July 3, 2014

Jean O’Connor, J.D., DrPH
Director, Health Promotion Section
Georgia Department of Public Health
2 Peachtree Street, NW, 16-220
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3142

Dear Dr. O’Connor:

With about 7,500 members and as the leading advocate for physicians in every specialty and practice setting in the state, the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) supports the Georgia Department of Public Health’s (DPH) application for “CDC Funding Opportunity Announcement DP14-1422 State and Local Public Health Actions to Prevent Obesity, Diabetes, and Heart Disease and Stroke” in full.

This grant will enable DPH to prevent and reduce obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and stroke in Georgia. It will also enable DPH to address health disparities among adults in the state.

Despite having access to some of the best medical care in the world, too many Georgians are succumbing to chronic – though often preventable – diseases, which require costly and long-term medical care. For example, adult heart disease accounted for $5.3 billion in hospital costs in Georgia in 2012 alone.

It is also worth noting that a lot of our member physicians care for a lot of patients who rely on Medicare and Medicaid to pay for their health care services.

Given the prevalence of chronic disease and a dwindling pool of societal resources, MAG believes that it is imperative to support efforts that can improve outcomes and reduce preventable hospitalizations in Georgia.
MAG believes that DPH is in a unique position to effect real change in this area if it can obtain this grant, especially since it reports that about half of the health districts in the state are eager to participate in this initiative. In fact, MAG believes that this kind of strategic partnership between DPH and the health districts in the state will ultimately result in a more efficient system and a healthier population.

Once again, MAG supports the Georgia DPH application for CDC Funding Opportunity Announcement DP14-1422 State and Local Public Health Actions to Prevent Obesity, Diabetes, and Heart Disease and Stroke in full.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

WES/dg

cc: Donald J. Palmisano, Jr., Executive Director/CEO, MAG
    Susan Moore, Director, Third Party Payer Advocacy and Health Policy, MAG
    Daniel Thompson, Deputy Director, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, DPH