



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 27, 2007

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WELLCARE ASSURES MEDICAID MEMBERS OF ACCESS TO QUALITY DENTISTS

Kool Smiles Removed from Network -- DCH Reviewing Allegations of Over-utilization of Services, 'Unusual Patterns of Patient Restraint'

ATLANTA, GA – WellCare of Georgia, Inc. announced today that it has confirmed hundreds of dentists in its network available to treat new patients. In fact, the WellCare dental network has the capacity to treat two-to-three times the number of patients who were seeing Kool Smiles dentists before WellCare terminated its contract with Kool Smiles.

More than 90 dental practices within a five-mile radius of Kool Smiles offices have committed to welcoming new WellCare members as patients. In the Atlanta metro area, for instance, there are 15 offices eager to accept up to 46,000 new patients.

“We have assured the state Department of Community Health and all of our members that we have many times more dentists than needed near Kool Smiles offices who are ready, willing and able to treat our WellCare members,” said Michael Cotton, chief operating officer of WellCare of Georgia. “Our network is extensive, and well beyond the access guidelines mandated by the state.”

WellCare has performed an analysis of claims data, which shows some startling facts. Kool Smiles treats primarily children and performs 17% more procedures per patient than other dentists. When compared with other dentists, a child treated by Kool Smiles is:

- five times more likely to receive crowns;
- four times more likely to receive five or more crowns;
- 40% more likely to have their teeth pulled or extracted; and
- three times more likely to be physically restrained during dental procedures.

- MORE -

WellCare Dental / Add One

In addition, fourteen Kool Smiles patients under the age of ten have endured fourteen or more crowns placed in their mouth. While Kool Smiles was only about 5% of WellCare's dental network, Kool Smiles made up approximately 20% of general dentistry costs.

Georgia's Department of Community Health (DCH) last week released a statement (attached) that the Department will "...thoroughly investigate all the allegations received from parents/guardians of patients and other dentists concerning poor care delivery received from Kool Smiles."

The statement goes on to say that the DCH Inspector General began an audit of Kool Smiles back in March, and that it will also investigate concerns reported to them "... including but not limited to unusual patterns of patient restraint (such as use of restraining boards for children), over-utilization of stainless steel crowns in children compared to other dentists and normal averages, and lower use of preventive care (i.e. fewer sealants used to prevent cavities per patient treated) compared to other dentists."

"It is a shame that Kool Smiles has been unnecessarily scaring our members about their access to dental care," said Cotton. "In the face of their well-orchestrated campaign of scare tactics, we could no longer sit quietly while our members and others were fed misinformation."

A hotline has been established, in English and Spanish, and shared with all members who need assistance finding a new dental home.

About WellCare Health Plans, Inc.

WellCare Health Plans, Inc. provides managed care services exclusively for government-sponsored healthcare programs, focusing on Medicaid and Medicare. Headquartered in Tampa, Florida, WellCare offers a variety of Medicaid and Medicare plans, including health plans for families, children, the aged, blind and disabled and prescription drug plans, currently serving over 2.3 million members nationwide. For more information about WellCare, please visit the Company's Web site at www.wellcare.com.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 22, 2007

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DCH Statement Concerning Possible Class Action Lawsuit Regarding Medicaid Dental Services

No child in our Medicaid or PeachCare for Kids™ programs has lost dental benefits or been dropped from the program due to the contract disputes between Kool Smiles, P.C. and the care management organizations (CMO), Peach State Health Plan and WellCare of Georgia.

The Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) will thoroughly investigate all the allegations received from parents/guardians of patients and other dentists concerning poor care delivery received from Kool Smiles, P.C.

The Department will also investigate allegations and concerns reported to DCH including but not limited to:

- Patterns of “over-utilization of services” and questions raised about the appropriateness of care delivered
- “Unusual patterns of patient restraint”(such as use of restraining boards for children) and sedation vs. Traditional Pain Management (usage of Nitrous Oxide or IV sedation) compared to other dentists and normal averages
- “Over-utilization of stainless steel crowns” in children compared to other dentists and normal averages
- “Lower use of preventive care” (i.e.: fewer sealants used to prevent cavities per patient treated) compared to other dentists
- “Over-utilization of X-rays” compared to other dentists and normal averages

The adequacy of the dental networks for both Peach State Health Plan and WellCare of Georgia are closely monitored and assessed by DCH.

In March 2007, the DCH Inspector General began an audit of Kool Smiles, P.C., which precedes the current contract termination between the CMOs and the provider. Until the audit is complete, the Department will offer no comment on that investigation.

DCH offers no comment during pending litigation. If included in the lawsuit, the State of Georgia will be represented by the Attorney General’s Office. Inquiries should be directed to the AG’s office.

According to Georgia Families records:

- 24,000 or five percent of current WellCare of Georgia members have received services from Kool Smiles, P.C. since implementation of the Georgia Families program
- 20,500 or seven percent current Peach State Health Plan members have received services from Kool Smiles, P.C. since implementation of the Georgia Families program