

Testimony for Heather Greene from Waterbury, Connecticut

My name is Heather Greene. I am from Waterbury, CT, and reside with my spouse and our two daughters, ages 2 and 9.

I am here today because I am one of the thousands who was not given the freedom of choice mentioned in DSS's proposed managed care waiver, when it came to selecting a plan for my children and my family.

It was not a real choice because PCCM was not made available to pediatricians and others doctors around the state, like DSS promised you at the hearing last September, and so, without their participation, we HUSKY families were not offered the option to choose to participate in it.

I know this because I brought paperwork about enrolling in PCCM to my children's pediatrician's office, and they said they had never heard of this program from DSS. If that is the case with this office, then how many other offices did DSS actually give information about PCCM to throughout the state, let alone allow them to participate?

On top of that, my children's doctor is through Danbury Hospital, so hospitals would have to be allowed to participate in PCCM for us to be able to choose it and still keep our doctor.

I was told by my children's pediatrician that in order for my children to remain being seen there, that I would have to choose Aetna Better Health before January 30th, and they would not be able to see them if I chose after that date. I understand that many other doctors' offices said they would only see their existing patients if they switched plans before the deadline, and are not accepting new patients on any of these plans, as to which we supposedly are given a free choice.

I did choose Aetna Better Choice, so my children could remain with their pediatrician, and luckily the doctor for my spouse and I accept the same plan, but now I am stuck with the fact that my OB/GYN only takes AmeriChoice, and my children lost their eye doctor, both specialists whom are in Waterbury, due to these changes. And still I haven't heard any mention of PCCM with any of them, even

though I live in one of the two cities in which DSS said they have implemented PCCM.

Being told to choose a plan that your child's doctor participates in is common sense to many of us, but my question today is, with the limited number of pediatricians and other doctors participating in each HUSKY plan, and with these doctors and HUSKY families not being told that PCCM is an option (or even what PCCM is about), does it sound like we were given freedom of choice?

Freedom of choice to me is having a choice between two or more plans that are offered, where the providers my family are involved with accept both, and then choosing one out of the two.

Instead, there was only one plan that I was able to choose, as is probably the case with over 100,000 other families here in Connecticut.

I live in Waterbury, and I was not given the choice of PCCM. DSS should have to enroll more providers within PCCM throughout the state and educate the people on HUSKY about the benefits of switching to PCCM, just like it promised before your committees at the hearing in September. At a minimum, it should enroll with PCCM right away those providers who already submitted timely applications to participate by the October 31 deadline set by DSS, and then offer to all HUSKY enrollees who live around them the choice of enrolling in PCCM, just like DSS also promised in September.

I personally would love for my providers to participate in PCCM, so I could switch to it.

In the end, PCCM will save the State of Connecticut close to \$100 million dollars annually, and give children and families better health care, as seen with other states which use PCCM.

So why not get PCCM up and running throughout the state to help save money during these hard economic times? Please reject DSS's proposed waiver and tell them to correct it so it complies with the statewide PCCM plan you already approved in September.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.