

Hi, my name is Heather DeLisle, and I am one of the many families who live in Ohio and whose children rely on the Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps' diagnostic and treatment plans. BCMH has been a godsend to my very seriously and chronically ill children. We are very disturbed by the possible changes being presented for BCMH.

Transferring the BCHM program to Medicaid would be catastrophic for my family with severe and intense medical needs. Losing BCMH would be financially devastating for my family. All of my children are on a variety of their programs (diagnostic and treatment). We are a middle class family that doesn't qualify for other services. We live with rare diseases that fall under no other programs because of them being orphan diseases. BCMH is the ONLY program that we qualify for and the only reason our family isn't destitute. While there are medicaid programs, we do not qualify because we are middle class. BCMH is a model program that Ohioans should be proud of. It is a program other states should model their services after. I am writing to ask for support by keeping BCHM as it is and supporting the rare and medically complex middle class families of OH.

Without BCMH, we would have to pay our \$10,000.00 copay in January. Three of my children have feeding tubes and require special formula and excess hydration fluids which cost roughly 18,000.00 a month. This doesn't include incidentals like surgeries, therapies, dental appointments or visiting the doctor for a sick visit, clinic with specialists, genetic testing, etc. Losing BCMH means that we lose the many therapies such as OT/PT/SLP as well as dental coverage and vision which we wouldn't otherwise have. It saves our family roughly 60-70 thousand dollars a year if not more. Losing BCMH means that we have to choose between our children...we will have to decide which kids are most important (or which are sickest...and let me tell you...we have 3 with life limiting conditions....so, they are all sickest). We would have to choose between children and ourselves (I also have severe and debilitating conditions which require extensive and invasive procedures annually...usually more frequently than that. I'm now considered medically fragile and have had and will have more brain surgeries as well as bladder surgeries, PT, etc.). Losing BCMH would be more than just financially devastating. It would be an emotional hardship having to choose which of our 6 chronically ill children need services. We will have to choose who gets treated and who has to wait for sometimes life saving interventions. This program is designed for the middle class, most whom don't financially qualify for Medicaid and who work to make sure they carry private insurance.

I am so grateful for your time and appreciate your support on this issue. Any further information or updates would be most appreciated. As you can imagine, my family has extreme apprehension surrounding these changes and would love to know more. We would also love to be considered to represent families in Ohio having similar issues or to share our story about what BCMH means to us. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
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