



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **MMAPA FULLY SUPPORTS THE MARCH AGAINST FEDERAL HEALTHCARE CUTS**

**November 2, 2015. San Juan, Puerto Rico.** The Medicaid and Medicare Advantage Products Association (MMAPA) announced today its full support for the march against cuts in federal healthcare funds for Puerto Rico, which will be on Thursday, November 5.

As the entire Puerto Rico healthcare delivery system is under serious threat from the cuts to healthcare funds legislated in the Affordable Care Act (ACA), civil and religious groups, as well as unions, universities and the community have joined forces to demand equal treatment for Puerto Rico when it comes to health issues.

Jim O'Drobinak, president of MMAPA and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of MCS, expressed full support for the march against federal healthcare cuts on behalf of MMAPA, and called on the general public to attend the march to make their voices be heard and defend their right to have the same access to healthcare services as their fellow U.S. citizens in the 50 states.

"MMAPA has for four years been advocating for federal healthcare reform for Puerto Rico's beneficiaries. If we don't join forces now to try to stop these funding cuts, the whole healthcare delivery system in Puerto Rico might permanently crumble. Given the seriousness of this situation, every sector in the island has taken it upon itself to launch this massive movement to make the Federal government understand that Puerto Rico can no longer sustain this unfair treatment. The consequences of not supporting this movement against the federal healthcare cuts could be disastrous," O'Drobinak said.

Dr. Rick Shinto, CEO of MMM and member of MMAPA, said that this march is a crucial effort in the quest to avoid further Medicare Advantage (MA) funding cuts, as half (50%) of Puerto Rico's healthcare funding resources come from Medicare Advantage. Shinto also expressed his support for efforts to ensure parity for Puerto Rico's Medicaid program, which could also see devastating cuts in the coming years.

"Access to quality health care services in Medicare Advantage and Medicaid are in serious jeopardy. If we all don't fight relentlessly to ensure equitable treatment and avoid further funding cuts, the inflicted damage to our whole healthcare delivery system could be permanent," Shinto explained.

"Every sector— government, religious, universities, unions, the community— is doing everything that's in their hands to try to stop these funding cuts and avoid further harm to our healthcare system but, to really get results, everyone must act," said Earl Harper, Market President at Humana Puerto Rico and MMAPA member.



Harper remarked that everyone must engage in this march, “because it’s not only for those receiving benefits now, but for all of those who will be receiving them in the future. The future economic impact would be devastating if we do not try to stop these funding cuts now.”

For his part, Triple S’s Chief Operating Officer and MMAPA member Roberto García expressed his gratitude to all the supporters of this cause for this well-orchestrated effort aimed at trying to stop the discriminatory cuts towards the US citizens of Puerto Rico, and made an emphasis on the need to act now and stand firm on the quest for equality.

“This story has not been fully written yet. Healthcare is an important part of Puerto Rico’s economy, and our economic crisis has already led to massive outward migration over the last eight years. We cannot accept relocation to the United States as the only viable option for healthcare beneficiaries and caregivers in Puerto Rico who seek equal treatment. Puerto Rico is legitimately providing the most cost-effective Medicare and Medicaid programs in the nation, but these cuts will affect our capacity to continue providing the level of care Puerto Ricans deserve,” García concluded.

MMAPA ([www.mmapapr.com](http://www.mmapapr.com)) is a non-for profit association comprised of the leading Medicaid and Medicare Advantage Products Association was born in 2009 to evaluate and act about the implications of new government policy on funding for Puerto Rico’s healthcare system.

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