantage plans.¹

Ensuring access to these important services for all beneficiaries will help advance health equity and ensure that Black women who rely on Medicare have equitable and quality care and improved health outcomes.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or would like more information.

Sincerely,



Linda Goler Blount, MPH
President and CEO

¹ Kaiser Family Foundation, Medicare Advantage 2022 Spotlight: First Look, November 2, 2021. Available at: [Medicare Advantage 2022 Spotlight: First Look | KFF](#)