



State of New Jersey

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TRENTON – A Manahawkin, New Jersey pediatrician has entered into a settlement in which he has agreed to pay \$156,220 and to revise certain office practices, thus ending his temporary suspension from the Medicaid program.

Dr. Michael Bleiman, of Southern Ocean Pediatrics and Family Medicine, was the subject of investigations by the New Jersey Department of Health (“DOH”), the Board of Medical Examiners and by the Medicaid Fraud Division (“MFD”) of the Office of the State Comptroller. MFD, based on DOH’s investigative work, determined that Dr. Bleiman’s practice had improperly stored vaccines that were administered to children as part of the Vaccines for Children (“VFC”) program. As a result, in January 2017, MFD temporarily suspended Dr. Bleiman and his practice from all Medicaid and NJ FamilyCare programs. MFD issued the temporary suspensions based on concerns that the vaccines administered to Medicaid beneficiaries may have been compromised.

The VFC program is a federally funded program that provides vaccines at no cost to children who might not otherwise be vaccinated because of their family’s inability to pay. Many of the children vaccinated through the VFC program are Medicaid beneficiaries.

“The quality of care issues in this matter raised serious concerns about the welfare of Medicaid program participants,” State Comptroller Philip James Degnan said. “This settlement holds Dr. Bleiman accountable for his actions while ensuring compliance going forward.”

Comptroller Degnan noted that \$110,000 of the settlement amount is a civil penalty levied by MFD, while the balance represents Dr. Bleiman’s reimbursement to the Medicaid program of overpayments that were made to Dr. Bleiman and his practice.

MFD serves as the state’s independent watchdog for New Jersey’s various Medicaid programs and works to ensure that the state’s Medicaid dollars are being spent effectively and efficiently. As part of its oversight role, MFD audits and investigates health care providers, managed care organizations and Medicaid recipients to identify and recover

improperly expended Medicaid funds and identify and redress quality of care issues affecting the health of Medicaid recipients.

Suspected Medicaid waste, fraud or abuse can be reported to the MFD by calling its toll-free hotline at (888)937-2835 or by submitting a complaint form located at the following address: <http://www.state.nj.us/comptroller/divisions/medicaid/complaint.html>.

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A copy of the settlement can be viewed by clicking [here](#).