



Providing quality coverage to nearly 3 million Medicaid and private sector enrollees in Wisconsin.

To: Bailey Dvorak, Division of Medicaid Services
From: Caty McDermott, Lobbyist – MA Policy
Date: April 29, 2022
Re: Section 1115 Postpartum Coverage Waiver

On behalf of the Alliance of Health Insurers (AHI) we are submitting comments in support of the department’s submission of an application to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), requesting a five-year Medicaid 1115 Research and Demonstration Waiver to allow the state to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage from 60 days to 90 days for birthing people whose household income is above 100% of the federal poverty level (FPL). While AHI members applaud this initial first step to address maternal outcomes, we support and will continue to urge state policymakers to extend coverage for the full 12 months after delivery.

AHI is a nonprofit state advocacy organization created to preserve and improve upon consumer access to affordable health insurance in Wisconsin, both via the private sector and public programs. AHI members are dedicated to delivering affordable, high-value care to the state’s Medicaid population. Currently, AHI members provide managed care to approximately 68 percent of the participants in Wisconsin’s Medical Assistance program (including both BadgerCare and SSI program participants).

Maternal mortality and morbidity are key markers of the health care outcomes and in Wisconsin, there continues to be significant racial disparities in maternal health outcomes. According to the Department of Health Services the rate of maternal morbidity in Wisconsin is higher than the national average and Black women in Wisconsin are 1.75 times more likely to experience maternal morbidityⁱ. Many common postpartum conditions that lead to mortality and morbidity require long-term care management, such as cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, and depressionⁱⁱ. Furthermore, data collected from 14 of the U.S. Maternal Mortality Review Committees, found that from 2008-2017, 23.6 percent of pregnancy-related deaths occurred in the later postpartum period (43-365 days post-partum) and across all pregnancy-related deaths, 2 out of 3 were determined to be preventable.ⁱⁱⁱ

As contracted managed care companies, our focus is to delivery healthy outcomes for the state’s Medicaid population. Continuity of care is a critical element to drive those outcomes – and leads to better health care cost management for Wisconsin taxpayers. This waiver is the first step for the state to positively impact maternal health, begin to address racial health disparities, and support growing families.

ⁱ [Wisconsin Department of Health Services Maternal Mortality and Morbidity](#)

ⁱⁱ [Postpartum Coverage Extension in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [Pregnancy-Related Deaths: Data from 14 U.S. Maternal Mortality Review Committees, 2008-2017](#)