

Insurance nightmare

Terry Bradner Fairbanks | Posted: Wednesday, March 5, 2014 12:13 am

To the editor: I wonder how many state employee retirees have had as many problems as my family has in dealing with AETNA since their Jan. 1 takeover of the state's medical and dental insurance plan from AlaskaCare.

It has been a nightmare. Apparently their policy is to deny most payments and pressure caregivers, pharmacies and policy-holders to deal with those non-payments. Every doctor, pharmacist, caregiver and fellow retiree I've talked to has had trouble dealing with AETNA, so I believe the problem is pretty widespread.

In our particular case, my wife has had ongoing medical programs for more than a year and made incredible progress. Suddenly, after the first of the year when AETNA took over, we were told that all payments for medicine and treatments will be denied because of non-approval by the FDA. This is not true and has been documented. It's the reason AlaskaCare covered it last year.

The state even acknowledged in its newsletter that there is a major problem with AETNA. They are asking for member input online at doa.drb.alaskacare.retiree.plan@alaska.gov or by calling 1-800-821-2251.

I urge all state retirees to make their complaints known now. The state is obligated to its retirees. Many, like my wife, worked for years for the state with assurances that they would be provided for in their retirement years, with dignity. So far, I'm not seeing that with AETNA.