June 28, 2016

Robert A. Marino and Dr. Minalkumar Patel

Horizon BCBS NJ Headquarters

3 Penn Plaza East

Newark, NJ 07105

Dear President Marino and Dr. Patel,

I’m reaching out to you on behalf of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM), a membership association representing over 10,000 sleep medicine physicians and centers. The AASM was recently contacted by a member who is a Horizon BCBS provider. It is our understanding that Horizon has contracted with NovaSom as the sole provider of home sleep apnea testing (HSAT) also referred to as home sleep testing (HST) or out of center sleep testing (OCST). Our member outlined two concerns regarding NovaSom.

1. There is concern that NovaSom may be advertising itself to Horizon and others as approved or accredited by the AASM. NovaSom previously held an approval from the AASM under the Approved OCST Supplier (AOCSTS) program described in more detail in the paragraph below. This program sunset in early 2015 and currently NovaSom holds no accreditation or approval from the AASM. The AASM is in no way able to speak to the quality of testing or interpretation conducted by NovaSom.

As background, the AASM’s AOCSTS program was an approval program offered to companies that performed the technical portions of HSAT for accredited sleep facilities that did not/could not perform those tasks themselves.  Approved suppliers were required to meet all accreditation standards applicable to the provision of HSAT, as well as additional requirements, including stipulations regarding the transfer of test data from the supplier to the accredited facility.  This was an approval program that served only to provide accredited centers with companies that were credentialed as having met applicable standards in providing the technical portion of HSAT; however, Approved Suppliers are not and were never accredited or endorsed by the AASM in any way.  This program was offered to suppliers from February 2013 through July 2014; the program was officially sunset January 1, 2015 with the approval of all AOCSTSs expiring on that date.

1. Our member has also expressed concern that NovaSom, as sole provider of HSAT for Horizon, does not allow the treating physician access to the raw testing data. Instead, the treating physician is provided with an interpretation. We respectfully encourage Horizon to request that NovaSom change this policy. The AASM asserts that the treating physician should have the opportunity to review raw data related to his/her patient’s diagnosis so that the physician has a complete picture of the patient’s disease and can appropriately determine treatment for that patient.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our concerns. If you have any questions about either of these issues, please me at 630-737-9700 or svanhout@aasmnet.org.

Sincerely,

Steve Van Hout

Assistant Executive Director, AASM