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April 20, 2016

Honorable Terry B. Gerratana, Senate Co-Chair, Public Health Committee  
Honorable Matthew Ritter, House Co-Chair, Public Health Committee  
Honorable Joseph J. Crisco, Senate Vice-Chair, Public Health Committee  
Honorable Emmett D. Riley, House Vice-Chair, Public Health Committee  
Honorable Joe Markley, Senate Ranking Member, Public Health Committee  
Honorable Prasad Srinivasan, House Ranking Member, Public Health Committee  
Honorable Members of the Public Health Committee

Honorable Marilyn Moore, Senate Co-Chair, Human Services Committee  
Honorable Catherine F. Abercrombie, House Co-Chair, Human Services Committee  
Honorable Gayle S. Slossberg, Senate Vice-Chair, Human Services Committee  
Honorable Brandon L. McGee, House Vice-Chair, Human Services Committee  
Honorable Joe Markley, Senate Ranking Member, Human Services Committee  
Honorable Terrie Wood, House Ranking Member, Human Services Committee  
Honorable Members of the Human Services Committee

Dear Honorable Co-Chairs, Vice Chairs, Ranking Members and Members,

In accordance with federal Medicaid law and state Plan Amendment 15-020 (implemented March 2015), the Department of Social Services regularly monitors access to radiology services provided to Husky Health program participants to measure the impact of the reduced fees paid to independent radiologists. This correspondence compares radiology utilization data for claims made for the period June 1, 2015 through October 31, 2015 to the claims made in the same period of calendar year 2014. The Department will provide the respective Committees updates on radiology utilization on a quarterly basis.

In summary, a review of the data reveals no negative impact on access to radiology services for HUSKY Health members. The total number of times all HUSKY Health members received services from a radiologist increased from 323,316 to 337,551 during the respective reporting periods. The total number of procedures performed by all service providers increased to 506,778 from 527,497.

Utilization per 1000 members increased 1.0% in 2015 over 2014. Radiologist's professional services (i.e., the number of times a Husky Health member was seen by a radiologist) increased 1.6% per 1000 members year to year; hospital technical (facility) claims decreased 0.1%; and independent radiology technical (facility) claims decreased 11.7%. Geoaccess mapping continues to show more than adequate access to radiology services statewide.

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The overall use of radiology services per 1000 Husky members continues to increase very modestly, demonstrating no decrease in access. Although the drop in the use of radiology technical (facility) claims made by independent radiologists appears to be significant on a percentage basis, the net impact of this decrease is negligible - less than 400 claims from 4,134 to 3,754. This reduction is considered negligible because, historically, the vast majority of HUSKY members use hospital-based services, with less than 5% obtaining x-ray services from independent radiology centers. Even when accounting for this decrease, net utilization of all radiology services continues to rise.

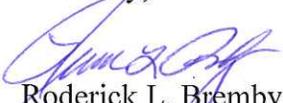
All of the most frequently utilized services showed increased utilization during the reported period year to year, with the exception of a 1.1% decrease in the number of mammograms per 1000 members. While the Department acknowledges this slight decrease, it should be noted that the number of mammograms performed actually increased 1.65% - 33,901 in the 2014 reporting period to 34,460 in 2015. The decrease in mammograms per 1000 members may reflect the relatively younger HUSKY D population who are not yet old enough to require a mammogram. (It should also be noted that the U.S. Preventive Health Services Task Force recently revised its recommendations for breast cancer screening to make mammography a personal choice for women between the ages of 40 and 50 years, rather than starting regular mammography at age 40.)

Lastly, recognizing that it may still be too early to measure the impact of the 2015 rate reductions due to delays in provider claim submission, the Department monitors member's calls as a "real-time" indicator of member concerns. Specifically, we track member requests for help finding radiologists, as well as member complaints about lack of access to radiology services. In 2016 there have been 8 referrals to the Escalation Unit for assistance with radiology services. These services were mainly for pain management and orthopedic services.

The Department appreciates the Committees' mutual interest and concerns on this topic. It must again be emphasized, however, that the Department cannot substantiate the allegations that there is a lack of access to radiological and imaging services for Medicaid beneficiaries. The data does not support the conclusion that participants' access to services has been diminished.

We remain absolutely committed to actively monitoring utilization and access for radiology services (and all other services) provided to every HUSKY Health member. If you require additional information, please feel free to contact me or Alvin R. Wilson Jr., Counsel and Government Relations Director, at [alvin.wilson@ct.gov](mailto:alvin.wilson@ct.gov) or 860-424-5105.

Sincerely,



Roderick L. Bremby  
Commissioner

cc: Kate McEvoy, Esq., Director, Division of Health Services  
Robert W. Zavoski, MD, MPH, Medical Director, Division of Health Services  
Alvin R. Wilson, Jr., Counsel and Government Relations Director