



Improving access.  
Transforming health.

March 19, 2025

The Honorable Bernie Sanders  
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sanders:

On behalf of the Patient Access Network (PAN) Foundation and the patients and families we assist, I write in support of S.939, the *Medicare Dental, Hearing, and Vision Expansion Act*. PAN lauds your leadership in reintroducing this important legislation for seniors. Adding dental, vision, and hearing benefits to Medicare is long overdue.

As a leading charitable foundation and healthcare advocacy organization, the PAN Foundation is dedicated to accelerating access to treatment for those who need it most and empowering patients on their healthcare journeys. We provide critical financial assistance for treatment costs, advocate for policy solutions that expand access to care, and deliver education on complex topics—all driven by our belief that everyone deserves access to affordable, equitable healthcare.

As you know, since its implementation in 1965, Medicare has excluded coverage for routine dental care, hearing aids and related audiology services, and routine eye exams and eyeglasses, despite the large numbers of older Americans who need such items and services. Older adults who do not get the dental, hearing, and vision services they need, or who have to delay needed treatment because of cost, are at greater risk for avoidable emergency department visits, hospitalizations, skilled nursing facility visits, falls, isolation, depression, dementia, and greater dependence on family caregivers.

The need for dental, hearing, and vision coverage is great. Almost half of Medicare beneficiaries, or nearly 24 million people, do not have dental coverage and many forego dental visits due to cost. Nearly half of people older than age 75 and one-third of those ages 65 to 74 have hearing loss, but only one in four Americans diagnosed with hearing issues uses a hearing aid, with cost being the major barrier to obtaining them. And 92% of Medicare beneficiaries use eyeglasses but those on Medicare Fee-for-Service are without coverage for eyecare.

The PAN Foundation appreciates your leadership in seeking solutions to increase access to and affordability of health care for more Americans. We look forward to working with you to educate on the importance of passing the *Medicare Dental, Vision, and Hearing Benefit Act*. If you would like further information or have questions, please contact Amy Niles, Chief Mission Officer at [aniles@panfoundation.org](mailto:aniles@panfoundation.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kevin L. Hagan'.

Kevin L. Hagan  
President and Chief Executive Officer