


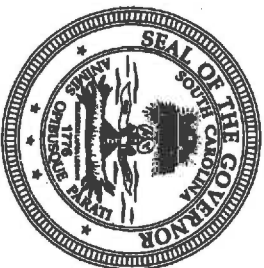
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF DIRECTOR**

ACTION REFERRAL

TO <i>Myers</i>	DATE <i>12-19-08</i>
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DIRECTOR'S USE ONLY	ACTION REQUESTED
1. LOG NUMBER <i>000323</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare reply for the Director's signature DATE DUE _____
2. DATE SIGNED BY DIRECTOR <i>Claude 1/7/09, letter attached.</i> 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepare reply for appropriate signature DATE DUE <i>1-5-09</i> <input type="checkbox"/> FOIA DATE DUE _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Necessary Action

APPROVALS (Only when prepared for director's signature)	APPROVE	* DISAPPROVE (Note reason for disapproval and return to preparer.)	COMMENT
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			



RECEIVED

DEC 19 2008

Department of Health & Human Services
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

State of South Carolina Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD
GOVERNOR

Post Office Box 12267
COLUMBIA 29211

December 16, 2008

Robert Puchalski, MD
South Carolina ENT, Allergy & Sleep Medicine
1165 Highway 1 South, Suite 300
Lugoff, South Carolina 29078

Dear Robert,

Thank you for your letter. I certainly understand your frustration and am asking that someone from the Department of Health and Human Services contact you directly. You should be hearing from that office soon. In the meantime, thanks again for taking the time to write.

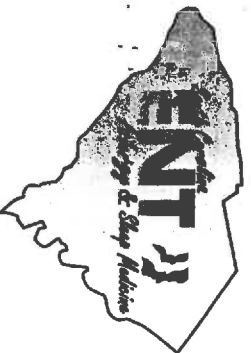
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "MS", written over a horizontal line.

Mark Sanford

MS/dm

cc: The Honorable Emma Forkner, Director
South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services



Robert Puchalski, MD, FAAOA
 Orville H. Dyce, MD
 Chad Gunnlaugsson, MD
 D. Macy Vidrine, MD
 Stephanie H. Tetterton, PA-C

www.SouthCarolinaENT.com

December 2, 2008

Governor Mark Sanford
 Post Office Box 12267
 Columbia, South Carolina 29211

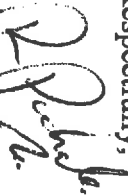
Dear Governor Sanford,

I am writing today to express issues our practice is experiencing with collecting the Medicaid reimbursement from Total Carolina Care Plan. To date the Medicaid HMO plan owes our practice \$55,214.38, the majority of which is over 150 days past due. We have communicated the concerns to Total Carolina Care on numerous occasions by contacting Mike Warren, Director of Negotiations and Mariam Carter, Provider Relations Specialist, by phone and in writing.

Conversations with Total Carolina Care's contract negotiator, Ted Hanayik, revealed the issues to be stall tactics as a way to get our practice to contract with their plan. He stated that if we signed a contract @ 105% the large outstanding amount would get processed and paid correctly. We expressed these concerns with Mr. Warren who asked us to make him our personal contact. Our billing director has left him 4 messages and he has not returned the calls. South Carolina ENT, Allergy & Sleep Medicine's mission is to provide the highest quality otolaryngology care to the patients of South Carolina. For this mission to be accomplished we must receive the reimbursement from the insurance plans. It is our hope that you will assist in our efforts to be reimbursed appropriately for the care given to these Medicaid patients.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Please feel free to contact us at anytime for any further information needed.

Respectfully,


 Robert Buchalski MD, FAAOA

CC: Scott Richardson, South Carolina Department of Insurance
 Mike Warren, Total Carolina Care

West Wateree Medical Complex Suite 300 1165 Highway 1 South Lugoff, SC 29078 803-408-EARS (3277) Fax: 803-408-3299	701 Medical Park Drive Suite 208 Hartsville, SC 29550 843-857-4355 Fax: 843-857-0105	Providence Northeast MOB 114 Gateway Corp. Blvd. Suite 340 Columbia, SC 29203 803-736-EARS (3277) Fax 803-865-2301	711 Doctors Drive Suite A Cheraw, SC 29520 843-537-4401 Fax: 843-537-4421
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Specialized Departments:
 CAROLINA COSMETIC INSTITUTE
 CLARITY HEARING AND BALANCE CENTER, Madonna Morgan, AUD, *Clinical Audiologist*, www.clarityhearingcenter.com
 THE SINUS & ALLERGY CENTER, Angela Clemans, LPN
 CAROLINA SPEECH AND SWALLOWING CENTER, Sheila T. Hoskins, MSP, CCC-SLP, www.carolinaspeechandswallowingcenter.com



