



HEALTH WATCH

c/o New York State AFL-CIO

100 South Swan Street, Albany, New York 12210

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January 6th, 2023

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Mr. David North
Chief Executive Officer
Sedgwick
8125 Sedgwick Way
Memphis, TN 38125

Dear Mr. North,

I am writing on behalf of 9/11 Health Watch to convey our concerns about the continuing poor performance of Managed Care Advisors Sedgwick (Sedgwick) in providing contracted services to members of the World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP).

It has been over five months since Sedgwick became the Nationwide Provider Network (NPN) administrator for the WTCHP under contract with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). During that time, it is our view that Sedgwick has repeatedly and continuously failed to meet its contractual requirements with the CDC.

9/11 Health Watch has documented over 100 members who have had problems with Sedgwick and reported them to the WTCHP, including the following issues.

1. Sedgwick not answering the phone or returning calls, not just to the call center but to point of contacts and case managers as well.
2. Sedgwick staff providing inaccurate program information.
3. Sedgwick's failure to notify members when their providers are outside the network.
4. Sedgwick's failure to sufficiently recruit out of network providers, including active cancer care providers that were in the LHI network who are not in the new network.

5. Providers who have been providing care previously under the previous NPN but refuse to work with Sedgwick given their experiences with Sedgwick.
6. Sedgwick providers billing the member for covered services.
7. Sedgwick staff not approving appointments for services.
8. Sedgwick listing providers as in-network who are in fact not in your NPN.
9. Sedgwick's lack of in-network mental health providers.
10. Sedgwick's failure to provide single-case agreements for those who are now out-of-network providers currently treating members under active cancer or mental health treatment until those providers could be recruited into the network.
11. WTCHP members now on their third or fourth case manager who do not appear to have sufficient training due to the tremendous staff turnover that Sedgwick is experiencing.

Enough people have been affected by these myriad problems that there have been press reports from around the country describing Sedgwick's failure to provide services, including:

- ["9/11 health program users plagued with problems using new medical providers"](#) by Michael McAuliff, New York Daily News, November 7, 2022.
- ["Jacksonville 9/11 first responder battling cancer dropped from WTC health program after insurance provider switch, Brown receives infusions every three months"](#) News 4, Jacksonville, Florida, August 31, 2022.
- ["Macon man who worked during 9/11 struggles to get therapist"](#) WMAZ, Macon, GA., December 14th, 2022

When Managed Care Advisors/Sedgwick President Lisa Firestone was asked about these problems, she responded by saying

"Since we have taken over management of the Nationwide Provider Network, our team is focused on providing an optimal member experience..."

But the problems outlined above do not, by any stretch of the imagination, meet the definition of "optimal member experience."

Sedgwick's continuing contractual nonperformance means that WTC Health Program members are still not getting proper access to the program and its benefits.

And while call center staff now appear to at least be answering the phones, albeit at an inadequate rate, at this time Sedgwick cannot provide any data as to whether in fact members' issues are being satisfactorily resolved once they connect.

During the preparation for the transition, Sedgwick reported in March 2022 that the new National Provider Network to be supplied by Sedgwick would cover 88% of members (which would result in 2,147 members of the program with at least one or more providers out of network. Five months later, we are finding that over 2,000 additional program members—over 4,000 total—have a provider who is not in the new network—double the number of providers that Sedgwick reported in its gap analysis, and only 80% of the providers in the previous network provided by Logistics Health Incorporated (LHI), the prior NPN contractor. (In some cases, the out-of-network providers have been serving clients without realizing they were now out of the NPN under Sedgwick.)

As you can imagine, this has caused enormous disruption and distress, especially given that many of the World Trade Center Program Members had no warning of the loss of their provider.

Moreover, we recently learned that Sedgwick has submitted only 22 claims from providers for payment as of October, and only 289 in November. Given Sedgwick's national reputation among providers for non-payment (or other payment problems) under other programs they contract to serve, that payment rate is a worrisome signal as Sedgwick is purportedly trying to close the gap in providers and recruit them to its provider network.

Again, it should be obvious that a network which fails to provide timely payments is not going to find or retain providers willing to participate in the WTC Health Program and provide services.

We'd like to believe that WTCHP members will be spared the horrendous experiences of Amazon employees who get their medical services from Sedgwick. ("[Amazon employees are left to suffer after workplace injuries](#)," The Guardian, April 2, 2019.)

But that does not appear to be the case.

We assume Sedgwick was the low bidder for this contract and you thought you would take your worker compensation business model of spending as little as possible and providing as little assistance as possible on this contract.

Using this model, Sedgwick's poor performance will continue to impact the care of 9/11 responders and survivors.

Using that model, it appears that instead of "never forgetting" 9/11 and the injured 9/11 responders and survivors whose health is still impacted by it every day, it appears that Sedgwick forgets 911 everyday—by delivering abysmal service to this community.

Mr. North, what is Sedgwick going to do about this?

We suggest you staff up by providing:

1. Adequate numbers of case managers, trained and paid enough to retain for more than a month.
2. The same number of points of contact for members as the previous national provider.
3. Adequate staff to quickly recruit enough providers to close the larger than expected gap in providers in your network.

We look forward to hearing what steps Sedgwick will be taking to improve their service to the 911 Community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Chevat", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Benjamin Chevat
Executive Director