



The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

April 24, 2020

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

Thank you for your tireless efforts to support the public health response to the coronavirus/COVID-19 public health emergency. As you develop additional legislation to address the coronavirus pandemic, the Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association (GAPNA) as the premier organization representing the interests of nurse practitioners and all providers who work with older adults, encourages you to include a full deployment of the Medicare Quality Innovation Network – Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO) program to support health care providers.

The QIN-QIO program is only shovel-ready independent national infrastructure that can deploy technical assistance locally to health care providers on the front line. QIOs provide support and expertise to providers in critical areas such as infection control and prevention, telemedicine deployment, identifying areas where care can be improved and helping implement best practices into the care-givers workflow. QIOs will also help navigate the unprecedented challenge of expanding surge capacity safely in hotspots and intervening to curb the rate of infection in areas that are not yet experiencing a severe outbreak.

Urgent Congressional action is necessary because the QIN-QIO program is currently operating at only 10% of the FY'20 QIO Program budget; a fraction of its historic funding levels, after the program lapsed for 4 months and then was cut by 70% in 2019. Despite saving the Medicare Trust Funds \$13 billion in the preceding 5 years, the program has been cut at the worst possible time for the country. QIN-QIOs are currently trying to assist care providers of our Nation's most vulnerable in all care settings including those hardest hit by Covid-19 such as Long Term Care and Assisted Living Facilities with education and training on how to safely care for both themselves and older adults during a pandemic. This is currently being done on a pro-bono basis, but resources are lacking to mount a strategic national response to truly help turn the fight against coronavirus.

Attached is legislation that would deploy the QIN-QIO program to help providers meet the challenges presented by the public health emergency, and ensure ongoing QIO support directly to providers is not interrupted again.

Thank you for your leadership as we all work to achieve the best outcome for patients impacted by the coronavirus.

Sincerely,
Deborah Dunn, EdD, MSN, GNP-BC, ACNS-BC, GS-C
GAPNA President

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