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American Diabetes Association®
CALIFORNIA AFFILIATE, INC.
San Diego County Chapter

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Ans'd.

February 21, 1991

Leon Williams
County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, California 92101

Dear Supervisor Williams,

The American Diabetes Association is extremely concerned about the current proposal to dismantle the County Medical Service Program and urges you to keep this vital program in tact. CMS provides urgent care for the working poor and indigent, and is essential for the care of the many people with diabetes that utilize its services. Diabetic care and severe diabetic complications comprise the second highest diagnosis in the County Medical Services program, an estimated 6 percent. Diabetes is also often listed as a dual diagnosis, such as with heart disease. This is due to the fact that the single most common cause of death in adults with diabetes is atherosclerotic coronary heart disease, which accounts for at least one-third of all deaths in diabetic patients over 40. Diabetes is not only a disease of youth, but can strike at any age. In fact, it is most common among people over 40. American Indians, Blacks and Latinos are at an even higher risk for this devastating disease, up to 5 times more likely to develop diabetes and its complications.

Over 130,000 San Diegans suffer from diabetes mellitus-the third leading cause of death by disease in the United States. Diabetes is also the number one cause of new cases of blindness (12,000 cases are diagnosed each year in people age 20-74) and half of all leg and foot amputations annually are a result of diabetic complications.

The American Diabetes Association refers many indigent patients who call looking for medical assistance to County Medical Services where they receive the medical attention and education that they desperately need. Without CMS, there will be no other resource for these people. The ADA is committed to finding a preventive and cure for diabetes, but until that time, CMS is essential for the care of diabetic complications which often lead to death. Please keep the County Medical Services working for the estimated 25 to 30 thousand county residents who utilize its services for the care of their diabetes and diabetes related problems.

Sincerely,

Richard Daly MD

Capt. Richard G. Daly, MD, USN
President

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