National Public Health Groups Applaud the Supreme Court's Medicaid Ruling

People on Medicaid must have the right to sue if they can't get care, notes groups representing those with cancer, HIV, diabetes and more.

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On Thursday, June 8, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) issued a decision in the case of Health and Hospital Corporation of Marion County v. Talevski siding with the plaintiff and ruling that individuals could enforce their civil rights to spending clause programs such as Medicaid via Section 1983.

Leading patient groups representing millions of patients with chronic diseases and acute conditions applauded the ruling, noting the critical importance of Medicaid in prevention of diseases and treatment for those diagnosed. The groups filed an amicus brief in September urging SCOTUS to protect access to quality health care for individuals with Medicaid coverage and providing scientific data showing the importance of Medicaid to early detection and treatment.

The below is a statement on behalf of the American Cancer Society, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, the American Diabetes Association, The AIDS Institute, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, the Epilepsy Foundation, the Hemophilia Federation of America, the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the National Patient Advocate Foundation, the National Organization for Rare Disorders, and WomenHeart.

"We're relieved to see SCOTUS issue this decision allowing individuals to sue under the civil rights statute (42 U.S. Code Section 1983) and protect the rights of people with Medicaid. For more than 50 years, section 1983 has been a critical avenue that has empowered people covered by Medicaid to sue if they are unable to get the care they need and enforce their individual rights to Medicaid. Many times, this law has been the only recourse individuals have when their Medicaid rights have been violated.

"Accessible health care is essential in managing chronic diseases, including cancer, heart disease and diabetes, as well as maintaining maternal and infant health. By providing affordable, comprehensive health insurance, Medicaid is a critical program for improving early detection and overall patient health for the more than 86 million people covered nationwide.

"Having access to Medicaid significantly improves health outcomes, particularly for persons with

serious, life-threatening diseases, and reduces health disparities, in many cases by providing specific rights to certain types of care. We applaud SCOTUS for protecting the rights of individuals to access Medicaid benefits and coverage as required by law.”

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