



Helen Lamont, PhD
HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation
Room 424E, Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington DC, 20201

March 28, 2012

Dear Dr. Lamont:

We are writing to commend you and the Department of Health and Human Services for including care transitions in the National Alzheimer's Project Act's (NAPA's) draft *National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease*.

At Healthcentric Advisors, Rhode Island's Medicare Quality Improvement Organization (QIO), we are currently in our 4th year working with local providers and stakeholders to improve the safety of patient care transitions. Our Medicare-funded Safe Transitions Project aims to implement sustainable systems change that improves patients' experiences and outcomes as they transition between care settings. In 2011, we published the results of a patient coaching intervention that we implemented in six Rhode Island hospitals, which reduced the odds of 30-day hospital readmission 34% among coached patients vs. those who were eligible, but not approached for coaching (Voss et al., *Archives of Internal Medicine*).

Regrettably, there is little evidence or expert consensus about how to include patients with cognitive impairment, such as Alzheimer's disease, in interventions to improve transition quality. Our project's multi-stakeholder Advisory Board includes consumers, providers and payors from a variety of inpatient and outpatient settings, including Rhode Island's free-standing psychiatric hospital, and has recently begun discussion of ways to target and tailor post-hospital coaching and other interventions to these patients and/or their caregivers. **We believe that NAPA's inclusion of care transitions in the draft *National Plan* will inform efforts across the country, helping us collectively provide better care for these vulnerable patients.**

Our next Advisory Board meeting, scheduled for Thursday, April 5, 2012, includes discussion of the draft *National Plan*. We plan to follow-up with you later that week to share the results of our group's discussion, in hopes that additional input will be helpful as you and your colleagues continue to refine your draft.

With questions, please contact Rosa Baier at rbaier@healthcentricadvisors.org or 401-528-3205.

Sincerely,

Rosa Baier, MPH
Senior Scientist

Rebekah Gardner, MD
Senior Medical Scientist

Lynne Chase
Senior Program Administrator

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Clinical Director

CC: *Safe Transitions Advisory Board*