



April 6, 2020

Amy Acton, MD, MPH
Director, Ohio Department of Health
246 N High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Dr. Acton,

On behalf of people living with cystic fibrosis (CF) in Ohio, we thank you and the Department of Health (ODH) for all that you are doing to ensure the health and safety of state residents in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. While we understand that these are unprecedented times, we ask for your continued support of the Children with Medical Handicaps (CMH) programs.

Cystic fibrosis is a life-threatening genetic disease that affects approximately 1,550 people in Ohio and 30,000 people in the United States. CF causes the body to produce thick, sticky mucus that clogs the lungs and digestive system, which can lead to life-threatening infections. As a complex, multi-system condition, CF requires targeted, specialized treatment and medications. Additionally, people with underlying health conditions, including respiratory conditions like cystic fibrosis, are at greater risk of serious illness from COVID-19.

CMH is a state program run by the ODH and acts as a safety net for children with special health care needs who meet medical and financial eligibility requirements. It fills gaps in coverage related to the child's special health condition and acts as a payer of last resort and helps families pay for the services their child needs. CMH also provides services for people over age 21 with cystic fibrosis, including prescription medications, medical supplies, special formula, and public health nursing visits. Both the Medically Handicapped Children line item and the Targeted Health Care Services – Over 21 line item within CMH's budget remain more important than ever in helping those with CF access the care and treatments they need to stay healthy in these uncertain times.

We understand that the state of Ohio and ODH may face budget constraints in the coming months as they work to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic but ask for your continued support of robust funding for both the pediatric and adult programs within CMH in any future potential budget adjustments. We appreciate your partnership and please let us know if the CF Foundation can be a resource in the weeks and months ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary B. Dwight".

Mary B. Dwight
Senior Vice President of Policy & Advocacy