



April 8, 2015

Mat-Su Activity and Respite Center Owner Laura Sasseen Sentenced to 120 Days in Jail for Altering Medical Records

The Alaska Department of Law, Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) announced today the sentencing of 58 year old Laura Sasseen for altering medical records. Sasseen was the owner of the Mat-Su Activity and Respite Center (MARC) in Palmer, Alaska. Sasseen was charged for falsely altering medical records that were requested as part of an audit being conducted by the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS).

DHSS and Myers and Stauffer, a certified public accounting firm, notified Laura Sasseen on April 26, 2012 that the MARC had been selected for an audit to verify the claims paid by the Alaska Medicaid Program. Auditors from Myers and Stauffer noted that documents submitted by the MARC for review had been modified by changing timesheets and hours or units of service provided.

A full review of the agency's medical records revealed that the changes primarily consisted of an increase in the amount of services the agency claimed to provide. The alterations, if undetected by auditors, would have resulted in the MARC avoiding over \$287,000 in extrapolated overpayment findings against the agency by the Alaska Medicaid Program. Myers and Stauffer extrapolated the results of the 2009 and 2010 audits conducted and estimated that the MARC improperly billed Medicaid \$1,628,023.00 for services without proper documentation to support the claims. Medicaid regulations require the recoupment of all payments made by the program when the provider fails to properly document the provision of services provided.

Based upon the aforementioned evidence, Laura Sasseen was convicted of one count of Medical Assistance Fraud, a class A misdemeanor offense for altering a medical assistance record. Sasseen was sentenced to 360 days in jail with 240 days suspended, a suspended fine of \$5,000, a total of 160 hours of community work service and 10 years of informal probation during which time she will be barred from billing Medicaid. DHSS stopped all payments to the MARC for Medicaid services based upon the criminal allegation and the agency will be barred from providing any future services based upon this conviction. The plea agreement also requires that Sasseen pay restitution to the State of Alaska Medicaid program in the amount of \$1,628,023.00, which constitutes the amount of the extrapolated overpayment determined by the Myers and Stauffer audits.

The agreement also required Sasseen to give up her right to administratively challenge the audit findings. The case against the corporation is still pending.

The case was jointly investigated by the Alaska Department of Law, Alaska State Troopers, and the Department of Health and Social Services.

The Alaska MFCU is part of the Attorney General's Office. The MFCU is responsible for investigating and prosecuting Medicaid fraud and abuse, neglect or financial exploitations of patients in any facility that accepts Medicaid funds. The information filed in this case can be found on the MFCU website at <http://www.law.alaska.gov/department/criminal/mfcu.html>.

CONTACT: Assistant Attorney General Andrew Peterson at 907-269-6292 for more information about this case or other cases handled by the Alaska MFCU.