State of South Carolina
Department of Health and Human Services

Log #323

Mark Sanford
Governor

Emma Forkner
Director

January 7, 2009


Robert Puchalski, MD, FAAOA
South Carolina ENT
West Waterree Medical Complex
1165 Highway 1 South, Suite 300
Lugoff, South Carolina 29078

Dear Dr. Puchalski,

Thank you for copying us at the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on the concerns you have related to unpaid medical bills for South Carolina ENT as documented in a letter dated December 2, 2008 to Governor Sanford. Mr. Bruce Harbaugh, Program Mentor with the Managed Care Department at DHHS spoke with Mr. Gary Schwartz, Vice President of Operations for Total Carolina Care (TCC), regarding these unpaid claims. Mr. Schwartz indicated that he and other staff members associated with TCC have been in contact with you and are working to resolve this issue. Mr. Schwartz shared a letter dated December 30, 2008 to you from Mike Musgrave, Vice President, Network Management with TCC in which TCC indicates that outstanding claims filed from South Carolina ENT have been paid. Additionally, TCC offers to assist you in reconciliation of payment against your insurance accounts (copy of the letter is attached). Mr. Schwartz has indicated that from December 12, 2008 forward, South Carolina ENT submitted \$58,251.05 in charges and Total Carolina Care has made payments of \$17,382.53 on these charges.

In regards to your concerns of alleged stall tactics employed by TCC, Mr. Roy Hess, Division Director of Care Management for DHHS, spoke with Mr. Aaron Brace, CEO & Plan President with TCC. Mr. Brace addressed this issue in the letter dated December 30, 2009, but assures DHHS that this appears to be a misinterpretation of conversations between Ted Hanayik, contract negotiator for TCC and the office manager for South Carolina ENT. Mr. Brace will continue to monitor the situation as will Mr. Hess.

Thank you for having brought these matters to our attention. Please contact Mr. Roy Hess or Mr. Bruce Harbaugh at (803) 898-4614, should you need additional assistance on matters related to Medicaid Managed Care.

Sincerely,

Emma Forkner
Director

EF/mhh

Enclosures

cc: Governor Mark Sanford
Scott Richardson, South Carolina Department of Insurance
Mike Warren, Total Carolina Care
Aaron Brace, CEO & Plan President, Total Carolina Care



December 30, 2008

Dear Dr. Puchalski,

I hope you are having a terrific Holiday season. I am writing to you today regarding concerns raised from your practice around claims payment issues and historical contract discussions between your office manager and one of my contract negotiators, Mr. Ted Hanayik. I want you to know that I take these concerns very seriously and have worked with the CEO of Total Carolina Care (TCC), Mr. Aaron Brace, to address your concerns.

Regarding the outstanding payment of claims submitted to TCC, I have reviewed our records that show TCC has made routine payments to South Carolina ENT, Allergy & Sleep Medicine beginning in May of 2008 totaling \$106,072. For your convenience, I have attached a spreadsheet with the check numbers, amount paid and date paid. This represents a total inventory of claims that TCC has received from SC ENT for services rendered to TCC members. We would be happy to meet with you and your staff to assist with the reconciliation of claim payments against your insurance accounts receivable reporting.

In addition, I wanted to personally address concerns over statements that may have been misinterpreted around the advantages of participating with TCC vs. being a non-participating provider. I have talked with both Mike Warren, manager of contracting, and Ted Hanayik, contract negotiator, about this matter. I feel confident that the message that was intended was to highlight the benefits of being a participating provider compared to those of a non participating provider. Those benefits include:

- Enhanced reimbursement rate
- Electronic claims submission
- Authorizations waived for routine office visits

I sincerely apologize if our intended message above was misunderstood.

As we have discussed previously, we would welcome SC ENT as part of the TCC network. I know that your office manager and Mike Warren talked on December 17, 2008 and at that time, Mike expressed our continued desire to have you as a participating provider. We would welcome a continued dialogue around contract terms that meet the needs of both parties, while achieving a common goal of serving the Medicaid population of our great state. I will contact you in the days ahead to make sure this letter and the

claims listing meets with your satisfaction. If I can be of service to you or your office staff in the meantime, please contact me at 803-933-3663.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Musgrave', written over a horizontal line.

Mike Musgrave
Vice President, Network Management