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Programs and Enrollment through Health Benefits and Exchanges, Medicaid and
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General Comment

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services gathering
demographic data from all applicants and non-applicants as part of the enrollment
process for Marketplace, Medicaid, or CHIP coverage. As a bisexual person and
clinical health researcher, I believe it is vital for the applications to collect data on
demographic factors associated with disparities in access to health coverage and care.
These factors include race, ethnicity, disability, primary language, sex (including
gender identity), and sexual orientation.

The bisexual population faces lower rates of health insurance coverage than our
lesbian, gay, and straight counterparts. Transgender people, including bisexual

transgender people, face even lower rates.

Collecting data related to sex (including gender identity) and sexual orientation is crucial to better understanding and addressing these disparities.

The Center for American Progress has submitted comments regarding existing models for data collection that are appropriate for the application process. Please see their comments for specific recommendations on proposed questions.

Adding these questions to the applications is both feasible and realistic. As part of the process of updating the federal applications, I strongly urge CMS to also explicitly clarify that state-based Marketplaces may update their applications to improve the sex question as described above and to add an optional sexual orientation question in the section of the application that includes the optional race and ethnicity demographic questions.

Thank you so much for your consideration of this important issue.

Lauren B. Beach, JD/PhD