

Dear Committee:

My concerns are great. I cannot make a judgement on whether privatization of Medicaid is wise or not, but I can tell you the process Iowa has undertaken is inadequate, at a minimum. I am embarrassed to be an Iowan at this time.

My daughter has received services under what was then the MR waiver program for nearly 25 years. She has been in the system. Yet, today, upon not having received her packet telling us which MCO she had been assigned to and the forms to make changes, and after two days of her dad and I making call after call to try and get this figured out, this is the conversation I had with an Iowa Medicaid representative:

Medicaid rep: I see here her packet has not been sent out.

Me: What? Why? I thought they had to be by end of November?

Her: Maybe because it has a bad address.

Me: DHS just confirmed they have the RIGHT address. Can you at least tell me the MCO she has been assigned to so we know if we need to make changes by the deadline?

Her: She has not had one assigned. Maybe because of the bad address.

Me: She has been receiving services for like 25 years. You couldn't find a source to get a correct address for something this important? What is the bad address on her file?

Her: I can't tell you that. I can't give you that information. I understand your concern, but don't worry. You know, Rome was not built in a day.

The building of Rome did not, but this transfer to a private system feels like it is exactly trying to do just that. And it is not working. We are being asked to place the entire lives of those we love into the hands of companies whose track records do not align with Iowa values. We are being asked to make decisions and figure out what these changes are going to mean in a matter of weeks. We have crafted the life for those we love - hard work - to create a safe home, a life style that allows them to contribute back through jobs or volunteering, doctors that meet their specific and unique needs. Yet we are to choose a MCO without knowing if those providers will contract with the MCO or not.

This is disrespectful to us as Iowans. To all Iowans. Please add to the cost of this change the two days we - 2 professional Iowans - just spent trying to get one simple answer. This is one example of the costs Branstad is not looking at and there are countless others being transferred. For those who can't afford those costs... what will this really mean to Iowa's bottom line in the future? What will this all mean to the quality of care for these Iowans?

For those of us living this... this IS OUR ROME. We deserve more respect than being put in a place where we are forced to make poor decisions. We deserve to be provided a system that is worthy of trust. This is not what we have at this time. Please slow it down, step back and look at it honestly from those of us it impacts perspective, and the real costs.

Thank you.

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