

ASK FOR HELP WITH VA-MEDICARE PROBLEMS

By Woodrow Wilcox

On July 27, 2011, a veteran and his wife visited my office and asked for help with a Veterans Administration & Medicare problem. The client is a senior citizen from Merrillville, Indiana.

Four years ago, I wrote an article about VA-Medicare problems. That article was widely published and distributed. The problem then was more serious and widespread. I made waves with the VA. I kept phoning the next higher person in the chain of command until I finally got someone in Washington, D.C. to agree to take calls and letters from our veteran clients who were having problems.

Since then, I have heard of few problems in the VA-Medicare medical billing arena. But, the client who visited me told me that he had the same problem over a year ago and that it took him a year to get the problem corrected. So, he came to our office to get me to help with the new medical bill problem.

Fixing a problem among the Veterans Administration, the Medicare system, and an insurance company to make sure that the VA, Medicare, and the Medicare supplement insurance policy all pay the correct amount on a medical bill is an ordeal.

Then, I realized an easier and better way to deal with this problem. Ask a Congressman or Senator to help. Members of Congress and the U.S. Senate can get the cooperation of the VA and Medicare systems to correct a medical billing error faster than I or our client can. Also, it is important for U.S. Congressmen and U.S. Senators to know that there are medical billing problems for veterans in dealing with the VA and Medicare. If we, the people, don't tell the elected representatives that there are problems, they will never realize that there are problems because the bureaucrats in Washington won't admit it and tell them about problems.

The help that an insurance agent or agency can give such a veteran is to write an introductory letter to the elected official and his staff to specifically describe the problem that the veteran faces in the billing problem between the VA and Medicare. This will show respect for the time of the staff member who is assigned to help with the matter. That is what I did.

This is a more practical way to get the help that is needed to resolve a medical bill problem that involves two federal government agencies. I strongly suggest this action be taken in similar situations to give veterans the help that they need when they need it.

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