



HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY
ADMINISTRATION

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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November 30, 1998

AGENDA: December 8, 1998

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: Report back regarding Santa Cruz County Health Options Wheelchair Repair
and Associated Issues

Dear Board Members:

At your November 24, 1998, meeting you received a report from the Commission on Disabilities, the Health Services Agency, and the Santa Cruz County Health Options organization regarding a variety of issues associated with services to disabled members of SCCHO. At that meeting, you asked for a report back on the specific issues of the timeliness of wheelchair repairs, as well as the authorization process for wheelchair repairs.

The Managed Medical Care Commission met on December 2, 1998, and adopted various programmatic changes that were enumerated in your November 24, 1998, letter and that had been agreed upon in previous discussions with the Commission on Disabilities. The Managed Medical Care Commission, by unanimous resolution, reaffirmed its commitment to providing the most responsive and effective services possible to all members, and most specifically those members with disabilities and mobility impairments. The Commission also approved staffs plan to convene a conference call with local wheelchair vendors to discuss SCCHO's policies, and identify any barriers to prompt service. The advice of local vendors is critical to making improvements in these services. Planning sessions will continue with the objective of expediting wheelchair repairs and new chair delivery to the greatest extent possible. SCCHO staff have been authorized to implement all needed and feasible changes at the earliest possible date, and will be reporting back to the Commission in this regard. SCCHO's planning process with vendors began on September 16th, as part of SCCHO's Allied Health Services Advisory Group, and will proceed with focus on concerns recently raised by the COD's report.

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With regard to issues of prior authorization, the Managed Medical Care Board and SCCHO staff at their December 2, 1998, meeting reaffirmed the following:

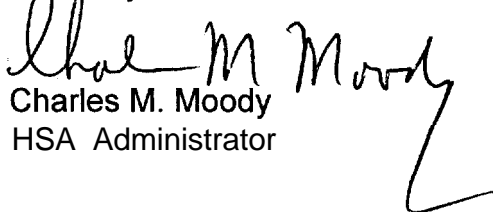
Emergency repairs for wheelchairs (which account for about 95% of repairs for SCCHO members) do not require prior authorization from SCCHO or any of its primary care providers. This policy is intended to avoid delays related to authorization. However, if vendors (in the current planning discussions) indicate a preference for written authorization as a condition for prompt repair, SCCHO will make the appropriate changes in its procedure.

SCCHO's Finance Committee has been authorized by the Commission to meet with SCCHO staff in **mid-January, 1999**, to receive a report from staff on any policy or procedure changes resulting from the planning process with local wheelchair vendors. The commission recognizes that reliable and satisfying wheelchair services depend on appropriate SCCHO policies, vendor service capability, members' communication of needs, and effective collaboration between all parties. The Commission and SCCHO staff are resolved to employ all feasible solutions that can be developed in collaboration with local wheelchair vendors. Achievements in these areas will be reported when HSA returns to your Board with a progress report on March 2, 1999.


It is therefore RECOMMENDED that your Board:

Accept and file this report on SCCHO wheelchair repair and associated issues.

Sincerely,


Charles M. Moody
HSA Administrator

RECOMMENDED:


Susan Mauriello
County Administrative Officer

CMM/amg

cc: CAO
HSA Administration

County Counsel
SCCHO

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