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Multi-Stakeholder Coalition Applauds the Release of Updated U.S. Treasury Guidance to Ensure Access to Critical Services and Drugs for the Chronically Ill

Washington, DC – Today, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin issued guidance to expand the scope of the preventive services safe harbor for health savings account-eligible (HSA-eligible) high-deductible health plans (HDHPs) to cover certain chronic disease services and drugs on a pre-deductible basis.

“The Smarter Health Care Coalition, representing patient groups, consumers, employers, providers, health plans, life science companies, and public-sector purchasers applauds the Treasury Department for issuing long-sought guidance to expand the scope of the preventive services safe harbor. We commend the Administration, with the support of bipartisan, bicameral champions in Congress, for continuing to pursue policies that get more health out of every health care dollar our country spends.”

Approximately 60 percent of all Americans have at least one chronic condition and about 42 percent suffer from two or more. Each year millions of Americans struggle to receive the appropriate care due to high out-of-pocket costs. Studies show that chronic conditions account for \$.90 of every dollar spent on health care and, without appropriate management, lead to adverse effects on health outcomes and quality of life. HSA-eligible HDHPs are currently prohibited from offering services and medications to manage chronic conditions on a pre-deductible basis, creating cost barriers to care for chronically ill patients.

The Coalition has long supported and called for updated guidance to expand the preventive service safe harbor and commends the Secretary for swiftly issuing the guidance following the Administration’s recent Executive Order to expand the safe harbor. The U.S. Treasury guidance aligns with our mission to advance value-based insurance design (V-BID), and we believe this provision will improve the utilization of high-value health care services and have a significant impact on the chronic disease epidemic facing our nation.

“The Secretary’s guidance addresses this problem by expanding the current preventive services safe harbor to a more contemporary scope of prevention, allowing HSA-eligible HDHPs to provide plan members access to health care services that manage chronic conditions on a pre-deductible basis. Doing

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so will yield an enormous benefit to patients, employers, and payers alike, including improved health, enhanced workplace productivity, and the avoidance of unnecessary emergency care visits and hospitalizations,” said MacPherson.

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The Smarter Health Care Coalition represents a broad-based and diverse group of health care innovators, including patients, employer groups, consumer organizations, health plans, life science companies, provider-related organizations, trade associations, academia centers and professors. Our goal is to leverage our combined perspectives and experiences to achieve smarter health care that improves the patient experience, particularly through integrating benefit design innovations and consumer/patient engagement within broader delivery system reform in order to better align coverage, quality, and value-based payment goals.