

Patient Termination

A risk management consideration is the termination of the relationship with your patient.

Your written notice to the patient avoids the potential of being held legally liable for abandonment i.e., *reasonable notice to the patient to arrange for proper care, thus avoiding harm to the patient.*

It is recommended that your letter include:

- A confirmed date; usually 30 days from the date of the letter after which you will no longer care for the patient.
- Advice to the patient that you will continue to see them during that period of time for emergencies.
- A statement indicating the importance of the patient continuing medical care with another provider.
- The referral of names and phone numbers for alternative service including the source of emergency medical care.
- An offer to forward a copy of the patient's records upon signed request.
- While discretionary on your part, it is not necessary to state the reason for the termination.
- Certified mail with return receipt requested.

Source: ProAssurance/ Risk Management/ 2005

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