



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement of the National Association of Medicaid Directors
Evidence-Based Reporting Critical to Decisions on Sofosbuvir and
Health Care Innovations

Washington, DC – Matt Salo, issued the following statement after the Medicaid Evidence Based Decisions Project (MED) based at the Center for Evidence-Based Policy at Oregon Health and Science University, released a report titled, *Sofosbuvir for the Treatment of Hepatitis C and Evaluation of the 2014 American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases Treatment Guidelines*. The report addresses research on new hepatitis c treatments.

“As patients, providers, and payers grapple with the complex implications of the new developments in the treatment of hepatitis C, the need for sound clinical evidence has never been greater. Today, the Medicaid Evidence Based Decisions Project (MED) released a report that will provide much needed insight into this issue. The report, titled *Sofosbuvir for the Treatment of Hepatitis C and Evaluation of the 2014 American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases Treatment Guidelines*, contains a thorough review of currently available and ongoing studies of sofosbuvir and extant treatment guidelines.

“The potential for eliminating hepatitis C is an exciting one. However, the high cost of sofosbuvir (branded Sovaldi), at \$1,000 a pill, requires careful consideration of how to responsibly decide how to best use this new treatment option, especially in light of the three million people currently diagnosed with hepatitis C in the United States. As payers, both public and private, formulate policies for sofosbuvir, having the highest quality evidence is critical to inform these decisions.

“The Center’s report is a key step in solidifying the evidence base for this drug. Based on its rigorous review of the ten published sofosbuvir studies, the Center found that each was of “poor” methodologic quality, noting risks of bias and lacking comparison to current standards of hepatitis C treatment. None of the studies were designed to answer the question of whether



these drugs work better than current treatments and for the people most likely to have them prescribed. The report also questions the soundness of treatment guidelines published by the American Society for the Study of Liver Disease, noting the guideline methodology did not rigorously examine the aforementioned studies to assess their weaknesses.

“As stated in the report, there are no long-term studies upon which to draw conclusions. Therefore Medicaid programs must be deliberate in their decisions and may need to adapt their strategies over time as more detailed clinical research becomes available.

“However exciting these new treatments are, the unprecedented nexus of cost and widespread demand threaten to disrupt the health care landscape in the near term. I believe that efforts from groups like the Center can – and must – contribute to an ongoing national conversation about the value of chronic disease treatments, pharmaceutical innovation, and overall health.”

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The National Association for Medicaid Directors (NAMD) is a bipartisan, professional, nonprofit organization of representatives of state Medicaid agencies (including the District of Columbia and the territories). NAMD provides a focused, coordinated voice for the Medicaid program in national policy discussion and to effectively meet the needs of its member states now and in the future.