

566 Henderson Road
Varnville, South Carolina 29944

February 20, 2015

Southern Surgery Specialists
P O Box 742203
Atlanta, Georgia 303842203

RE: Account Number 83450

Dear Sir:

Please find enclosed Check Number 4727, in the amount of \$151.00. According to your records, I owe the stated amount on the above referenced account. But, if I were to act according to my experience on October 18, 2012 at your office at 408 Jackson Avenue East in Hampton, South Carolina, I would be requesting an amount of \$150.00 in refund, because I paid the amount that I was instructed to remit and I failed to receive services from the healthcare provider to whom I was referred by Ms. Ramona M. Pinckney, ANP of Estill Medical Center in Estill, South Carolina. I was referred to Dr. Carlos Montenegro, a surgeon, but I received services only from Ms. Rebecca Jones, another NP. If I needed to remit an amount of \$301.00 for services to be rendered by Ms. Rebecca Jones, I should have been told prior to my office visit on October 18, 2012.

Please note that when I became ill, I lacked my co-pay of \$30.00 at the Estill Medical Center. But, Ms Pinckney examined me (I paid the \$30.00 later when funds became available from my sister). Because I was experiencing unexplained weight loss, I was referred by Ms. Pinckney to Dr. Carlos Montenegro. I was instructed to carry \$150.00 to be remitted prior to being seen by Dr. Montenegro. I informed the Estill staff that I did not have the needed funds. I had no insurance and no income at the time. I was told to work out details with Dr. Montenegro's office. Thus, I telephoned and spoke with someone in that office. I was told that I had to remit \$150.00 before being seen by Dr. Montenegro. Because I lacked any funds and thought that I may have been able to secure the required \$150.00, I asked if I would owe anything else. I was told that I would owe more if Dr. Montenegro had to perform surgery, etc, but that the amount would be determined after he examined me. I did not wish to request services of which I was unable to remit payment. A friend learned of my situation. I did not have transportation either. So, she gave me \$150.00, drove me in her vehicle to Dr. Montenegro's office, and sat with me there. I paid the requested fee due and was given a receipt with a zero balance due. Because my associate paid the fee for me, I showed her the receipt. To ensure that all that I needed was paid, she asked if anything else was due. We were told "no" by Ms. Starla DeLoach of the Hampton Office. I was seen by Ms. Rebecca Jones and told that I needed to remit an amount no less than \$500.00 as partial payment to see Dr. Montenegro for a Colonoscopy and Upper GI on October 26, 2012. The total amount for both was given as \$1,691.00. I informed Ms. Jones that I did not have the needed funds to remit by October 26, 2012. Ms. Jones stated nothing about me owing an additional fee to her for services she rendered. She and another office employee stated that I would have to remit an additional amount if I wished to be seen by Dr. Montenegro. I informed the Hampton office that I lacked the funds and cancelled the scheduled procedures. I did not see Dr. Montenegro at the office and Dr. Montenegro did not examine me. Ms. Jones did not do anything else either. But, thereafter, I received a telephone call from that office and later statements, requesting an amount of \$151.00 for services provided by Ms. Jones.

Earlier, I vowed not to remit payment because it is an issue of integrity to me. It is a matter of honesty in office practices. But, because of my belief, I've resolved to remit payment, although I owe nothing. Again, it is a matter of integrity. Daily experiences teach life-long lessons to us. Valuable information is gained from them. This was an experience that taught a lesson about integrity. From my experience I've learned something that may be beneficial to others. If the

above named surgeon can honestly require payments prior to rendering services to those in dire need, if he can deny services to those without resources to pay for them, if he can accept payments from the poor/need/elderly for services he failed to render, and if his office staff can continue to operate while failing to honor their word, then he and they will make it very clear that they are operating as a mere local business instead of a healthcare practice, offering compassionate care to all. Because it involves services rendered by not just any specialist, but a surgeon, it is a cause of great concern to me. My concern involves two large issues – trust and healthcare. Through my experiences at the Jackson Avenue Office in Hampton, I've suffered a loss of trust in the healthcare system.

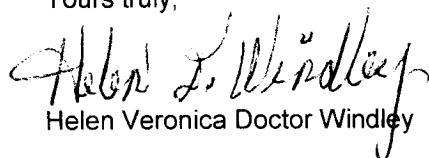
In addition to the statement from your office, a telephone call from 803-943-4003 (Southern Surgery Specialists) came into our home today. Another family member picked up the receiver only to hear a pre-recorded message. She did not hear the message because she called for me once hearing that the call was from Southern Surgery Specialists. The message had ended before I arrived. Thus, I did not receive the message directly. I did not return the telephone call. I feel that it was not a call inquiring of my wellbeing, but rather about a bill. It may have been about further actions that would be taken if I did not remit payment. The many statements received from Southern Surgery Specialists have addressed payment on an overdue account, only. We once had healthcare providers whose concerns were about their patients and not about their wallets.

In your opening words on your statement of February 13, 2015 to me, you state the following: "We sincerely appreciate your trust in us as your healthcare provider." Yes, I placed my trust in you as a healthcare provider. I did because I thought that you actually were such. But, my experiences of October 18, 2012 taught me a valuable lesson. They taught me that you are actually a for-profit business instead.

Because of my concerns about the two stated issues, a copy of this letter will be mailed to local, state and national officials.

Thank you.

Yours truly,


Helen Veronica Doctor Windley

Enclosure

SOUTHERN SURGERY SPECIALISTS
PO BOX 742203
ATLANTA GA 303842203

February 13, 2015
ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Acct No.: 965P0-0000000000
Client Ref.: 8345083450
Amount Due: \$151.00
Due Date: February 23, 2015



HELEN D WINDLEY
566 HENDERSON RD
VARNVILLE SC 29944-4025



96504056

Dear Helen D Windley

We sincerely appreciate your trust in us as your healthcare provider.

Unfortunately, the above referenced amount is now past due and requires your attention. Please remit your payment with the lower portion of this letter in the envelope provided, or provide us with your insurance information if you have not already done so.

If you feel there is an error, please contact us as soon as possible. We really want to help resolve your past due account balance. Our staff is ready to assist you at the number indicated below.

Thank you for your desire to cooperate in resolving this matter.

SOUTHERN SURGERY SPECIALISTS
PO BOX 742203
ATLANTA GA 303842203
803-943-4003