

Turner House Children's Clinic

Good morning, Chairman Ryckman, Jr. and members of the committee. I am Janet Burton, Executive Director of Turner House Children's Clinic in Kansas City, Kansas, and a resident of Leawood in Johnson County. Thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony in opposition to the proposed cuts to primary care clinic grant funding for FY 2017.

As you consider and debate the potential impact of funding cuts to primary care Safety Net clinics, I'd like to share the potential impact of these cuts to Turner House Children's Clinic and our patients.

Turner House is an independent, nonprofit, pediatric Safety Net clinic, located in the heart of a low-income, working class neighborhood in Kansas City, Kansas, serving uninsured and underserved children. Approximately 85% of our patients live at 100% or below of the federal poverty level and 75% of patients are enrolled in KanCare Medicaid—a percentage that has grown from 54% over the past four years. Uninsured patients are charged a nominal fee for services. No patient is turned away for inability to pay. **In 2015, Turner House provided care to 5,924 patients, an increase of 26% over the previous year, and more than \$230,000 was provided in uncompensated charitable care.** There is no shortage of demand for our services as many families in our community, while hard working, struggle to make ends meet.

As a pediatric-only clinic, Turner House does not qualify to be a Federally-Qualified Health Center or to receive enhanced Medicaid reimbursements or encounter rates. The fee for service KanCare reimbursements Turner House receives provide an average of approximately 40% of the cost of a patient visit. The rest must be raised annually from sources including the Kansas state primary care grant. Kansas State grant funding fills an essential need.

Kansas State primary care grant funds provide Turner House with approximately \$120,000 a year, or almost the annual salary of a full-time pediatrician. Without these grant funds, our ability to employ and retain a full-time pediatrician on our staff, the number of children served would be reduced

Each full-time pediatrician at Turner House manages the health care of 2200 children. If state primary care funds are no longer available to Turner House, these 2200 children **currently served in a primary care patient-centered medical home clinic would instead rely on expensive emergency rooms for their care**, raising health care costs for all in our community. The loss of a provider salary would also mean that the jobs of the provider's care team, consisting of a certified medical assistant, medical office receptionist and care coordinator, would be lost and our local economy and the state would lose the positive revenue and tax contribution of these skilled workers.

Kansas State primary care funds have enabled Turner House to hire and retain an experienced staff, provide continuity of care for patients, and achieve the following results:

- 61% growth in the number of patients served since 2012, improving access, outcomes, and reducing health care system costs.

-- 90% average immunization compliance rates for two year olds and adolescents, which exceed county, state and national norms, and reduce both the incidence of contagious disease in our communities, and the number of missed school days for children striving to overcome the impact of poverty to successfully contribute to their communities and our state.

-- Implementation of an innovative weight management program for the 1,000 Turner House patients diagnosed with pediatric obesity, improving their quality of life and reducing their likelihood of chronic disease. At the end of 2015, 54% of obese patients had an individual action plan, an increase of 211% from the previous year, and were achieving or maintaining their Body Mass Indexes, which is viewed as statistically significant.

--In 2015, Turner House Children's Clinic successfully received renewal recognition from the National Council of Quality Assurance as Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home, the highest level of recognition. This accreditation is given for achieving six standards of Patient-Centered Access, Team-Based Care, Population Health Management, Care Management and Support, Care Coordination, and Performance Management and Quality Improvement.

With the support of Kansas State primary care grant funds, Turner House is making a significant difference in the health of our community's neediest children.

I urge you to thoughtfully consider and debate the potential impact of funding cuts to primary care Safety Net clinics like Turner House, and to restore the \$378,000 cut to the Aid to Local Primary Health Care Services Budget through an amendment on HB 2577.

Janet Burton
Executive Director
Turner House Children's Clinic