

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF DIRECTOR

ACTION REFERRAL

TO <i>Giese</i>	DATE <i>7/6/11</i>
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DIRECTOR'S USE ONLY	ACTION REQUESTED
1. LOG NUMBER <i>1000114</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare reply for the Director's signature DATE DUE _____
2. DATE SIGNED BY DIRECTOR <i>C: Director Keefe</i> <i>Cleared 7/20/11, letter attached.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepare reply for appropriate signature DATE DUE <i>7/18/11</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.			



CONSULTANTS IN
GASTROENTEROLOGY

June 15, 2011

Director Anthony Keck
Department of Health and Human Services
1801 Main Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Vasa W. Cate, MD, *Retired*
Richard M. Lawson, MD
S. Gabe Saleebiy, MD
March E. Seabrook, MD, FACC
Eric J. Heinzelmann, MD
John W. Schaberg, MD, FACC
Gene W. Stuart, MD
Rajeev Vasudeva, MD, FACC
Jessica Anderson, RN, ANP
Angela Darby, RN, FNP

Dear Director Keck:

I would like to thank you for meeting with members of The South Carolina Gastroenterology Association a few weeks ago. As I indicated at that time, we were going to have our annual meeting in May. During this meeting, we discussed the issues surrounding Medicaid. We had a lively and appropriate discussion on how the gastroenterologists can be involved in assisting with the overall problem.

There was a strong sense that it is the primary responsibility of the patients to take good care of themselves and I think this is often lost in the discussion. Be that as it may, the cost of proton pump inhibitors, especially the branded products, is quite exorbitant. We recognize this, though, there are times when generics do not seem to be effective in certain populations. Perhaps, it would be helpful if you, as director, did not allow any branded drugs to be available, at least on the state taxpayers' expense. Perhaps, a nominal voucher for a generic and then let the beneficiary pay for the difference if a branded product is necessary. Again, getting back to patient responsibility in terms of lifestyle modifications, tobacco cessation and weight loss is often an important role in treatment of this disease. This should not fall on the gastroenterologist or the one prescribing these medications.

Another issue is sedation for endoscopic procedures. The vast majority of patients can be adequately sedated using "conscious sedation". There is a significant excess expense when using Propofol as the sedating agents. There are, however, instances when adequate sedation cannot be achieved in certain patients and this drug is necessary but not routinely.

Globally however, I feel as an individual, that everyone who receives taxpayer dollars for their healthcare should at least complete an Advanced Directive. I believe this is just good medicine and everyone should discuss end of life issues when appropriate. The enormous expense in the last two months of life can probably be avoided by conversations within a family.

I hope some of this information will be helpful to you and your organization and I would like to let you know that the gastroenterologists stand ready to try to help in this challenge going forward.

Yours Most Respectfully,

March E. Seabrook, M.D.

RECEIVED

JUL 06 2011

MES/acs

West Columbia
131 Summerplace Drive
West Columbia, SC 29169
803-794-4585

Northeast Columbia
11 Gateway Corners Park
Columbia, SC 29203
803-462-2300

St. Andrews
7033 St. Andrews Rd, Suite 304
Columbia, SC 29212
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Department of Health & Human Services
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Lexington
811 W. Main St. Suite 208
Lexington, SC 29072
803-794-4585

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

ACTION REFERRAL

TO <i>Giese Williams</i>	DATE <i>7/6/11</i>
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DIRECTOR'S USE ONLY	ACTION REQUESTED
1. LOG NUMBER <i>100-1014</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare reply for the Director's signature DATE DUE _____
2. DATE SIGNED BY DIRECTOR <i>C: Director Keck</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepare reply for appropriate signature DATE DUE <i>7/18/11</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. <i>[Signature]</i>	<i>7-19-11</i>		
2. <i>[Signature]</i>		<i>7/15</i>	
3.			
4.			



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Director Anthony Keck
Department of Health and Human Services
1801 Main Street
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March E. Seabrook, M.D.

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JUL 06 2011

Experience with a gentle touch.

July 20, 2011

March E. Seabrook, M.D.
131 Summerplace Drive
West Columbia, South Carolina 29169


Dear Dr. Seabrook:

Thank you for your letter regarding the meeting with the members of The South Carolina Gastroenterology Association and their suggestions for taking cost out of the system. We greatly appreciate and value your perspective.

The South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) works very diligently to ensure that we pay the lowest net cost possible for all drug products that are made available to our beneficiaries. We do understand that this fact is not always apparent at the point of sale. In 1990, the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) established a system of mandatory rebates that pharmaceutical manufacturers pay to Medicaid agencies. The difference in rebate rates can significantly reduce the disparity between net cost of brand and generic products, even to the point where the net cost of a brand may be less than that of its generic equivalent. In those cases, S.C. Medicaid requires that providers use the brand product.

The agency looks forward to continuing our partnership as this will assist us with addressing the best methods to ensure beneficiaries are receiving the most cost effective care in the least restrictive environment. Your cost saving suggestion concerning the use of Propofol and Advanced Directive will be given to our Medical Directors to review for any possible recommendations to our policy.

We appreciate your continued participation in the South Carolina Medicaid program. If you have any additional questions please feel free to contact Ms. Valeria Williams, Division Director for Physician Services, at (803) 898-2660.

Sincerely,

Melanie "BZ" Giese, RN
Deputy Director

MG/ws