



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

25 SIGOURNEY STREET • HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-5033

January 10, 2014

Penny Williams, Grants Management Specialist
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Office of Acquisitions and Grants Management
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244-1850
Mail Stop: B3-30-03

Re: Support for Demonstration Ombudsman Programs Serving Beneficiaries of Financial Alignment Models for Medicare-Medicaid Enrollees; CFDA: 93.634

Dear Ms. Williams:

In its role as Connecticut's Medicaid agency, the Division of Health Services of the Connecticut Department of Social Services (the Department) supports and endorses the Connecticut Office of the State Healthcare Advocate (OHA) as the Connecticut designated entity in fulfilling all of the obligations of the Ombudsman Demonstration. The OHA is uniquely situated to play this role because of its longstanding and highly esteemed role in advocacy support for consumers in health insurance matters; its neutrality; its commitment to protection of beneficiary interests regarding confidentiality; its strong skillset in representation, negotiation and mediation of issues in dispute; and its extensive work in using a range of media and culturally competent formats and approaches to educate and inform consumers and professionals regarding self-advocacy and consumer rights.

The Department will actively partner with OHA in this effort as follows:

- in its leadership role in implementation of the Demonstration to Integrate Care for Medicare-Medicaid Enrollees (MME Demonstration), to ensure coordination of strategic efforts;
- in the six-month Planning Process as a partner/member of the proposed stakeholder Ombudsman Work Group; and
- in the implementation phase to ensure adherence to standards of beneficiary support, as well as identification of trends that will inform refinements or course corrections by the Department and its contractors in administration of the MME Demonstration.

The Department is confident that designated entity OHA, will:

- Not divert resources from or diminish the capacity of existing consumer protection services.
- Provide any needed legal authority to the Demonstration Ombudsman Program in order to ensure that:
 - Demonstration Ombudsman Program representatives have access to beneficiaries (including in their places of residence) and access to records needed for investigations;
 - The identity of beneficiaries and complainants served by the Demonstration Ombudsman Program is protected; and

- The information provided to the Demonstration Ombudsman Program from beneficiaries and complainants is protected.
- Operate the Demonstration Ombudsman Program in alignment with the principles and capabilities indicated above.
- Coordinate its efforts with the State Medicaid program administered by the Department.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have need for any additional information.

Best regards,



Kate McEvoy, Esq.



Director, Division of Health Services