An Open Letter to All Arkansas Medicaid Dental providers:

February 6, 2015

This is a friendly letter to Arkansas dentists to make you aware of important developments in the Medicaid Dental program. Please note that the state Medicaid dental consultants and the Medicaid Advisory Committee are becoming increasingly concerned about the level of potential fraud, waste and abuse in the dental program. The Medicaid Advisory Committee is comprised of licensed and practicing dentists who volunteer their services as a peer review and advisory group for the Arkansas Department of Human Services and ASDA.

Areas of potential abuse include but are not limited to the following:

- Upcoding of oral surgery and operative procedures
- Endodontic procedures being performed on teeth that are not restorable under Medicaid guidelines
- 2nd molar endo that does not conform to the guidelines in the Medicaid manual
- Unnecessary x-rays
- Unnecessary pulpotomies
- Orthodontic treatment not being completed after payment has been made
- Possible misrepresentation of orthodontic cases
- Extraction of asymptomatic third molars on patients under seventeen years of age

Similarly, in December ASDA met with officials at the Office of Medicaid Inspector General, which is authorized by the Arkansas legislature to identify fraud, abuse and waste within Medicaid. They shared the following concerns:

- Documentation should be complete and accurate. *This cannot be overemphasized.*
- X-rays must be easy to read and support the treatment provided

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• Attention to merit and accuracy should be considered prior to submitting orthodontic cases
• Remember that consistent upcoding is fraud, and Medicaid has authority to recoup payments that are made to providers in error or under false pretenses.

The Advisory committee, which also serves as the peer review committee for Medicaid dental cases on appeal, has the authority and responsibility to refer cases of potential fraud, waste and abuse to the Office of Medicaid Inspector General. All providers should be aware that all treatment rendered on Medicare/Medicaid patients can be reviewed by the consultants, Medicaid Advisory Committee and the Office of Inspector General. Also, information regarding payments made to dental providers is available to the public under the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

Please note that dental offices that discover areas of noncompliance within their practice may use the Office of Medicaid Inspector General’s “Self Disclosure Protocol” at www.omig.arkansas.gov/providers. Self-reporting is an ethical way to report mistakes that otherwise could be interpreted as fraudulent, abusive or wasteful if an audit is performed. If you have questions about this or other questions, please contact the OMIG at 501-682-8349 or www.omig.arkansas.gov.

The dental consultants and the Medicaid Advisory Committee request that all providers read the Arkansas Medicaid manual, adhere to the guidelines of the dental program, and always practice ethical dentistry.

Respectfully submitted,

Medicaid Advisory Committee

Dr. Ron Gore, chairman
Dr. Tim Chase
Dr. David Ciesla
Dr. Robert Gunter
Dr. Ron Hubbard
Dr. Hal Koppel

Dr. Alan Lamb
Dr. Cindy Landry
Dr. Jim Phillips
Dr. Thad Shirey
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