

June 16, 2021

Congressman Dan Newhouse
504 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Newhouse,

Grant County Public Hospital District #1 dba Samaritan Healthcare would like to express our strong support for the proposed Rural Remote Patient Monitoring Act which would create a pilot grant program within HRSA.

Access to healthcare services in rural areas such as Grant County, WA can be very challenging due to lack of transportation or distance to access care, weather conditions, and more. The distance to access care can be an hour or more depending on road conditions. In addition, reliable, high speed internet is often not available in these rural areas. These factors can make it a significant hardship for people to get to a clinic or hospital. Those individuals with chronic conditions need routine care and monitoring by their healthcare team in order to prevent further medical conditions that could result in the worsening of their condition or the need for hospitalization.

Samaritan Healthcare has partnered with critical access hospitals in our region to form the Grand Columbia Health Alliance. The Alliance was the recipient of a HRSA grant around preventive cardiology services. Much of our work with the grant focused around chronic care management. We were very successful in our efforts under the grant. Remote monitoring devices like home BP cuffs, scales, pulse oximeters, and glucometers would be excellent tools to further this work. These tools are vital instruments in being able to engage patients in managing their health conditions, obtaining necessary information to determine appropriate interventions, allowing care to happen with the patient at home and early interventions when there are complications, and reducing emergency room visits and readmissions.

As rural healthcare facilities, we have limited resources to be able to make the investment in such important technologies that can improve access to care, improve quality of care, and at the same time, can reduce health care costs. This proposed pilot project could assist rural facilities to deploy this technology. Ensuring reimbursement for these services is also essential for sustainability.

Thank you, Representative Newhouse, for your ongoing support, innovation, and leadership on behalf of rural healthcare and striving to ensure access to care for those we serve.

Sincerely,



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Chief Executive Officer

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