



SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL HOSPITAL
UCSF DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY & COMMUNITY MEDICINE

Thomas Bodenheimer, MD, MPH

SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL HOSPITAL
BUILDING 80, WARD 83
995 POTRERO AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94110-3518
TELEPHONE: (415) 206-6348
FAX: (415) 206-8387
EMAIL: tbodenheimer@fcm.ucsf.edu

June 21, 2015

Senate Finance Committee Chronic Care Workgroup
US Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senators Hatch, Wyden, Isakson and Warner,

I am a primary care physician with 32 years of experience in full-time primary care practice and more recently 10 years teaching primary care medicine in our family medicine resident training program. I have become an expert on chronic care and have written a number of articles on that subject. I am particularly impressed by the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program created by Dr. Kate Lorig at Stanford School of Medicine. This program goes far beyond the doctor-patient relationship by bringing together patients into a group and having discussions on behavior change and coping, led by a trained patient who has chronic disease herself. This program has been extensively studied and has been implemented widely across the United States. Patients attending the groups have a reduction in health care costs and improved health. It would be an excellent investment for Medicare to pay for the Chronic Disease Self-Management groups; Medicare reimbursement would allow the program to spread far more widely for seniors and disabled Medicare beneficiaries.

Sincerely,

Thomas Bodenheimer, MD
Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine,
University of California, San Francisco