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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Jeff Van Ness, (202) 204-7515

**STATEMENT OF ACAP CEO MARGARET A. MURRAY ON CMS RESEARCH ON THE LINK BETWEEN SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND STAR RATING PERFORMANCE**

WASHINGTON—Today, ACAP Chief Executive Officer Margaret A. Murray issued the following statement on [a recent study](#) conducted by RAND Corporation researchers on behalf of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) examining the effects of socioeconomic factors on Star ratings:

“We’re pleased that CMS is investigating this issue and that it has shared its results so far.

“The analysis supports what ACAP has long said: there is a negative association between performance on quality measures and enrollment of individuals dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid. Dual-eligible status was associated with lower scores on 12 of 16 measures studied, or 75 percent. Disability was associated with lower scores on 11 of 16 measures, or 69 percent.

“Moreover, CMS found that this finding holds true within the same Medicare Advantage contract. Although CMS described the within-contract effect as small and only on some measures, the research shows that the effect is there.

“It makes intuitive sense that plans who serve dually eligible beneficiaries exclusively or primarily are on an uneven playing field in the Star rating system, which compares plans without regard to the populations they serve. The research shows that Dual Eligible Special Needs Plans are at a structural disadvantage compared to those that serve Medicare Advantage members whose care is uncomplicated by socioeconomic factors.”

“CMS’ research shows a clear disparity in quality scores for people with low incomes or disabilities. This is consistent with our plans’ experience. Accordingly, we sustain our call for CMS to implement changes to the Star rating system to adjust for this disparity.”

**About ACAP**

ACAP represents 60 nonprofit Safety Net Health Plans in 24 states, which collectively serve more than fifteen million people enrolled in Medicaid, Medicare, the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and other health programs. For more information, visit [www.communityplans.net](http://www.communityplans.net).

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