

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
OFFICE OF DIRECTOR

**ACTION REFERRAL**

TO  <i>Myers</i>	DATE  <i>1-18-11</i>
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DIRECTOR'S USE ONLY	ACTION REQUESTED
1. LOG NUMBER  <i>41011308</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare reply for the Director's signature DATE DUE _____
2. DATE SIGNED BY DIRECTOR  <i>Claud 1/18/11, letter attached.</i> 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepare reply for appropriate signature DATE DUE <i>1-27-11</i>  <input type="checkbox"/> FOIA DATE DUE _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Necessary Action

APPROVALS <small>(Only when prepared for director's signature)</small>	APPROVE	* DISAPPROVE <small>(Note reason for disapproval and return to preparer.)</small>	COMMENT
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**RECEIVED**

JAN 18 2011

January 9, 2011

Felicity Myers,

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

Your immediate action and assistance is required, regarding the decreased Medicaid benefits for special needs children in our home state.

I cannot imagine a more desperate situation than the inadequately evaluated plan to reduce physical, occupational, and speech therapy.

I am a small business owner in Murrells Inlet, South Carolina. I own, operate, and direct Carolina Therapy Associates, LLC. I am a pediatric Speech-Language Pathologist. I have a two year-old son, and I am currently the bread-winner of my family, since my husband has taken several pay cuts as an Environmental Scientist this year. If these Medicaid cuts occur, the financial distress will be unbearable. I will not be able to keep my office doors open to serve children in Horry and Georgetown counties.

The bulk of my patient caseload consists of children with multiple disabilities. Gone are the days of simple articulation therapy. Now Autism is an epidemic among our youth, and my patients require consistent speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, and hours of Applied Behavioral Analysis. I also treat children who struggle to chew, swallow, walk, dress themselves, etc. who require Physical Therapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) in addition to my speech-language and swallowing therapy services. The proposed 75 shared visits between PT, OT, and Speech is not enough for a child with multiple disabilities to progress (or in many cases even maintain function).

As an early interventionist, I have seen the efficacy of Medicaid monies used by these deserving citizens. My patients work diligently to gain function and prevent regression, thereby reducing future state spending.

I believe God has called you into service. You can be the voice for those who quite literally cannot speak for themselves. Please do not permit budget cuts to occur at the expense of our special needs children. Fully fund Medicaid. As a concerned parent and therapist, I would be happy to share my concerns or answer any questions with you or one of your staff members.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration in this matter.

Sincerely



Sarah E., Gerace, M.A., CCC-SLP

Owner/Director

Board Certified Speech-Language Pathologist

Carolina Therapy Associates, LLC

Cc: Governor-Elect Nikki Haley; Senator Thomas Alexander; Rep Bryan White

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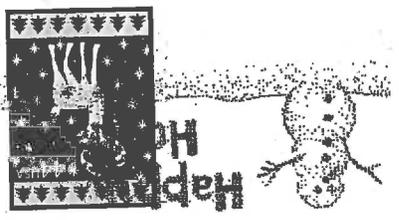
Felicity Myers  
SC Medicaid  
1801 Main St.  
Columbia SC 29201

Department of Health & Human Services  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

JAN 18 2011

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Carolina Therapy Associates, LLC  
180 Cedar Point Avenue  
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576  
p: (843) 385-6162 f: 1-866-800-5103



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South Carolina Department of  
Health & Human Services

William Wells, Interim Director  
Nikki Haley, Governor

January 18, 2011

Ms. Sarah Gerace, M.A., CCC-SLP  
Carolina Therapy Associates, LLC  
180 Cedar Point Avenue  
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576

Dear Ms. Gerace:

Thank you for your letter dated January 9, 2011 regarding your concerns on the 75 visits cap (total of 300 hours of therapy) for private rehabilitative services. While South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) regrets having to place limitations on services, we are facing an unprecedented deficit this fiscal year.

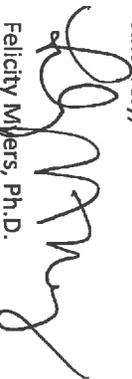
We have determined that there are systems changes that will be required prior to our enforcing this limitation; therefore, the implementation date has been postponed until 4/1/11. We will make every effort to clarify the rules associated with this change so that enrolled private therapists will understand the requirements for coordination with their patients' primary care physicians. This information will be made available in a Medicaid Bulletin. All Medicaid Bulletins and Provider Manuals are located on the agency website, [www.scdhhs.gov](http://www.scdhhs.gov). If you are not already receiving our Medicaid Bulletins, I strongly encourage you to sign up for them on our agency website.

While these limits will be in place, as indicated in the Private Rehabilitative Therapy and Audiological Services Manual, on pages 2-4, "Payment for services that exceed frequency limitations may only be justified as a result of an Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) examination and must be pre-approved by SCDHHS." This policy remains unchanged. Should the referring physicians determine, through EPSDT visits, that some of your patients require additional private therapy services, the physicians should document the medical necessity and request additional visits. Such requests must be made in writing, must indicate the diagnosis and/or functional impairment that establishes medical necessity, and must be signed by the children's primary care physicians. This documentation should be faxed to SCDHHS staff at 803-898-8222, Attention: Private Rehabilitative Therapy Services Authorization, prior to provision of the service. It will be important to utilize this process when requesting additional visits; failure to comply with these requirements may result in denial or recoupment of payment.

Again, we are sorry that any limitations are necessary and we understand that many of the children receiving these services will, in fact, meet criteria for additional visits. In those instances, I assure you that we will work with physicians, therapists, and parents to ensure that services are made available. If you have further questions concerning this policy change, please contact your program manager.

Thank you for your commitment to the children we serve.

Sincerely,

  
Felicity Myers, Ph.D.  
Deputy Director, Medical Services

CC: Senator Thomas Alexander  
Representative W. Brian White