

THE DISABILITY COALITION

A Coalition of Persons with Disabilities, Family Members, and Advocates

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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ADVISORY PRESS CONFERENCE

The Disability Coalition Issues Recommendations on Medicaid Modernization

Calls on Administration to Promote and Expand Home and Community Supports for New Mexicans with Disabilities

ALBUQUERQUE, NM -- Governor Susana Martinez's Medicaid Modernization is an opportunity to promote and expand opportunities for thousands of New Mexican children and adults with disabilities to receive community health and long-term supports in their communities. The Administration's proposed Medicaid Modernization will affect tens of thousands of people with disabilities, including people with mental health needs, developmental disabilities, chronic conditions, and people with other disabilities who rely upon supports for their daily physical needs to keep them out of nursing homes.

The Disability Coalition is the largest statewide advocacy coalition representing people with disabilities in New Mexico. The Press Conference immediately precedes the final day of the Southwest Conference on Disability, an event that will attract over 900 people with disabilities, families, advocates and professionals from 28 states and three countries, in addition to the United States. **The Coalition is holding a Press Conference on October 7 at 8:30 am to bring attention to the needs of New Mexicans with disabilities and issue recommendations for the redesign. The Press Conference will be held at the Albuquerque Convention Center, Main Ballroom, Upper Level, West Side.**

'The Governor's key principle of home and community supports rather than institutions is fundamental to the redesign of the state's Medicaid program and one that The Disability Coalition is fully behind,' asserts Coalition Chair Jim Jackson. Mr. Jackson is also the Executive Director of Disability Rights New Mexico, a nonprofit legal advocacy organization working on behalf of the rights of persons with disabilities.

"The Coalition urges the Administration to work with representatives of the disability community on a meaningful and ongoing basis as plans for Medicaid redesign are developed and implemented,' states Mr. Jackson. The Disability Coalition's recommendations are proposed to protect the health and safety of persons with disabilities, as well as to strengthen the services and

supports that promote their independence and inclusion in the community. Among the recommendations provided by the Coalition are those relating to case management, getting people out of nursing homes with the supports needed to live in their home and community, and the Personal Care Option program, which provides assistance in the home to seniors and younger people with disabilities who need the level of care provided in a nursing home.

“The PCO allows individuals who need nursing facility level of care to stay in their own homes instead of going into a nursing home. That’s cheaper for the state and much better for the individual,” said Ellen Pinnes, a health policy consultant who works with the Coalition.

The Press Conference on Friday will also feature people with disabilities who rely upon the Medicaid PCO program to remain in their community.

The Legislative Disability Subcommittee, chaired by Representative Antonio Lujan of Las Cruces, will be meeting immediately following the press conference. The Subcommittee’s agenda will include briefings on some of these critical Medicaid programs, such as the Personal Care Option.

WHAT: PRESS CONFERENCE
WHO: THE DISABILITY COALITION
WHEN: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7TH
TIME: 8:30 A.M.
WHERE: ABQ CONVENTION CENTER, MAIN BALLROOM,
UPPER LEVEL, WEST SIDE

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