



**Oral Testimony to Support HB 2557
February 12, 2020
House Committee on Insurance**

Chairman Vickrey and members of the House Committee on Insurance, thank you for allowing me to present Community Care Network of Kansas' support for House Bill No. 2557. I am Denise Cyzman, CEO of Community Care, and have the honor to represent community clinics providing primary, dental, behavioral health and other care to one in nine Kansans. Thanks to the state's investment, this network (map attached) is one of the largest primary care systems in Kansas. In 2019, the clinics provided care to 317,000 patients through more than 1 million visits.¹ Each clinic has a common mission to serve all, regardless of who they are, how much money they make, where they live, or if they have health insurance. The majority of Kansans served by the clinics experience significant barriers to accessing care and maintaining health² – many of whom would benefit from HB 2557.

Approximately 282,000 people in Kansas have diabetes.³ Unlike some, diabetes is not an equal opportunity chronic disease. Data consistently show certain population groups are disproportionately affected by diabetes, including racial/ethnic minority populations, older individuals, and those with low income. Community Care clinics encounter this inequity every day. The prevalence of diabetes among all Kansas adults is 12%; among Community Care clinic patients it is 30.5%.

For many people with diabetes, insulin is a life-sustaining medication for which there is no substitute. Injecting insulin on a daily basis is necessary to maintain blood glucose levels and reduce the risk of diabetes complications. When insulin is not taken appropriately, the risk of serious complications, such as cardiovascular disease, blindness, amputations and kidney disease increases. Any could lead to emergency hospitalization and death. The cost of diabetes complications is high, both economically and personally.

Insulin is expensive. In 2016, individuals with type 1 diabetes spent \$5,705 on insulin in one year. Add another \$4,119 for diabetes supplies and other prescription drugs, we are looking at \$819/month. If history predicts the past, we will see these costs continue to climb, as the annual cost for insulin increased 23% from 2012 to 2016.⁴

Now imagine having to pay for insulin without health insurance. Without prescription insurance coverage. Or with high-deductible health insurance. Add a limited income, and it is easy to see how out-of-pocket costs for insulin could be devastating, with life-threatening consequences. In

¹ Community Care Network of Kansas. Quality Reporting System (QRS): 2019 Preliminary Data. Accessed on 2.10.2020.

² 91% of the patients reported income levels at or below 200% FPL; 36% were uninsured; and 30% were Medicaid beneficiaries. Community Care Network of Kansas, 2018 data.

³ American Diabetes Association. The Burden of Diabetes in Kansas.

⁴ Binek, JF and Johnson, W. Spending on Individuals with Type 1 Diabetes and the Role of Rapidly Increasing Insulin Prices. Health Care Cost Institute. January 2019.

fact, a 2018 American Diabetes Association patient survey revealed that many individuals who faced high out-of-pocket costs for insulin were forced either to ration or forgo insulin doses to reduce costs.⁵

This is what happened to Allen, a nephew of a CEO from one of the Community Care clinics. Allen was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at 8 years old. At age 19, he aged out of the Medicaid program and lost his medical coverage. Without insurance, he was forced to rely on donated insulin and manage his disease with very few resources. His family believes he was stretching his insulin doses to make the medication last longer. At 21 years of age, a time that should have been the beginning of his life, Allen – a smart, funny, vibrant young man – was found dead in his home. Cause of death: diabetic ketoacidosis. Diabetic coma.

With HB2557, many Kansans, like Allen, could afford their insulin. It is that simple. A maximum \$100 out-of-pocket cost-share per month will provide options that \$819 does not. House Bill 2557 will reduce diabetes complications and it will save lives.

Community Care Network of Kansas supports HB2557. Thank you. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.

⁵ American Diabetes Association. The American Diabetes Association Applauds the Insulin Price Reduction Act, Introduced Today by the Senate Diabetes Caucus. American Diabetes Association Press Release, July 2019. Accessed online at <https://www.diabetes.org/newsroom/press-releases/2019/insulin-price-reduction-act>.