



August 29, 2006

Randall L. Johnson, Chair  
Citizens' Health Care Working Group  
7201 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 575  
Bethesda MD 20814

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the interim recommendations of the Citizens' Health Care Working Group (CHCWG). On behalf of the 25 Federally Qualified Health Centers in Oregon, I wish to express my concern with the recommendation to "support integrated community health networks." In particular, we disagree with the implementation point to "expand and modify the FQHC concept to accommodate other community-based health centers and practices serving vulnerable populations."

Federally Qualified Health Centers, with patient board of directors, are at the heart of providing health care that empowers those receiving health care and gives them a direct say in how care is organized and delivered. FQHC's in Oregon were the medical home for over 203,000 residents in 2005, providing high-quality, affordable primary care and preventive services to the most vulnerable populations. The Oregon Primary Care Association is disappointed with this recommendation which will undercut the FQHC grass roots community model of health care. For 40 years, the FQHC community-based boards of directors have been instrumental in assuring that health centers provide quality care that is responsive to community needs.

In meeting the health care needs of our most vulnerable populations it is critical to preserve the integrity of the existing FQHC governance and payment system while also supporting additional concepts to meet the expanding health care needs of all Americans. I look forward to reviewing final recommendations that highlight and support the unique FQHC model as well as recommendations that create additional access to health care.

Sincerely,

Craig Hostetler, MHA  
Executive Director