

November 10, 2017

Governor John Carney
Tatnall Building
150 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. South
Dover DE 19901

RE: Delta Dental Comments on Draft Report “Delaware’s Road to Value

Dear Governor Carney:

On behalf of Delta Dental of Delaware and the 220,000 Delaware residents we serve through our affordable dental benefit programs, we applaud the very fine work that is begun by the Delaware Health and Social Services Department in its draft report *Delaware’s Road to Value*.

Delta Dental of Delaware was especially gratified to see the report’s recognition of the state’s need to prepare and support the dental workforce specifically, among other health professionals. There is indeed a dentist shortage in the state, which greatly impacts our ability to contract with dentists who are willing and able to comply with our high quality standards. As you might imagine, value-based care in the world of dentistry, like medicine, very much depends on our ability to build networks, maintain them, and develop contractual provisions that aligns dentist incentives with health outcomes. The proposal to eliminate the current one-year residency requirement for new dentists is a good start, and as the report indicates, would push Delaware into the same direction that other states have taken as well.

We’d also like to take this opportunity to point out that the challenge of dental network contracting is an essential aspect of the state’s infrastructure needs. The dental PPOs that currently serve the state are only as good as the networks they are built on. Proposals that might weaken our ability to build such networks – for example, mandatory assignment of benefits to non-participating providers – are counter-productive.

Delta Dental currently contracts with 70 percent of all Delaware dentists, but we find it’s a struggle every day to grow and maintain our networks owing to the shortage of new dentists arriving to set up shop. For these reasons, we support every effort to address the state’s dental infrastructure, and look forward to working with your administration to increase access throughout the state to affordable, high quality dental care.

Sincerely,



Jeff Album
Vice President, Public & Government Affairs