The 340B program is a vital lifeline for safety-net providers, supporting critical health services in our communities. The program is narrowly tailored to reach only hospitals that provide a high level of services to low-income individuals or that serve isolated rural communities. Savings from the 340B program help hospitals meet the health care needs of underserved patients across the country. Congress should preserve and protect the 340B program as an essential part of the safety-net that does not rely on taxpayer dollars.

St. Mary’s Hospital is a community hospital serving the people of Clarke County Georgia and surrounding counties. St. Mary’s is a health care ministry that includes three hospitals, numerous physician practices, our region’s first medical residency program, one of the state’s pioneering home health care/hospice services, a retirement community, extensive outpatient services and much more.

The Benefits of the 340B Program to our Community
The purpose of the 340B program is to enable covered entities to stretch scarce federal resources as far as possible, reaching more eligible patients and providing more comprehensive services. St. Mary’s Hospital, Inc., leverages the financial impact of the 340B program to provide a broad range of services that increase access to medications, medical treatments, primary care and specialty care, while improving the quality of care for all patients, regardless of ability to pay.

We receive help from the 340B program in several ways. Our off-site Infusion Center allows eligibility to purchase 340B drugs. This center is an active and valuable resource for the residents in our community. The Infusion Center serves patients by administering medications on an outpatient basis. These patients are scheduled by appointment and come to the center to get their medications administered and go back home the same day. Medications administered to our patients include antibiotics, medications for rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis, Crohn’s disease, refractory chronic gout, moderate to severe psoriasis, osteoporosis, rejection prophylaxis for kidney transplants, just to name a few. Many of these drugs are very expensive and they cannot be self-administered. Many of our patients are also Medicare patients. Patients in our community would find it difficult to get these services elsewhere. When we purchase these drugs at 340B pricing, we can sustain the Infusion Center with the savings. However, if we must purchase these drugs at group purchasing organization prices, our reimbursement is many times less than our cost. So, this puts our Infusion Center at risk of curtailing services to the patients in our community or possibly closing the Infusion Center.

Also, the savings from the 340B drug pricing program allowed us to begin an Obstetrics Hospitalist program. The program supports 24-hours-per-day hospitalist coverage for our obstetrics patients and has enhanced the level of access, care, and safety we are able to provide when time is of the essence. Without the savings from the 340B drug program, we may not be able to sustain this very valuable asset to our community.

Impact if the 340B Program is Scaled Back
If the 340B program were scaled back, valuable services to our community, such as our Infusion Center, and Obstetrics Hospitalist program would be jeopardized and possibly unsustainable. The patients we serve may need to seek these services elsewhere, at a burdensome distance from their homes. The benefits from the 340B program supply a buffer that allows the health system to continue meeting community needs, continue investments in vital equipment, keep critical infrastructure, and continue our commitment to serve. Without the 340B program, St. Mary’s would likely struggle against constriction, reducing services, forgoing improved technologies, and limiting its positive impact on the community.

Mission
We, Trinity Health, serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities.

Core Values
Reverence • Commitment to Those Who Are Poor • Safety • Justice • Stewardship • Integrity

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