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**HB 96 Interested Party Testimony**  
**Kim King, CEO**  
**Home Care Network**  
**Ohio House Medicaid Committee**  
**Chair Jennifer Gross**  
**March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

Chair Gross, Vice Chairman Barhorst, Ranking Member Baker, and Members of the House Medicaid Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on issues impacting home and community-based services in Ohio.

The Ohio healthcare industry is currently experiencing substantial challenges. The most recent budget was the first substantial raise in decades, but inflation is rising, the workforce is strained, and home care service rates in Ohio are insufficient to meet the needs of those most in need.

As Ohioans age, they desire to remain in their homes. However, the current rates system determines the winners and losers in the industry, potentially leading to the displacement of home care services from Ohio.

We aim to collaborate with the state of Ohio to find solutions that enable individuals to remain in their homes as they age. However, achieving this without the necessary political support to sustain the industry presents a significant obstacle. If other providers secure their rates through legislative means, home care services in Ohio may face a decline, resulting in a substantial loss. *HCBS must have a raise to maintain their workforce.* Please consider raising HCBS at the rate that Ohio's budget increases, in this case 10.2% FY2026 and 7.2% FY2027.

Prior to the receipt of any funds from the upcoming budget, the state initiated a program that may deter providers from participating in Ohio's Medicaid program.

Since 2015, we have maintained a close partnership with Ohio, and our collaboration with providers during the pre-COVID era was highly successful.

- We engaged in telephone conversations with providers to discuss Electronic Verification of Visits (EVV), enabling Ohio to identify both struggling and successful providers. Within five months, we achieved a remarkable 50% improvement.
- To further support providers, we deployed a full-time trainer who traveled across the state, providing in-person training.

Fast forward to today, we have been unable to schedule in-person meetings with the department or arrange provider visits to troubleshoot. Current Go-Live preparation efforts are characterized by limited information sharing via email and inadequate resources available at “office hours” for tier 2 and 3 support questions.

- Did you know that SanData has been acquired, and HHA Exchange has reduced the number of tier 1 support staff and two of Ohio’s top tier 3 support professionals (Carolyn Osborn and Mike Amborski) are no longer working with the company?
- The current administration exhibits a lack of effective communication, problem-solving abilities, and a commitment to evaluating outcomes. The Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) has lost the individuals who conceived, developed, and implemented Electronic Verification of Visit (EVV). Consequently, they are now attempting to force the system through without adequate support for providers.

The current situation is unsustainable, and we cannot endure the ongoing pressure. Home Health is, at best, experiencing substantial challenges, and at worst, is in a prolonged state of instability. In recent years, several factors have contributed to these difficulties:

- 2021: Licensing – The licensing process has caused chaos for home care providers, resulting in excessive administrative time and disruptions.
- 2022: Provider Network Management (PNM) – PNM demands a significant amount of attention to detail and administrative time from providers, further exacerbating their workload.

- On-Going: Gainwell – Gainwell has implemented numerous changes, leading to late or non-existent payments. To mitigate these cash flow interruptions we had to increase our lines of credit.
- 2025: Re-Credentialling – The re-credentialling process for all providers has been particularly challenging. Denials have occurred due to medical directors not recredentialling with Medicaid, leaving us with limited control over the situation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today and would be happy to answer any questions at the appropriate time.

