



April 1, 2020

Ms. Jovita Carranza
Administrator
U.S. Small Business Administration
409 3rd St, SW.
Washington DC 20416

Dear Administrator Carranza,

Thank you for your dedication to U.S. small businesses as our country grapples with the incredible health and economic challenge posed by COVID-19. We appreciate that you and your staff are working quickly to release the funding allocated for small business relief in the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief & Economic Security Act* ("CARES Act"), and the guidance you have issued thus far regarding the new opportunities for relief.

As you work expeditiously to begin the flow of funding, we strongly encourage you to prioritize independent physicians and practices for funding under the Paycheck Protection Program, Emergency Injury and Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, and other programs through which funding might be available.

Health care providers, including independent physicians and practices, are on the frontlines fighting this virus in their communities. Independent physicians and practices are also running small businesses themselves, and are worried about keeping the lights on even as they try to best serve their patients by shifting to virtual care to the extent possible, delaying elective or non-urgent care, working with state and community leaders with greater frequency, and implementing the significant volume of new guidance coming from the federal and state governments on a daily basis.

Unlike hospital-owned or affiliated groups, independent physicians and practices will not benefit from other funds that have been made available for larger providers (for example, the 20% Medicare fee-for-service add on for hospitals). These practices are small businesses, and many are already reporting decreased reimbursement as a result of shifting their visits from in-person to virtual and because of declining patient volumes.¹

In addition to urgent access to funds, independent physicians and practices also need a streamlined application process and flexible agreement terms to ensure that they are not jeopardizing their long-term viability to solve a short-term cash flow issue.

Thank you for considering these important priorities, and please feel free to reach out to the Partnership to Empower Physician-Led Care (PECP) if you have questions about the impact of COVID-19 on independent physicians and practices. We appreciate your leadership during these difficult times.

Sincerely,

Kristen McGovern
Executive Director

¹ Los Angeles Times, "Widening Coronavirus Crisis Threatens to Shutter Doctors' Offices Nationwide," March 24, 2020. Available at <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2020-03-24/coronavirus-outbreak-primary-care-doctors>



About the Partnership to Empower Physician-Led Care

The Partnership to Empower Physician-Led Care (PEPC) is a membership organization dedicated to supporting value-based care to reduce costs, improve quality, empower patients and physicians, and increase access to care for millions of Americans through a competitive health care provider market. We believe that it is impossible to achieve truly value-based care without a robust independent practice community. Our members include Aledade, American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), California Medical Association, Florida Medical Association, Medical Group Management Association (MGMA), and Texas Medical Association's Practice Edge. We also have individual and small medical group supporters across the country, many of whom are independent physicians or practices and wish to remain so.