

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
OFFICE OF DIRECTOR

ACTION REFERRAL

TO <i>Waldrep</i>	DATE <i>9-15-11</i>
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DIRECTOR'S USE ONLY	ACTION REQUESTED
1. LOG NUMBER <i>00122</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare reply for the Director's signature DATE DUE _____
2. DATE SIGNED BY DIRECTOR <i>CC: Mr. Keck</i> <i>Cleared 10/7/11, letter attached?</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepare reply for appropriate signature DATE DUE <i>9-26-11</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.			

**Nikki G. Setzler**

South Carolina Senate District 26  
Lexington, Aiken and Saluda Counties

510 Gressette Senate Office Building  
Post Office Box 142  
Columbia, South Carolina 29202  
Telephone: (803) 212-6140  
Fax: (803) 212-6299



Committees:  
Banking and Insurance  
Education  
Finance  
Labor, Commerce and Industry  
Interstate Cooperation

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SEP 15 2011

Department of Health & Human Services  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

August 31, 2011

Robert F. Bowles, Sr. NHA  
Administrator, Saluda Nursing Center  
581 Newberry Highway  
Saluda, S.C. 29138-0398

Dear Mr. Bowles:

Thank you for your letter and concerns as they relate to the SC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and cuts in Medicaid for nursing homes. Please know that I share your concerns and will certainly work from my perspective as a member of the Senate Finance Committee when we return in January. However, in the meantime, I have had communications with DHHS on several matters and will relate to them, via this correspondence, my concern in this regard as well.

I do appreciate your contact and your dedicated efforts on behalf of our senior population and their families. I have heard many good things about Saluda Nursing Center from family members, and I believe that the quality comes from the top down.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nikki Setzler".

Nikki G. Setzler

cc: Tony Keck, Director, SC Department of Health and Human Services, Post Office Box 8206, Columbia, SC 29202-8206



**SENATOR NIKKI G. SETZLER**  
SUITE 510  
GRESSETTE SENATE OFFICE BUILDING  
POST OFFICE BOX 142  
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29202

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**SEP 15 2011**

**Department of Health & Human Services  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR**

**Tony Keck, Director  
SC Department of Health and Human Services  
Post Office Box 8206  
Columbia, SC 29202-8206**

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October 7, 2011

The Honorable Nikki G. Setzler  
510 Gressette Office Building  
Post Office Box 142  
Columbia, South Carolina 29202

Dear Senator Setzler:

This is in response to your letter to Mr. Robert F. Bowles dated August 31, 2011 concerning the recent reduction in Medicaid nursing home permit days. Management of the continuum of long-term care services is a priority for the department, and we appreciate feedback on the system and our changes.

Working jointly with the South Carolina Health Care Association, the decision to reduce Medicaid permit days by eight percent was made in lieu of additional rate reductions beyond 3%. As this reduction in nursing home beds days was made, we simultaneously expanded the number of slots in our home and community based waiver program by 550 to serve our current demand at less cost.

SCDHHS is monitoring access issues to ensure adequate care. As one way of assuring that people are in the most appropriate setting, we recently made an exemption to the Community Long Term Care (CLTC) waiting list to allow persons hospitalized and at risk of nursing facility placement to go to the top of the priority list. Home and community based services, as an alternative to institutional care, cost taxpayers much less (\$32 per day on average compared to \$127 a day). We have also filed an amendment eliminating the so-called "50-mile" rule which was a barrier to timely discharge of individuals from hospitals into nursing homes. We are also encouraging partnerships between hospitals and nursing facilities to develop creative alternatives in the flow of consumers between stages in the continuum of care.

During the first quarter of the state fiscal year, the eight percent reduction in Medicaid beds resulted in several nursing facilities technically exceeding their annual allotment, but we anticipate this problem will be solved by the natural attrition rate in these homes. We are encouraging families who are opting for nursing facility care rather than home care through CLTC to place their family member's name on several local facility waiting lists and are working with the Lt. Governor's Office on Aging to create a central nursing home bed locator service.

South Carolina was recently ranked 38<sup>th</sup> nationally by the first AARP/Commonwealth Fund report on Long Term Care Services and Supports. We believe that by implementing changes in our system we can substantially improve South Carolina's rank. We value your suggestions and concern for your constituents and look forward to working with you individually and in Senate Finance to continue to improve our citizen's health.

Sincerely,



Anthony E. Keck  
Director