

A note from our CEO and CFO,

Some have commented regarding our collection policy at the McKenzie County Healthcare Systems, Inc. Approximately one year ago we changed our collection processes in response to the overwhelming amount of bad debt we are incurring as a healthcare system. This message will address some of the rationale for this change.

This last fiscal year our bad debt expense was \$1,403,803. While this is an improvement over the prior fiscal year, this level of providing care which was not paid for places the ability of the healthcare system to continue to operate in jeopardy over the long term.

The following outlines the process that currently takes place.

If a person presents to the emergency room without insurance, they will be assessed and stabilized regardless of ability to pay. Note, that assessment and stabilization does not necessarily include writing a prescription. For those without verifiable insurance coverage, once assessed and stabilized we will request a **deposit** before proceeding to write a script, etc. or order other non-emergent testing.

At the clinic or for other non-emergent services if a person presents for care and does not have insurance, we will request a **deposit** which for the clinic is in the amount of \$250.00. This deposit does not cover any additional lab work or radiology services which would result in an additional cost. If the level of care and thus the costs exceeds the deposit amount the person will be billed for the balance. If the charges are less than the \$250.00 deposit the balance will be refunded once the coding and billing is completed.

If a person does not have the financial ability to pay they can complete a charity care application which could result in all or part of the cost of services at the healthcare system being written off. If you believe you would qualify for charity care you are encouraged to contact our Patient Accounts department and speak with Janey at (701-842-7173). You may likewise contact Janey with any other questions you have regarding billing.

There have also been some comments about individuals not receiving a bill from the healthcare system. Every day significant amounts of mail are returned as undeliverable. We encourage you to call the healthcare system Patient Accounts department at the numbers listed above, if you move so that your mailing address can be kept up to date.

Finally we encourage you to contact our billing department when you receive your first statement to work out payment arrangements. If you wait until your account is sent to collections, we have limited options to work with you on a payment arrangement.

A healthcare system is no different than any other business in this community. The services provided must be paid for. Our hope is that this information will assist you in understanding our policy and the rationale for such.