
Medical Debt Collection Policy [UMP only]

Scope: This policy applies to solely UMP-owned facilities only. (For M Health Fairview, including the Mpls CSC, use the applicable Fairview system policy on PolicyTech.)

Purpose: To establish standards for University of Minnesota Physicians (“M Physicians”) collection of Medical Debt from its patients.

Policy: M Physicians will use fair and consistent practices to collect Medical Debt from its patients in compliance with relevant laws.

- I. Workforce members will communicate with patients regarding Medical Debt by either U.S. mail or telephone following the procedures set forth below.
- II. M Physicians will not deny medically necessary services to a patient or any member of the patient’s family or household due to current or previous outstanding Medical Debt owed by the patient.
- III. If a patient or a third party notifies M Physicians that a patient’s bill contains a Billing Error, or if M Physicians identifies a potential Billing Error, M Physicians will conduct a review and correct any Billing Errors found.
- IV. This policy will be posted on the M Physicians website and a physical copy will be provided to any individual upon request.

Procedure:

I. Collection Process

- A. M Physicians may send a patient up to three billing statements over a three-month period and make up to three telephone calls per business day.
 1. All contact by telephone will be between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
 2. Workforce members will speak respectfully to patients at all times.
- B. If no payment is made within 10 days of the third statement being mailed to the patient, M Physicians may refer the Medical Debt to a third-party collections agency for further attempts to collect the debt.
- C. M Physicians will end collection activities once the debt has been fully paid. Once the debt has been referred to a third-party collection agency, that agency will determine when the debt is satisfied and when to otherwise cease collection activities.
- D. M Physicians will not report any unpaid medical debt to consumer reporting agencies.

II. Scheduling Service for Patients with Outstanding Medical Debt

- A. M Physicians may require a patient with an outstanding balance to enter into a payment plan prior to scheduling a service.
- B. The payment plan must be reasonable and take into account any information disclosed by the patient regarding the patient's ability to pay.
- C. Before entering into the payment plan, M Physicians will notify the patient that if the patient is unable to make all or part of the agreed-upon installment payments, the patient must communicate that to M Physicians and pay an amount the patient can afford.

III. Billing Errors

- A. Within 30 days of M Physicians identifying a potential Billing Error or being notified by someone other than the patient of a potential Billing Error, M Physicians will provide written notice of the

potential error to the patient, including that M Physicians will review the bill and correct any Billing Errors found, and that while the review is being conducted, it will not attempt to collect the potentially erroneous bill.

- B. If a patient notifies M Physicians of a Billing Error, M Physicians will review the bill and correct any Billing Errors found. M Physicians will not attempt to collect the bill while the review is pending.
- C. Within 30 days of completing the review under A or B above, M Physicians will provide written notice to the patient that the review is complete, explaining in detail the corrections that were made or why the requested corrections were not made, and including citations to applicable coding guidelines, records and other information that is relevant to understanding the outcome.

Definitions:

Billing Error: an error in an M Physicians bill to a patient for healthcare services that affects the amount owed by the patient according to that bill. Billing error includes but is not limited to miscoding.

Medical Debt: all debt incurred for medically necessary health treatment or services.

Related Resources:

References: Minn. Stat. Sects. 62J.805-808

Owner: Director of Revenue Cycle

Author: Desiree Quist, Revenue Cycle Manager

Contributors:

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