

May 21, 2020

Alex M. Azar
Secretary
United States Department of Health and
Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Seema Verma
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 445-G
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Azar and Administrator Verma:

The National Alliance of Safety-Net Hospitals is most grateful for everything you and your colleagues are doing to help hospitals continue to serve their communities during these challenging times, including distributing grants through the Provider Relief Fund.

Providers that received grants from the \$50 billion General Distribution funding have been given many different and sometimes contradictory instructions and information regarding the attestation required for them to keep the grants they have received and remain eligible for future distributions. We respectfully ask for more time and for clearer instructions so that hospitals, acting in good faith, can confidently comply with the attestation requirements without risking subjecting themselves to significant financial and legal vulnerability.

Based on the considerable confusion surrounding instructions for attestation, please extend the deadline for all attestations related to the \$50 billion General Distribution until June 30 while the Department of Health and Human Services and stakeholders work to ensure a clearer understanding of the requirements for attesting to receipt of these funds.

Many factors contribute to this widespread confusion. Hospitals that have received this funding are facing multiple deadlines for multiple attestations related to multiple distributions from this General Distribution fund. They have received numerous contradictory instructions and guidance that together include varying definitions of what is a provider and of what constitutes an overpayment of these funds. When providers refer to the provider relief fund Frequently Asked Questions document they find that answers to questions are literally and substantially changed from day to day.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that you suspend all current attestation and financial filing deadlines, set a new attestation deadline of June 30 for all recipients of General Distribution funds, and spend the next month developing definitive, consistent answers to questions that may arise as hospitals prepare to attest to the terms and conditions for receiving Provider Relief Fund grants and to submit supporting data to document their need for the grants they have already received. Hospitals need much more clarity in these instructions to comply with the requirements for receiving and keeping these funds and to ensure their eligibility for future general distributions.



We appreciate your consideration of these matters and would be pleased to provide further information and examples of the challenges we have encountered. Please feel free to contact us if you believe that would be helpful.

Sincerely,

Ellen J. Kugler
Executive Director