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Statement from HFS Director Elizabeth Whitehorn on Transformative Federal Waiver Approval for Illinois Medicaid

Waiver will increase access to services that address health disparities

Chicago, IL – Today, Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) Director Elizabeth Whitehorn released the following statement in response to the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) approval of Illinois’ [“1115” demonstration waiver](#):

“This announcement transforms and advances our state’s vision of an equitable and sustainable healthcare delivery system, leveraging Medicaid resources to address root causes of health disparities. We thank federal CMS for recognizing the connection between health-related social needs and healthcare outcomes. The new services will be designed to bring sustainable, community-driven solutions to some of our most vulnerable residents and incorporate non-traditional providers into the Medicaid program.

In addition to supporting housing, nutrition and transition from incarceration and other institutional settings, CMS approval includes services to address substance use disorder (SUD), employment supports for people with disabilities, and violence prevention and intervention. Some other items contained in the original waiver request continue to be under review by federal CMS. HFS will announce further details later in July.”

Section 1115 of the Social Security Act gives the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services authority to approve demonstration projects that promote the objectives of the Medicaid program. Under this authority, states can be granted additional flexibility to design and improve their Medicaid programs. The full approval document is available on the CMS website: [Illinois Healthcare Transformation | Medicaid](#).

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