



COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF INSURANCE

January 23, 1996

Ruling Letter NE-1-76-96

To All Health Services Organizations, Non- Profit Associations, and Disability Insurers with Operating Medical Plans and their Providers Practice of Uncertified Specialized Medicine

Dear Sirs:

In Resolution Number 91-18, dated September 18, 1991, the Puerto Rico Board of Medical Examiners emphasized that in order to be able to advertise as a provider and exercise any medical specialization in Puerto Rico, it is a requirement to be certified as a specialist by the Board. It was further advised, in the same resolution, that failure to comply with this requirement would be a felony offense, and sufficient cause for suspension or cancelation of any license issued by the Board.

The practice of specialized medicine without certification has the adverse effect of undermining the quality of the services provided to patients, due to errors in the analysis of the information obtained and the resulting diagnostic errors. Many of the studies that have been done need to be repeated, which means more expense for the patient and new billing for the health insurance.

Health services organizations, as well as disability insurers, may be effective vehicles for controlling the practice of uncertified specialized medicine. Through strict qualification of providers, followed by monitoring disbursements, involuntary sponsorship of this practice may be minimized.

This Office wishes to support the intention expressed by the Puerto Rico Board of Medical Examiners in its Resolution Number 91-18. To that effect, we are requiring health services organizations and disability insurers to only use specialists that are certified by the Board of Examiners in such cases where their use is required.

This Office will verify the accreditation of health services providers that receive payments for specialized medical services. The verification will be done as part of the periodical examinations provided for in Sections 2.140(1) and 19.180(1) of the Puerto Rico Insurance Code.

Health services organizations and disability insurers will be responsible for maintaining the corresponding evidence in their files, of advising their health care providers of the notice, and ensuring strict compliance

We hereby require strict compliance with this guidance.

Very truly yours,

SIGNED

Juan Antonio García
Commissioner of Insurance

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