

September 4, 2015

Mr. Jon Opelt  
Executive Director  
Texas Alliance For Patient Access  
2301 South Capital of Texas Highway  
Suite J-101  
Austin, TX 78746

Dear Mr. Opelt:

I practice as an interventional cardiologist with Covenant Cardiology Associates in Lubbock. I have both a New Mexico and Texas license. During the past 36 years I have cared for thousands of New Mexico patients both in Lubbock and satellite facilities in New Mexico. Often that care is emergency cardiac care including acute interventions in patients with heart attacks.

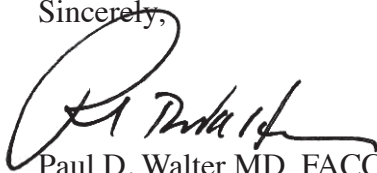
Patients from Eastern New Mexico are reliant on West Texas for a full range of medical care. My practice still contains hundreds, if not thousands, of patients from New Mexico.

I also serve as Chief Medical Officer for Covenant Medical Group, a multi-specialty practice comprised of approximately 180 physicians. Roughly 40% of our patients originate from New Mexico. We serve the full gamut of New Mexico patients ranging from neonates to end-of-life care.

We have always worked with the understanding that care rendered by Texas physicians in Texas is subject to Texas tort law. Apparently, that premise has come into question in a case now before the New Mexico Supreme Court.

Physicians are risk averse. If the Montano ruling stands, I suspect a good many of my colleagues will reconsider providing elective care to New Mexico patients in order to avoid the increased liability risk. This is poor public policy and would be harmful to New Mexico residents denied care by Texas physicians.

Sincerely,

  
Paul D. Walter MD, FACC, MHA  
VP Cardiovascular Services,  
Covenant Health  
CMO, Covenant Medical Group