

# Humana issues statement on Moore's 'Sicko'



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In anticipation of the Friday opening of Michael Moore's newest documentary-style movie, which targets the health care industry, health benefits giant Humana Inc. released a statement to media members regarding the company's depiction in the movie.

According to a statement from Dick Brown, director of media and public relations for Humana, the Moore film, "Sicko," contains some information about the company that should be clarified.

While Brown directed general questions about the documentary to the Washington, D.C.-based industry trade group America's Health Insurance Plans, he defended Humana's efforts to provide care to its members.

"While this film does not accurately depict the health benefits industry, we have long championed the need for fundamental, consumer-focused transformation of health care," he said in the statement. "To this end, Humana has for seven years been a strong advocate for consumer empowerment as the key to improving health outcomes while controlling costs. ... "We believe it is unacceptable that millions of Americans lack access to quality, affordable health care coverage" and "urge the country to embrace coverage for everyone by shoring up the safety net, providing a helping hand for working families and encouraging the purchase of health care coverage."

He added in the statement that two allegations in film regarding Dr. Linda Peeno are false because "she implies she was promoted for saving money by denying care. As a part-time contractor, she was never a Humana associate, and therefore never received any sort of promotion or other career advancement from Humana."

Peeno, who also has testified before Congress about managed-care companies, also says in the film that she contributed to the death of a Humana customer in a Las Vegas hospital 20 years ago by denying him care.

"The facts: During a 1987 telephone conversation, she was asked by a hospital doctor whether the member's plan covered heart transplants," Brown said in his statement. "Since the member's employer had not purchased heart transplant coverage, she correctly answered 'no.' The member was discharged from the hospital and lived at least another two years. He was no longer covered by Humana after March of 1988."

"Sicko," which will be released nationwide on Friday, will be shown in Louisville at Baxter Avenue Theatres at Mid City Mall and Cinema de Lux 20: Stonybrook on South Hurstbourne Parkway.