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Office of the Cook County Board President
Toni Preckwinkle

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Cook County Health and Hospitals System Announce Approval of 1115 Medicaid Waiver

Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle and Cook County Health and Hospitals System Chief Executive Officer Dr. Ram Raju today announced the federal government has approved the 1115 Medicaid Waiver for Cook County. Approval allows CCHHS to enroll more than 115,000 individuals who will be eligible for Medicaid in 2014 into a Cook County Medicaid network with no cost to the state of Illinois.

"The 1115 Medicaid waiver has been the legislative priority for my administration this year. Dr. Raju and I have worked closely together and met with elected officials in Springfield and Washington D.C. to push for waiver approval for Cook County," Preckwinkle said. "I am so pleased to see this result after many months of hard work. Our health care system is vital to the community and we must continue to ensure everyone in Cook County has access to quality medical care. Under Dr. Raju's leadership the 1115 waiver will help patients feel welcome and well-treated in the Cook County Health System."

"This is excellent news that will allow us to begin enrolling nearly 115,000 patients, including many of the people we currently serve, in the Cook County Health System. We are working every day to create a patient centric medical home for county residents to

get top quality medical care," Dr. Raju said. "I want to thank President Toni Preckwinkle for her strong support throughout this process. We both look forward to moving the health system in the right direction for patients."

An 1115 Waiver allows the Cook County's Health System to "early enroll" certain uninsured patients into Medicaid. Specifically, these are patients who are not currently eligible for Medicaid, but who will be eligible in 2014 under the Accountable Care Act. Many of these individuals are patients who already are being treated by our system without compensation.

The Cook County Health & Hospitals System provides the services required under the 1115 Waiver and will add certain post-acute care services which are critical to offering a well-coordinated care. Waiver participants will be provided with a medical home where they will receive routine and preventive medical care, case management, physician and medical services. Before hospital inpatient discharge, participants will receive follow-up appointments with their primary health care provider to ensure that appropriate care is provided.

The Waiver is funded entirely by the federal government. The County and its taxpayers are currently assuming the costs for these uncompensated patients who, under the Waiver, will now be covered by Medicaid. The 1115 Waiver will give the County's Health System a head-start in getting ready for the future Medicaid managed care model, post 2014.

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