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February 18, 2025

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
Secretary, Health and Human Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP), I am writing to congratulate you on your new role and to offer ACCP's assistance as the preeminent organization representing clinical pharmacists and the patients they care for. Our members are experts in the complex medications and medication regimens that are often a part of today's healthcare system. ACCP has long enjoyed a strong relationship with HHS and its agencies in both Republican and Democratic Administrations, and we look forward to continuing that mutually beneficial relationship with you and your team to help advance Americans' health.

Clinical Pharmacists and Medication Optimization

ACCP represents about 16,000 clinical pharmacists nationwide who work every day with patients, physicians and other health providers to ensure that medications are prescribed, dosed and utilized properly for the best clinical outcomes for patients. The result is "medication optimization" which is most effectively achieved through **comprehensive clinical pharmacy services** delivered by qualified clinical pharmacists as part of collaborative healthcare teams.

Most clinical pharmacists work in formal collaboration with physicians and other providers as members of the patient care team. Patients and physicians alike have benefited from this formal relationship, which increases the quality and effectiveness of treatment while improving physician workload and enhancing patient access to high quality care. Clinical pharmacists engage with members of the health care team, patients, and their caregivers to achieve patient-centered therapeutic goals and utilize scientific and real-world evidence to make informed clinical decisions.

Prescription Drug Therapy is Vital, But Inappropriate Use Leads to Higher Spending

The value of prescription medication as an essential therapeutic option is well-established, particularly in the treatment of chronic conditions. In fact, it is estimated that 70% of doctor visits result in the prescribing of a medication. Unfortunately, due to lack of coordination across the health care team, too often those medications may not be fully "optimized" for a patient's specific health circumstances. As a result, over half a trillion dollars a year -- \$528 billion -- is consumed due to non-optimized medication use -- equivalent to 16 percent of total health care spending. This waste of financial resources must be addressed if the country is to establish a viable path forward for our country's healthcare future.

Given the central role that medications play in the treatment of chronic conditions, combined with the continuing complexity and cost of medications, it is tragic that the nation's health care system consistently

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fails to deliver the full promise that medications can offer. In our view, this is why it is well past time to recognize and advance the medication expertise of clinical pharmacists.

Modernizing Medicare to Cover Comprehensive Clinical Pharmacy Services

To help address the massive and costly “medication misuse” problem, ACCP has proposed coverage for **comprehensive clinical pharmacy services** in Medicare. These are direct patient care services, provided by clinical pharmacists working as formal members of the patient’s health care team. Through empirical, peer-reviewed studies and everyday practice, these services have been shown to significantly improve clinical outcomes and enhance the safety of patients’ medication use.

We deeply appreciate the positive, bipartisan conversations we have had to date with officials at HHS and we look forward to continuing to explore options that will enhance efficiency, cost savings and improved patient health. Toward this end, we welcome the opportunity to provide you and your team with additional information about the success of **comprehensive clinical pharmacy services** and how it can improve federal healthcare programs.

Unfortunately, despite the acceptance and coverage of **comprehensive clinical pharmacy services** in top-tier integrated healthcare systems like the Mayo Clinic, Kaiser Permanente, and the U.S. Veterans health program, Medicare does not offer coverage for this care. Adding coverage for these services will help address the staggering human and financial cost of medication misuse in this country. In our view, this needs to be a top priority for the Administration and for Congress.

Conclusion

Again, welcome to your new position. Clinical pharmacists play a vital role in our Nation’s healthcare system, but unfortunately, the country’s biggest healthcare program – Medicare – does not currently recognize the value of their services. Coverage of **comprehensive clinical pharmacy services** will be one vitally important way to ensure that our Nation’s healthcare system is fully modernized, efficacious and cost effective for the future.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



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