

February 23, 2017

The Honorable Thomas Price
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Price:

We write to congratulate on your confirmation as Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The Connected Health Initiative (CHI) represents a broad consensus of stakeholders spanning the healthcare and technology sectors who seek your partnership in realizing the benefits of an information and communications technology-enabled American healthcare system. We commit to work with you to move the country towards a more efficient and effective healthcare system.

Today, more than 133 million Americans suffer from chronic conditions such as diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and mental illness. This population is expected to increase to approximately 171 million by 2030. America's healthcare spending is expected to reach \$3.5 trillion in 2017, representing 18 percent of the entire U.S. economy, and this spending number is projected to reach 20 percent of the economy by 2025. A strong and growing body of evidence has clearly demonstrated that the wide array of connected health technologies available today improve patient care, reduce hospitalizations, help avoid complications, and improve patient engagement, particularly for the chronically ill. Further, the integration of these connected health technologies has been proven to reduce healthcare costs significantly. Today, these connected health innovations represent a main driver in an internet of things (IoT) marketplace valued at over \$250 billion in the United States. These tools, including wireless remote patient monitoring health and wellness products, mobile medical device data systems, converged medical devices, and cloud-based patient portals, are revolutionizing the healthcare care industry by allowing the incorporation of patient-generated health data (PGHD) into the continuum of care. Further, these advanced products and services present the ability to improve research and bring about the faster development of new therapies and cures and to improve meaningfully the lives of the American populations most in need today, such as veterans and those who live in rural areas. A 21st century healthcare system must

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integrate and embrace these innovative technologies to improve patient care and lower costs.

As a community, we believe that any legislation aimed at improving the American healthcare system should reflect the benefits today's technology offers by permitting caregivers and patients to flexibly utilize innovations already used in many other facets of their lives, in order to improve patient healthcare at lower costs. Despite the proven benefits of connected health technology to the American healthcare system, U.S. government policies have largely ignored these solutions. For example, due to Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) policies that have remained unchanged for over 15 years, Medicare "telehealth" reimbursements are minuscule (e.g., \$ 14 million in 2014), and remote monitoring technologies are ignored. You have the ability to move away from the backward-facing and outdated policies regarding the use of connected health technology in place today. We seek a partnership with you in revisiting these policies, and we are confident that our unique viewpoints and experiences can lend practical and innovative insights.

To assist in meeting your national priorities, we wish to provide the following recommendations and principles for consideration. We welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your leadership team and discuss these ideas in greater depth:

- The wide array of connected health technology products and services – including telehealth, remote monitoring of PGHD, telemonitoring – available today, and those in development, offer the ability to save countless American lives while lowering costs.
- Today, the connected health sector stands at the brink of incredible growth and has the potential to create many high-paying jobs across the United States, with the American patient as the primary beneficiary.
- The importance of the healthcare sector necessitates that improvements to America's critical infrastructure include measures to give providers the ability to use the power of connected health technology products and services throughout the continuum of care – both inside and outside of the four walls of the doctor's office.
- The healthcare policies of the U.S. government, including entitlement programs, must examine any and all ways to improve patient care while reducing costs. Today, a number of laws and regulations needlessly maintain artificial and technology-specific barriers for connected health technologies, such as Section

1834(m) of the Social Security Act. These barriers and redundancies should be eliminated as soon as possible to unleash investment and innovation across the healthcare sector.

- Interoperability between providers, as well as between remote monitoring devices and electronic health records, is critical to improving patient outcomes. We seek your partnership in enabling actionable data interoperability in healthcare to enable improved patient care and cost savings.
- No data is more personal to Americans than their own health data, while an ever-increasing amount of internet protocol-enabled healthcare tools face growing security threats. These threats to patient privacy and safety should be addressed in a way that enables scalable and dynamic risk management practices by companies in partnership with the U.S. government.

HHS has a historic opportunity to make the American healthcare system the greatest in the world by leveraging the wide array of connected health technologies available today, as well as future innovations. We seek your partnership in supporting the wide use of connected health technology solutions to improve the U.S. healthcare system, and we welcome the opportunity to work with you. We look forward to meeting with your team and working with you to achieve these mutual goals for America.

Sincerely,



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