



Drs. Hawks, Besler & Rogers

OPTOMETRISTS

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Eyecare for the 21st century

February 15, 2012

TO: HOUSE INSURANCE COMMITTEE

FROM: JASON ROGERS, OD

RE: HOUSE BILL 2565

My name is Dr. Jason Rogers. I am an optometrist in a four-doctor optometry practice serving patients in Overland Park and Gardner. In addition, I serve as the Legislative Chair for the Kansas Optometric Association. We support House Bill 2565 and encourage the committee to pass it favorably.

In an effort to advocate for our patients, our practice has actively obtained information regarding coverage and expected costs for their eye care services. We have been doing this for medical eye care and routine vision services for many years. We believe strongly that it is important for patients to be informed of their expected expenses, copays, coinsurance and impact on deductible prior to the delivery of care. This transparency allows patients to be actively involved in their patient care.

Currently, we have been able to access this information in most cases either by telephoning insurance company customer service representatives or, with some companies, through their website. Although we are generally able to obtain this information, the process can be time-consuming for our staff as telephone wait times are commonly 10-15 minutes. Further, some insurance companies limit the number of claim questions our staff can ask a representative during one phone call.

Our practice has two full-time staff that deal solely with billing and collecting. We estimate the daily time devoted to obtaining coverage and expected costs at approximately four hours.

From an efficiency standpoint, having access to this information directly through our practice management system would seem to reduce staff time for both our office and the insurance companies while improving the speed of communication to the patient. Once this information is obtained, our office could print the claim estimate and give to the patient. This would reduce errors by eliminating verbal miscommunication between our office and the insurance company, or between our office and the patient.

As providers, we advocate quality patient care by discussing benefits and risks of ocular treatments. Obtaining accurate coverage and expected costs in an efficient manner is an important element of the patient care experience that allows patients to make informed decisions about their health care.

On behalf of the Kansas Optometric Association, I respectfully request the House Insurance Committee to pass House Bill 2565.