June 7, 2022

Ms. Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, MPP

Administrator

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Department of Health and Human Services

Baltimore, MD

RE: RIN 0938-AU84

Dear Ms. Brooks-LaSure,

More than a decade ago, my mother entered a teaching hospital in Rhode Island for what was supposed to be routine surgery for colon cancer. Three weeks later she died of septic shock after an undiagnosed post-operative infection spread to her bloodstream.

That is why I am writing to express my opposition to the proposal by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to suppress calculation and publication of the CMS Patient Safety and Adverse Events Composite (CMS PSI 90) for FY 2023 and to potentially suppress other measures in the future without seeking public comment.

When my mother was diagnosed with colon cancer in 2009, precious little information was available to enable patients and families to find out how safe hospitals were. In the years since, that has changed, largely because CMS has collected and published data about hospital quality metrics. When choosing a hospital for my own care, I have visited the CMS Hospital Compare site and find it easy to use and informative.

Out of curiosity, I also reviewed statistics for the hospital where my mother was treated, I discovered—to my chagrin—that it is less safe than several other RI hospitals. I wish I had that information when we were making our decisions about my mother’s care.

I understand that hospitals are under strain because of the pandemic. At the same time, an editorial in the *New England Journal of Medicine* earlier this year (published Feb. 17, 2022) warned that many of the gains in hospital safety made in the 5 years prior to the pandemic were completely erased during the pandemic. How can we remedy this situation and improve patient safety if we don’t have good data to work with? The pandemic is not over. It is evolving in ways that make it clear Covid is here to stay. Given this new reality, it is important to hold hospitals accountable for keeping patients safe. We cannot do that without good data.

It’s too late to save my mother. But it’s not too late to enable other patients to choose hospitals where they can receive safe care from receiving care. Please consider withdrawing the proposal to suppress new PSI 90 data in 2023 and continue to publish previous PSI 90 data. In addition, please do not suppress future measures without public comment.

Thank you for allowing me and other members of the public to comment on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Ann MacDonald