

11 May, 2016

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in regards to a claim from which my son went to the Health and Wellness Clinic for a respiratory infection and was sent to a local hospital for labs and a CXR, since the clinic does not have radiology equipment. He went to our local hospital, Lexington Medical Center as requested by Dr. William Brearley as an outpatient and had labs and CXR performed. We did not go to the ER, which I now ironically feel may have cost us less out of pocket in the long run. Dr. Brearley even encouraged us to go to the ER for assessment due to his symptoms but myself, as a nurse and mother, did not want to incur unnecessary expenses by going to the ER so I requested we get the necessary diagnostic tests performed and then let Dr. Brearley assess what we should do. The bill from LMC just arrived in the mail with a charge of \$701.00 for the CXR alone. I cannot understand why in the world the hospital is allowed to charge over \$700 for a CXR which would cost around \$100 if I went to a MD office or radiology office. Unfortunately, we have not met our deductible this year, therefore we are responsible in full for the allowable amount. I believe the allowable amount is unreasonable and excessive. I believe as my insurance carrier, that PAI has a responsibility to protect and assist their members and help prevent this type of price gouging and overcharging. We pay a lot for insurance and it is so very unfair that hospitals can get away with this injustice. I would like to appeal this charge due to the amount charged being unreasonable.

I am also sending this to Lexington Medical Center for review. I am a Registered Nurse and I worked at Lexington Medical Center a number of years. I understand the cost of healthcare and the many problems healthcare now faces. It never crossed my mind to go anywhere else for these services because I have lived in Lexington County my whole life, have worked there, have friends who work there, and have also trusted LMC for my health care needs as a Lexington County citizen for many years. I have previously been charged very high prices getting care there with my insurance but never felt mistreated like this. I am highly disappointed in the manner it has been handled. I called Customer Service and was told the fees are determined by a Board of Director's and there is no way to appeal or question the fees. She would not transfer me to a supervisor to discuss the fees. I do not mind paying a reasonable amount for the services but I believe the billed cost is exorbitant.

According to Consumer Reports Health, healthcarebluebook.com, a fair price in the 29072 zipcode is \$50.00 for a chest x ray. I also called Palmetto Imaging in West Columbia and was told the fee for 2 view chest x ray for self pay is \$40.00!!! This \$700 bill is ludicrous! Too bad we didn't know to go Palmetto Imaging instead.

I am also sending our state representatives this letter which proves the growing problem for citizen's with health insurance. How can hard working families who are paying for expensive health care plans afford to pay these unreasonable, inflated fees from health care providers? We need to work together to find a solution.

Thanks for your attention to this matter,

Derek and Kimberly C Applegate

106 Coachman Ct. Lexington, SC 29072

803-513-9895

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PAI- Group# 548 Claim #23849644-01

Lexington Medical Center bill/ Account # 201881096