



November 24, 2020

The Honorable Mike DeWine  
Governor of Ohio  
77 South High Street, 30<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: Funding for the Children with Medical Handicaps (CMH) Program

Dear Governor DeWine,

On behalf of people living with cystic fibrosis (CF) in Ohio, we thank the State of Ohio and the Ohio 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 Program (CMH) in your forthcoming biennial SFY 22-23 budget proposal.

Cystic fibrosis is a life-threatening genetic disease that affects approximately 1,550 people in Ohio and more than 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 CF, may be at greater risk of serious illness from COVID-19.<sup>1</sup>

CMH is a state program run by ODH that 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 helps families pay for the services their child needs by acting as a payer of last resort. CMH also provides assistance for people over age 21 with cystic fibrosis with services including prescription medications, medical supplies, special formula, and public health nursing visits. Both the pediatric and adult programs administered by CMH's 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 will face budget constraints in the coming months as you work to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we ask for your continued support of adequate funding for both the Medical Handicapped Children line item and the Targeted Health Services – Over 21 line item in your budget proposal. We appreciate your partnership and hope you will consider the CF Foundation in the coming months.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fneed-extra-precautions%2Fgroups-at-higher-risk.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fneed-extra-precautions%2Fgroups-at-higher-risk.html)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary B. Dwight". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "M" and a long, sweeping tail.

Mary B. Dwight  
Chief Policy & Advocacy Officer  
Senior Vice President of Policy and Advocacy

Cc: Stephanie McCloud, Director, Ohio Department of Health  
Lance Hines, Senior Deputy, Ohio Department of Health  
Bruce Vanderhoff, Chief Medical Officer, Ohio Department of Health  
Kathleen Madden, Chief of Staff, Ohio Department of Health