



Senator Elizabeth Warren
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Warren,

We want to thank you for your continued efforts in protecting seniors, individuals with disabilities, and the dedicated workforce serving them, whose conditions are directly impacted by the decisions of Dr. Oz.

Dignity Alliance of Massachusetts urges you to consider the following critical issues when questioning Dr. Mehmet Oz at his upcoming confirmation hearing for CMS Administrator. Given the urgent need for improved oversight, transparency, and care quality in nursing home care, home and community-based services (HCBS), and broader Medicare and Medicaid policies, Dr. Oz must provide clear, actionable commitments to these areas.

Accountability and Oversight of Nursing Homes

1. **Enforcement Against Violators:** CMS ensures nursing home residents receive safe, high-quality care. Given the industry's persistent and well-documented failures, how will Dr. Oz strengthen enforcement against chronic care standards violators? What actions will he take against low-performing facilities and services?
2. **Private Equity Ownership & Transparency:** Many nursing homes are now owned by private equity firms, which have been linked to cost-cutting measures and profit enhancement that compromise resident care. What steps will Dr. Oz take to increase financial transparency and ensure Medicare and Medicaid funds are used for direct patient care rather than corporate profits?
3. **Minimum Staffing Standards:** CMS has proposed minimum staffing standards for nursing homes to address chronic understaffing. Does Dr. Oz support these standards? If not, what alternative solutions does he propose to ensure residents receive adequate care?

Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Expansion

4. **Expanding HCBS & Reducing Waiting Lists:** Millions of seniors and individuals with disabilities prefer care at home rather than in institutions. How will Dr. Oz ensure CMS expands funding for HCBS and reduces waiting lists for Medicaid waiver programs, thereby enhancing the quality of life for these individuals?
5. **Improving Direct Care Workforce Conditions:** Direct care workers in home care are underpaid and undervalued, leading to high turnover and workforce shortages. What policies will Dr. Oz implement to improve wages, benefits, and working conditions in this sector?
6. **Rebalancing Medicaid Funding:** Given demographic shifts and the growing demand for long-term services and supports (LTSS), how does Dr. Oz plan to rebalance Medicaid funding to ensure more individuals can receive care in their communities rather than being institutionalized?

Medicare and Medicaid Payment Reform

7. Shifting to Value-Based Care: Some states have experimented with value-based payment models for long-term care. Does Dr. Oz support shifting Medicare and Medicaid payments toward quality-based incentives rather than fee-for-service models that may incentivize unnecessary institutionalization?

8. Ensuring Adequate Medicaid Reimbursement: Many nursing homes and HCBS providers rely heavily on Medicaid funding, yet reimbursement rates are often inadequate. How will Dr. Oz work with states to ensure Medicaid payments are sufficient to sustain high-quality care?

These issues are crucial to ensuring that our nation's most vulnerable populations receive the quality care they deserve. Your leadership in holding CMS accountable and advocating for policies prioritizing patient care over corporate interests is crucial. We urge you to continue your efforts in this area.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to your continued efforts in protecting seniors and individuals with disabilities, as well as the dedicated workforce that serves them.

James A. Lomastro PhD

Coordinator Facilities Committee

Dignity Alliance of Massachusetts