

Subject: Mahalo / Partnering with CMS on Health Care Reform

Aloha kākou—

Mahalo for the time we briefly spent together last week in Hilo for “The Rising Stars of Health Care Reform” conference. *Maika'i no!* My apologies for not having the time to meet with you all while I was in Honolulu. Nonetheless, please accept my open invitation to visit us at CMS when you are in Washington, D.C.

I would like to report that in a senior management meeting yesterday with Dr. Don Berwick, CMS' new Administrator, I shared information about the conference and your experiences with patient-centered medical homes and “enabling services”, as well as your interest in forming an Accountable Care Organization (ACO). The meeting included our “box-tops”—the Agency's senior political and career executives who oversee various CMS centers and offices, e.g., Medicare, Medicaid/CHIP, Clinical Standards and Quality, Program Integrity, EEO, and External Affairs and Beneficiary Services. I also shared that Hawai'i was chosen as a Beacon Community (UH Hilo) and Regional Extension Center (Honolulu HIE) with regard to EHR adoption and meaningful use—a collaborative endeavor of CMS and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC).

There was genuine interest in the room. Dr. Berwick specifically asked about your endeavor to form an ACO and with whom you are partnering, e.g., the State, HMSA, HMA, PCA, CHCs, etc. I deferred and indicated that he had an implicit invitation to visit Hawai'i to share your *mana'o* directly with him. Indeed you may want to formally invite Dr. Berwick to Hawai'i to share more in depth your vision of patient-centered, quality, and cost and culturally appropriate care—particularly your experiences with medical homes and plans to form a Hawai'i-based ACO.

You may know that under the Affordable Care Act, CMS is forming the Center for Innovation. It will develop Medicare and Medicaid demonstrations and pilot programs to test the feasibility, cost effectiveness and quality outcomes of new healthcare delivery models. The time may be right for Hawai'i to share its experiences. Exciting times! I will shortly introduce you to his Senior Advisor when he comes on board who will be fast-tracking the implementation of key health care reform-related projects such as ACOs. In the meantime, please provide and allow me to share what information you have.

Lastly, historically you have worked closely with HRSA and more recently with ONC. Please consider partnering more closely with CMS as we all together implement health care reform. *Ma ka hana ka 'ike!*

Please give my regards to Kauila Clark and the rest of the conference attendees. Once again, thank you, and looking forward to hearing and working with you.

*E mālama pono—*Rob

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