



July 20, 2022

The Honorable Adam J. Bello  
Office of the County Executive, Monroe County  
110 County Office Building  
39 W. Main Street  
Rochester, NY 14614

Dear County Executive Bello:

I am pleased to submit Common Ground Health's commitment and support for Lifespan of Greater Rochester's proposal to serve at-risk older adults and expand the Community Care Connections Program. This program addresses the social determinants of health so that older adults can connect to essential services that keep them out of the hospital and in good health.

Community Care Connections integrates systems of care that have demonstrated impact on reducing health care costs and keeping older adults safely in their homes. In 2011, a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation study concluded, "85 percent [of physicians surveyed] believe that unmet social needs— access to nutritious food, reliable transportation, and adequate housing—are leading directly to worse health outcomes for all Americans. This is health care's blind side: Within the current health care system, physicians do not have the time or sufficient staff support to address patients' social needs."

Since this report, a lot has been written about the social determinants of health. We know that housing, food, transportation, safe neighborhoods, etc. impact the health of our community, and particularly older adults. The COVID pandemic illustrated the significant decline in older adult's health. Their conditions deteriorate over time and most require more expensive long-term care alternatives.

Common Ground Health and the Sage II Commission remain committed to The Community Care Connections (CCC) program, integrating traditional community-based aging services with medical systems of care. The New York Academy of Medicine has proven this program reduced hospitalizations, emergency room visits and observations by supporting the social needs of older adults. This program is making a positive difference in the lives of the older adults.

I offer my full support and assistance to Lifespan in this effort.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wade S. Norwood", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Wade S. Norwood, CEO  
Common Ground Health