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March 6, 2007

Governor Deval Patrick
Office of the Governor
Room 360
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Patrick:

I am writing to introduce you to the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) and request your assistance in encouraging Tufts Associated Health Plan to end their newly adopted policies limiting access to obesity surgery.

The OAC is a national non-profit patient organization dedicated to educating and advocating for those affected by obesity. It is our mission to elevate and empower those affected by obesity through education, advocacy and support. By strictly representing the interests and concerns of obese patients, the OAC is a unique organization.

As you may have read in multiple articles in the Boston Globe, in March 2007, Tufts Associated Health Plan adopted new policies on obesity surgery. The OAC believes these policies will ultimately harm those affected by obesity in Massachusetts. Specifically, we are concerned about:

1. The variation from the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) 1991 Consensus Conference on Obesity and the 2004 Betsy Lehman Center for Patient Safety guidelines.
2. The Health Plan prescribing surgery types based on body mass index (BMI) that does not follow today's clinical literature.
3. The elimination of patient and physician choice in determining surgery type.
4. Demanding patients participate in 12 consecutive months of unproven medically supervised weight management services, through the "ICanChange" program.

The OAC respectfully requests your assistance and advice in convincing Tufts Associated Health Plan to rescind their new guidelines. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has already condemned the policy revisions and we urge you to do the same. Your support in this matter would be greatly appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any additional information, more details or Tufts leadership contact information. I can be reached via phone at (813) 872-7835 or via e-mail at jnadglowski@obesityaction.org. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Nadglowski Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Joseph Nadglowski Jr.
President & CEO