



May 22, 2019

The Honorable Susan M. Collins
Chairman
U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging
G31 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bob Casey
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging
G31 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Collins and Ranking Member Casey:

The Healthcare Leadership Council (HLC) appreciates the opportunity to submit this letter for the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging’s hearing on “Aging and Disability in the 21st Century: How Technology Can Help Maintain Health and Quality of Life.”

HLC is a coalition of chief executives from all disciplines within American healthcare. It is the exclusive forum for the nation’s healthcare leaders to jointly develop policies, plans, and programs to achieve their vision of a 21st century healthcare system that makes affordable high-quality care accessible to all Americans. Members of HLC – hospitals, academic health centers, health plans, pharmaceutical companies, medical device manufacturers, laboratories, biotech firms, health product distributors, post-acute care providers, home care providers, and information technology companies – advocate for measures to increase the quality and efficiency of healthcare through a patient-centered approach.

Technology plays an increasingly greater role in delivering care in a more effective and cost-efficient manner. Healthcare technologies help to advance interoperability and allow providers to deliver virtual care through telemedicine and remote patient monitoring. Using technology, healthcare stakeholders can coordinate care more efficiently to deliver better health outcomes.

HLC is a strong supporter of using telehealth and remote patient monitoring to connect with patients across various locations to coordinate care. Telehealth improves healthcare quality and lowers costs, while giving more people access to quality healthcare. HLC has been a staunch supporter of telehealth provisions in the CHRONIC Care Act (P.L.115-123). HLC commends Congress for passing this legislation, which expands telehealth and remote patient monitoring services in Medicare. Additionally, we welcomed the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services’ flexible approach in implementing provisions in the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) of 2018 to expand telehealth services to Medicare Advantage enrollees. HLC believes Congress and the administration should work to further expand coverage for telehealth services to all Medicare beneficiaries, including those enrolled in fee-for-service Medicare so that all beneficiaries can benefit from increased access, reduced costs, and improved patient health, and outcomes.

In addition, for a health information system to seamlessly transfer patient healthcare information, irrespective of location to coordinate care, our healthcare system must be interoperable. An interoperable healthcare system also needs to correctly identify patients to better organize care. HLC opposes all forms of information blocking within the exchange of healthcare information and endorses the appropriate flow of patient healthcare information. The digitization of our healthcare system presents an opportunity to advance interoperability to deliver high quality healthcare and produce better health outcomes. Action to improve interoperability should focus on bringing information to the point of care to support care delivery and meeting the information needs of individuals to support their health and healthcare. HLC collaborated with the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) to identify challenges, private sector actions and public policies intended to expedite interoperability, information sharing and data access to support better health outcomes and higher-quality, safer, more cost-effective, and patient-centered care for individuals and populations in the United States. We are pleased to share the findings in our [report](#) with the committee.

Thank you for examining this important issue. Please feel free to reach out to Tina Grande, Senior Vice President for Policy, at (202) 449-3433 or tgrande@hlc.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary R. Greal". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Mary R. Greal
President