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**PHYSICIANS & PATIENT ADVOCATES SOUND ALARM  
OVER DANGEROUS BCBST POLICY**  
*CSRO Will Continue Efforts to Protect Patients, Workforce, and Economy*

[Schaumburg, IL] [July 1, 2020] – Despite the scheduled implementation of a harmful policy by BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee (BCBST) today, the [Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations](#) (CSRO) and other physician and patient advocacy groups remain committed to fighting and forcing a reconsideration of the insurers grave decision.

The BCBST policy obligates patients to utilize BCBST preferred specialty pharmacies for infusion therapies making treatments in physician offices, under their care, nearly unobtainable.

“Today, BCBST is disrupting the current model of care and putting patients at risk,” stated Dr. Madeline Feldman, CSRO’s President. “Patients may have to delay treatments, go elsewhere (like hospitals) experiencing longer waits, and less oversight or even lose access to their treatment altogether. Forcing patients to assume these added burdens, during the COVID-19 pandemic, is shameful.”

The [CSRO alerted BCBST](#) directly, [appealed to the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce](#), and continues to [alert BCBST customers](#) of the pending dangers associated with the changes that are set in motion today. It is also [encouraging patients to share their stories](#) too.

“We will continue pursuing this cause,” Dr. Feldman continued. “Physicians and medical personnel on the front lines of medical care are obligated to fight for our patients. We remain undeterred – we have no other choice.”

Before this policy, provider administered drugs were obtained via a “buy and bill” system where a provider purchases medication and bills the insurance company under a patient’s medical benefit. The new BCBST policy transfers medications covered on the medical side of insurance to the pharmacy side. While more economically lucrative for the payers/PBMs and specialty pharmacies, based on the hidden fees and price concessions - the patient is harmed, as are the businesses employing them.

“At a time when COVID-19 remains a looming danger, the last thing chronically ill patients need is to lose access to treatments at their doctor’s office. This policy could destabilize them at a time when they are most vulnerable, further harming public health, the health of their employers, and the Tennessee economy,” Dr. Feldman continued. “Negative impacts will be much worse (and expensive) than any savings promised by BCBST. As access to proper treatments is lost, it costs everyone more.”

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