



## ALLIANCE STATEMENT ON THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 6, 2017

Contact: Joshua Rael, JD, Alliance Executive Director [jrael@alliancecolorado.org](mailto:jrael@alliancecolorado.org)

### **AHCA's Cuts to Medicaid Put Critical Disability Services At Risk**

The American Health Care Act (AHCA) proposes deep cuts to Medicaid and aims to restructure the program's financing to minimize the federal government's share of costs, shifting costs to states and, ultimately, to those who need support the most. As the Senate works on its own version of the bill, Alliance urges Colorado's congressional delegation to protect critical Medicaid services for people with disabilities and oppose attempts to cap the program.

Alliance members provide Medicaid-funded home- and community-based services (HCBS) to thousands of Coloradans with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). For these individuals, Medicaid is literally a lifeline to critical supports they could not otherwise access, and that help them perform activities like eating, bathing, accessing their communities, and finding and getting to work. Without these supports, many would be forced to rely on institutional care for their most basic needs – a far more costly model that segregates people and prevents them from developing independent living skills to become productive, contributing, and valued members of their communities.

Restructuring Medicaid into a per capita cap or block grant model could have devastating effects on Coloradans with IDD and the agencies that support them. With its unique constitutional budget constraints, Colorado is in a more precarious position than most; there is simply no way our state could cover the significant losses in federal revenues proposed by the bill and maintain current levels of support. This means that services for people with IDD would undoubtedly endure significant reductions, putting access to, and quality of, services at significant risk.

"Cuts of this magnitude would be devastating to the people we support," said Randy Brodersen, Alliance Board President and Executive Director of North Metro Community Services. "We are already struggling to find employees and cover the costs of providing services at the current service reimbursement rates. I don't see how we could sustain our programs if these cuts go into effect."

The discussion of Medicaid financing is much bigger than the Affordable Care Act. HCBS programs and other disability laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, have received broad bipartisan support; yet these very policies would be undermined by the existing version of the AHCA. "The proposal on the table would undo years of important bipartisan work to help people move out of institutions and eliminate waiting lists for services," emphasized Josh Rael, Alliance Executive Director. "We've made

Alliance is a statewide association of Community Centered Boards (CCBs) and Program Approved Service Agencies (PASAs) that provide services and supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Alliance members serve over 10,000 individuals with IDD and employ 3,200 DSPs and case managers throughout Colorado.  
[www.AllianceColorado.org](http://www.AllianceColorado.org)





tremendous progress in our state to give Coloradans the support they need to live quality lives in their own homes and communities. It would be a tragedy to see all of that work go to waste.”

If Medicaid is capped, Coloradans with IDD may be at risk. People may lose access to services, be forced into nursing homes and institutions, and be at risk of homelessness and even death without access to supports. Alliance calls on all members of Colorado’s congressional delegation to recognize the critical need for and value of Medicaid-funded disability services that help increase independence, enable people to work and pay taxes, and improve quality of life. As elected representatives for Coloradans with disabilities and their families, they must ensure the ongoing availability and sustainability of these vital supports by bringing people accepting services and their providers, advocates, and families to the table to help shape this legislation and the future of this important program.

####

For more information, please read Alliance’s issue brief entitled “[A Perfect Storm for IDD Service Providers](#)” and/or Alliance’s [Perfect Storm Infographic](#) highlighting some IDD provider sustainability issues.

Alliance is a nonprofit, statewide association of Community Centered Boards (CCBs) and Program Approved Service Agencies (PASAs) that is dedicated to strengthening services and supports for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Alliance members support about 75-80% of people receiving services through Colorado’s HCBS Medicaid waivers for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This amounts to roughly 8,000 people accepting Medicaid-funded services alone. Click [HERE](#) to view Alliance’s current membership spanning every Colorado county.

Alliance is a statewide association of Community Centered Boards (CCBs) and Program Approved Service Agencies (PASAs) that provide services and supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Alliance members serve over 10,000 individuals with IDD and employ 3,200 DSPs and case managers throughout Colorado.  
[www.AllianceColorado.org](http://www.AllianceColorado.org)

