

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

ACTION REFERRAL

TO <i>Meyers</i>	DATE <i>12-29-08</i>
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DIRECTOR'S USE ONLY	ACTION REQUESTED
1. LOG NUMBER 100343	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare reply for the Director's signature DATE DUE _____
2. DATE SIGNED BY DIRECTOR <i>Claude 1/8/09, letter attached.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepare reply for appropriate signature DATE DUE <i>1-8-09</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.			



Upstate South Carolina Affiliate
301 Halton Road, Suite D-2 Greenville, SC 29607
864-234-5035 Helpline 1-877-GO KOMEN
www.komenUpstateSC.org

Logi Myers
Appro sign.
cc: EF



DEC 20 2008

Department of Health & Human Services
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

December 23, 2008

Ms. Emma Forkner
Director
SC Department of Health and Human Services
P.O. Box 8206
1801 Main Street
Columbia, SC 29202

Dear Ms. Forkner:

On behalf of Susan G. Komen for the Cure, we thank you and your agency for your dedication and service to the most vulnerable citizens of our state. Many lives are improved and saved through your programs.

As advocates for the women of South Carolina, the Upstate and Lowcountry Affiliates of Susan G. Komen for the Cure and many of our partners are deeply concerned that both cancer prevention and treatment services have been drastically impacted by current budget cuts. While we understand that the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has had to cut many valuable programs over the past weeks due to revenue declines in South Carolina, I am writing to express deep regret for your decision to eliminate Option 3 of the Best Chance Network (BCN) that provides breast and cervical cancer treatment services for low-income, uninsured women not diagnosed through BCN providers. This is particularly critical as the BCN screening program is also being cut, thereby further narrowing the door to treatment.

On July 1, 2005, DHHS became a leader in the fight against breast cancer by adopting Option 3 after advocates across the state fought hard to get \$1 million in state funding from the legislature to fund this program. With Option 3, women would no longer fall through the cracks by being too young and by being diagnosed outside of the Best Chance Network. Since that time, more than 1,000 women received life saving treatment thanks to the leadership of your department and our state. About 43% of those women were under 40 - young women who will now go without these vital treatment services.

With these cuts, women older than 40 who are eligible for BCN may also fall through the cracks since BCN has funding to screen less than 20% of eligible women. Other BCN-eligible women will lose the option of treatment because they are unaware of BCN and receive screening through a non-BCN provider. Little do they know that they will be making a potentially deadly mistake in selecting providers.

Know your risk. Get screened. Know what is normal for you. Make healthy lifestyle choices.



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You know too well that many of these women will never receive treatment for these highly curable cancers or will only receive partial treatment when free resources can be pieced together. They will end up receiving late-stage cancer treatment via emergency hospital care at drastically increased costs for our state. They will be unable to raise their family and will suffer higher mortality rates. Elimination of these programs is not cost effective at all, but quite the opposite. We cannot afford to leave these women with no treatment option while missing the federal 4 to 1 match offered for women treated through the Medicaid program. The cost to our society is too great.

While we understand the downturn in the South Carolina economy and the resulting severe revenue shortfall, nonetheless, cuts to cancer prevention and treatment programs will have devastating effects on SC's most poor and vulnerable citizens. While program funds are reduced, cancer and the disease process actively causes death and disability.

Low-income, uninsured people in South Carolina are at increased risk for a multitude of both cancer and other chronic diseases. Without access to health care and effective prevention services, the cost to our society is even more expensive and deadly.

We urge you to restore these cancer treatment dollars to Option 3 of the BCN and prevent additional cuts this and next year. We look forward to fighting for this program again in the upcoming legislative session.

Please feel free to call me at 864-234-5035 should you wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Mary Lynn Faunda Donovan
Executive Director

Know your risk. Get screened. Know what is normal for you. Make healthy lifestyle choices.



State of South Carolina
Department of Health and Human Services

Mark Sanford
Governor

Emma Forkner
Director

January 8, 2009

Ms. Mary Lynn Faunda Donovan
Executive Director
Upstate South Carolina Affiliate
301 Halton Road, Suite D-2
Greenville, South Carolina 29607

Dear Ms. Donovan:

Thank you for your letter of support for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Option 3 program. We appreciate your taking the time to share your concerns.

The South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) has been faced with very difficult decisions over the past five months in managing unprecedented budget cuts with limited avenues to reach the required reductions. We understand your concern and support your advocacy for the women of our state. However, due to the fiscal impact to our Agency's budget, the decision to limit coverage for this program will not be changed at this time. When circumstances improve, we will assess the capacity within our resources to expand support of this worthy cause.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write and for your continued support of the South Carolina Medicaid program. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Melanie "BZ" Giese, Bureau Director of Health Services, at (803) 898-2868.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Felicity Myers".

Felicity Myers
Deputy Director

FM/gws

Log # 343

