



February 16, 2018

Dear Chairman Hatch and Ranking Member Wyden,

I am pleased to submit this letter in response to the Senate Finance Committee's request for recommendations regarding the opioid crisis.

For nearly 50 years Dayton Children's Hospital has provided our newborn intensive care (NICU) patients with family-centered care in a friendly, developmentally supportive and healing environment. Our Level III NICU is the most comprehensive NICU in the region and is the main referral center for premature and sick newborns. Our NICU is designed to meet the special needs of our medically fragile patients—and help their families develop close bonds with them as they grow stronger under our care. Many of these babies are critically ill with life threatening conditions. Increasingly, however, many of our NICU beds are taken by babies born exposed to drugs, most notably opiates. These babies are generally “healthy” in that they do not suffer from congenital disorders of the heart, GI track, or other organ systems. Rather, the primary reason for their NICU stay is their withdrawal from opiates.

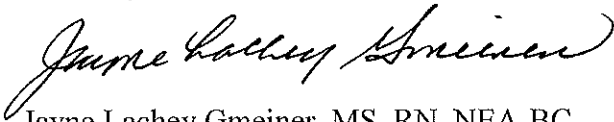
Every baby in our NICU receives the same high level of medical care. Babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) need specialized services in addition to their “regular” clinical services. They need to be rocked and held often, need small frequent feeds, and need frequent diaper changes. They startle easily, and prefer dimly lit, quiet surroundings. We strive to meet all these requirements, and do a great job. We also recognize that a non-hospital setting, such as a pediatric recovery center, is able to focus on providing this exact type of care. That is why we partner with Brigid's Path.

Dayton Children's Hospital is proud to provide clinical support to Brigid's Path in the form of one of our neonatologists who is Brigid's Path's medical director. Additionally, Brigid's Path's Chief Clinical Officer is an in-kind donation. Dr. Lisa Jasin, NNP-BC is a Dayton Children's neonatal nurse practitioner with a highly specialized skillset and knowledge specific to NAS. The registered nurses who staff Brigid's Path are leased through Dayton Children's. We also provide in-kind support in the form of screening, training, and orienting Brigid's Path's volunteers, as well as providing all transport services to babies going to Brigid's Path for treatment from Dayton Children's or other community hospitals in the Dayton area.

While we believe it is our duty as a member of the Dayton community to provide these services, it is not inexpensive. We want to continue to support Brigid's Path, and will do so. However, we believe that Medicaid reimbursement is critical to sustaining the organization's ability to become self-sufficient. As the federal law exists today, Brigid's Path is not eligible for Medicaid reimbursement. However, changing the Social Security Act by passing the CRIB Act can open this revenue stream to Brigid's Path and the babies and families we and they serve.

We value our partnership with Brigid's Path and have every confidence that they will be successful. We hope that the model is implemented in all parts of Ohio. But we know that in order for this to happen, Brigid's Path needs access to Medicaid. Please consider supporting the CRIB Act to help reduce the negative effects of the opioid epidemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jayne Lachey Gmeiner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jayne" being the most prominent.

Jayne Lachey Gmeiner, MS, RN, NEA-BC
Chief Nursing Officer