



Dear Hospital Representative:

Following a catastrophic injury individuals and their family are in desperate need for medical and financial assistance. During this critical period most individuals have difficulty understanding the complex and frustrating process of applying for disability benefits. To ensure that an individual's claim is processed in the most efficient and timely manner it is important that the most appropriate department within your Trauma Center or Brain & Spinal Cord Injury Program (BSCIP) designated facility understand the process and key individuals in their respective regions responsible for processing disability applications.

The Department of Health, Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program, (BSCIP), and the Division of Disability Determination (DDD) in conjunction with the Social Security Administration (SSA) have developed a coordinated "RED FLAG" system to identify and expedite claims for individuals who sustain traumatic brain or spinal cord injuries.

Social Security disability income and Medicaid can provide income and medical coverage to eligible disabled individuals. The utilization of Medicaid funds for acute care and rehabilitation will enable the Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund to last longer and serve more clients who sustain these catastrophic injuries.

The first step in the process of acquiring SSA and Medicaid is for the hospital's representative to telephone the local SSA office, requesting to refer a disabled individual. Please Note: a family member may accomplish this if the hospital representative is assured they will follow through in contacting the SSA. This will establish a presumptive application date for a claim of disability.

The hospital representative/family member should provide the SSA representative the patient's name, date of birth, social security number (if available), address, telephone number, type and level of injury, prognosis (if known), and if the person had earned any wages during the current month. The SSA office may arrange a telephone interview by appointment to help expedite the application process. Advise the SSA representative on the phone if a family member or friend will be coming to the SSA field office to complete the claim and request the name of the person that they should contact at Social Security.

This protective filing process by telephone will allow the person to receive benefits back to the date the contact was made. Medicaid coverage, if approved, will also start on that effective date. In some instances SSA will pay a hospitalized individual a small check until they are out of the hospital.

The second step in the process is that the hospital representative must complete the attached "RED FLAG" forms. All pertinent signatures, medical and or psychological documentation must be attached. The forms may be mailed to the local SSA office or a family member may take them and request an appointment to process the application. The patient or family member should be instructed to contact the designated "RED FLAG" contact person at the local SSA office (see attached list). In some cases, the social security office will send a field representative to the hospital to complete the claim. Please instruct the family member or friend to notify you upon completion of the application process.

Thank you for your assistance in utilizing Medicaid and BSCIP funds most effectively. Your effort in this regard will help the state programs in serving those who are truly in need of these vital and limited resources. For more information, please feel free to visit the Brain & Spinal Cord Injury Program's website at: <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/workforce/brainsc/> and clicking the "Facilities" link.

Sincerely

Mr. Thom DeLilla, Bureau Chief
Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program

Mr. James MacHargue, Director
Division of Disability Determination

Attachments:

SSA Liaison list

DDD Liaison list

Red Flag Processor list

Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Staff list by region

State Regional Map

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