



State of Louisiana
Department of Health and Hospitals
Office of the Secretary

January 28, 2012

Dr. F. Dean Griffen
President, Louisiana State Medical Society
6767 Perkins Road, Suite 100
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

Dear Dr. Griffen:

Thank you for inviting me to address the the Louisiana State Medical Society's (LSMS) annual meeting. LSMS and its member physicians are critical partners in our efforts to improve our health outcomes and I appreciate the opportunity to continue our dialogue about the future of Louisiana's health care system. Your members play a particularly vital role in our state's most critical health care reform initiative, BAYOU HEALTH.

It was evident by the questions raised during the meeting that your members have a deep understanding of the complex issues we are facing. I was encouraged by their keen interest and engagement in the roll-out of BAYOU HEALTH. The issues raised regarding its implementation are important, but they are not new. They have been and will continue to be addressed in varied settings, including daily provider calls, continuously updated public Q&A's and one-on-one communications with provider groups and individual physicians.

We recognize the importance of hearing directly from front-line providers in real time. This feedback loop has proven to be a valuable tool and has allowed us to make continuous improvements within our programs. LSMS has been instrumental in providing feedback to this initiative in particular and it is my hope to keep these channels of communication wide open. Together, we can make BAYOU HEALTH successful in improving the health outcomes of Medicaid enrollees.

I would like to take this opportunity to share resolutions already in place that address a few of the questions and concerns raised at today's session:

- **Provider Hotline** – As part of DHH's Bayou Health Rapid Response Initiative, we are establishing dedicated numbers for provider issues, which will be manned by our Bayou Health managers and subject matter experts. We will be posting those phone numbers as well as e-mail addresses at www.MakingMedicaidBetter.com prior to 2/1/12 that you can

use to contact the team and quickly get answers to your questions. The e-mail account BayouHealth@la.gov will be continually monitored as well.

- **Electronic Claims Submission** – All five Health Plans are able to accept ANSI X12 837 transactions and we have provided in the provider area of MakingMedicaidBetter.com detailed EDI information including payer numbers and the names of clearinghouses with whom they have contracted: <http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/36/n/77>(first bullet).
- **Primary Care Physician Selection after Birth** – DHH’s contracts with the Health Plans require Health Plans to work with pregnant members to choose a pediatrician or other appropriate PCP, for the care of their newborn baby both in the before and the beginning of the last trimester of gestation. In the event that the pregnant member does not select a pediatrician, or other appropriate PCP, the Health Plan shall assign one within one business day of birth. The mother has a choice of Health Plans and the newborn is not required to remain in the same Health Plan as the mother. The mother will be mailed a letter within one week of the date of birth advising that she can change Health Plans for the newborn within 90 days and the multiples ways that she can do so. Unless the request is received in the last few days of the month, enrollment in a different Health Plan would be effective the first day of the month following the request. For end of month requests, the change in enrollment will be effective the first day of the second month.
- **Prior Authorization** - This will be determined by each prepaid Health Plan and approved by DHH. Shared Savings Plans cannot require Prior Authorization for services that are not Prior Authorized by fee-for-service Medicaid. However, Prior Authorization policies for those services can be different than fee-for-service Medicaid. Providers should go to the MakingMedicaidBetter.com website – Provider Tab. We will provide a link to each Health Plan’s prior authorization procedures to be used by out-of-network providers during this transition period.
- **Grace Period for Out of Network Payment to Ensure Continuity of Care** - In the event a Medicaid/LaCHIP eligible entering the Health Plan is receiving medically necessary covered services the day before Bayou Health enrollment (During the initial implementation of the Bayou Health Program), the Health Plan shall provide continuation/coordination of such services up to ninety (90) calendar days or until the member may be reasonably transferred without disruption, whichever is less. The Health Plan may require prior authorization for continuation of the services beyond thirty (30) calendar days; however the Health Plan is prohibited from denying authorization solely on the basis that the provider is an out-of-network provider.
- **Emergency Care** – DHH’s contract with the Health Plans requires that emergency care provided by both in-network and out-of-network providers be reimbursed at 100% of Medicaid. The definition of the condition as an “emergency” is that of the “prudent layperson” which in the case of pediatric patients, would be the parent or guardian of the child or other adult presenting with the child at the physician’s office for emergency treatment.

The physician will make the determination of whether an emergency exists and the point at which the child has been “stabilized” and they have the **option** of continuing to treat the child or arranging for transfer of the child (to another PCP or Health Plan).

Again, I appreciate the feedback and assistance LSMS has provided. We will continue to host daily provider calls to hear from all providers. I would also encourage your members to view our extensive online list of Bayou Health Frequently Asked Questions that is being continually updated and can be accessed at www.MakingMedicaidBetter.com under the link “Providers”.

If you or your members have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact us, particularly Ruth Kennedy, Bayou Health Project Director at 225-241-1437, or via e-mail, ruth.kennedy@la.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce D. Greenstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bruce" being the most prominent.

Bruce D. Greenstein
Secretary