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By U.S. Mail and Fax: 209-468-6725

Dan Burch  
EMS Administrator  
San Joaquin County EMS Agency  
500 West Hospital Road  
French Camp, CA 95231

Re: Emergency Ambulance Service: Balance Billing Issues

Dear Mr. Burch:

I write to inform the Proposal Review Committee of an issue that has affected one of my clients and may yet pose difficulties for others. A client who was transported by an ambulance operated by the City of Stockton submitted her bill to her healthcare insurance company, HealthNet. HealthNet paid the usual and customary charges, which were about 75% of the invoiced bill. Rather than close out the file, however, the City of Stockton continues to pursue my client for the balance of the bill. Agents for the City of Stockton said the City does not agree to the rates established by the insurance companies and said it would continue to balance bill my client. A review of my clients who were transported by other companies, including American Medical Response, shows that none of them was balance billed after payment by a healthcare insurance company, including PacificCare.

As the Proposal Review Committee considers the bids of the several bidders, I urge it to consider each company's billing practice, especially as it relates to balance billing. The residents of San Joaquin County deserve the assurance that they will not be personally pursued for unreasonable charges after their healthcare insurance company has already paid.

Sincerely,

  
Clarence K. Chan