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July 18, 2018

Alex Azar, Secretary

Seema Verma, Administrator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Gopal Khanna, Director, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

200 Independence Avenue SW

Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar, Administrator Verma, and Director Khanna,

On behalf of the 34 members of the Electronic Health Record Association (EHRA), we would like to share our perspective on the disappointing decision to abruptly end the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality’s (AHRQ) support of the National Guidelines Clearinghouse (NGC).

NGC’s mission is “to provide an accessible mechanism for obtaining detailed information on clinical practice guidelines, and to further their dissemination, implementation, and use in order to inform health care decisions.” We believe NGC plays an important and necessary role in patient care, and encourage you to reconsider the decision to discontinue AHRQ funding.

EHRA members serve the vast majority of healthcare organizations that use electronic health records (EHRs) and other health information and technology to deliver high quality, efficient care to their patients. Providing evidence-based treatment guidelines via clinical decision support tools (CDS) embedded in EHRs is one way that EHRs support clinicians at the point of care; the NGC has long been relied upon by EHR software developers and by healthcare organizations seeking to make up-to-date best practices available to providers via CDS.

Our clients have told us that they regularly turn to the NGC. In the absence of another reliable, impartial source, we ask that you urgently reconsider the decision to discontinue the National Guidelines Clearinghouse. Clinicians, patients, EHR developers and other stakeholders have long depended on NGC as a trusted, comprehensive resource for the latest evidence-based guidelines.

Supporting such an important resource for U.S. healthcare should be an HHS priority.

Sincerely,



Cherie Holmes-Henry  
Chair, EHR Association  
NextGen Healthcare



Sasha TerMaat  
Vice Chair, EHR Association  
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#### About the EHR Association

Established in 2004, the Electronic Health Record (EHR) Association is comprised of more than 30 companies that supply the vast majority of EHRs to physicians' practices and hospitals across the United States. The EHR Association operates on the premise that the rapid, widespread adoption of EHRs will help improve the quality of patient care as well as the productivity and sustainability of the healthcare system as a key enabler of healthcare transformation. The EHR Association and its members are committed to supporting safe healthcare delivery, fostering continued innovation, and operating with high integrity in the market for our users and their patients and families.

The EHR Association is a partner of HIMSS. For more information, visit [www.ehra.org](http://www.ehra.org).