



March 11, 2019

Re: HB 955

Dear Representative [Legislator]:

On behalf of those living with cystic fibrosis, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation urges you to oppose legislation adding work requirements as a condition of Medicaid eligibility in Florida by voting “no” on HB 955.

Cystic fibrosis is a life-threatening genetic disease that affects approximately 1,600 Floridians and 30,000 children and adults 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. Medicaid is a crucial source of coverage for patients with serious and chronic health care needs, including 280 adults living with cystic fibrosis in Florida.

Making work a condition of Medicaid eligibility could threaten access to care for people with CF, as their ability to work can vary over time with changes in health status. Declines in health status due to pulmonary exacerbations, infections, and other events are common and can take someone out of the workforce for significant periods of time. Patients bear a significant treatment burden on a daily basis, amounting to hours of chest physiotherapy, delivery of nebulized treatments, administration of intravenous antibiotics, and/or other activities required to maintain or improve their health. Maintaining sustained employment may not be possible due to the time required to undergo necessary treatment, which includes an intense and time-consuming daily regimen.

HB 955 instructs the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) to seek federal approval to implement work requirements for Medicaid enrollees. This bill could create additional barriers to Medicaid eligibility and access to medically necessary benefits for people living with CF and other pre-existing conditions.

By opposing this bill, you will help ensure access to care for people living with CF who rely on Medicaid coverage. We urge you to vote “no” on HB 955.

Sincerely,

Mary B. Dwight
Senior VP of Policy & Advocacy
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation

Lisa Feng, DrPH
Senior Director of Policy & advocacy
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation