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October 18, 2007

Dear Patients:

Excellus BlueCross BlueShield implemented a new radiology management program. The program requires approval from an outside company before Excellus BlueCross BlueShield agrees to pay for most x-rays and other radiology services such as CAT scans, MRIs and nuclear medicine studies. The process requires your doctor to fill out a complicated form, submit the form to a company called CareCore National and wait for someone at the CareCore office to grant approval before the x-ray can be scheduled. We are being told that non-urgent requests will be processed within 1-2 business days. For urgent tests, Excellus BlueCross BlueShield suggests that your doctor call CareCore National and ask for permission to order the test. Please note- x-rays ordered from the emergency department do not require prior approval.

Excellus BlueCross BlueShield indicated that this program is being implemented to help control health care costs. Your doctors also support the need to control costs but feel it should not be done in a way that could also delay much needed medical care.

Representatives from the Monroe County Medical Society met with Excellus BlueCross BlueShield and CareCore National to object to the use of this program and ask that the process be changed so that all x-rays can be ordered without creating delays and generating so much paperwork. The Medical Society also sent a letter stating our concerns to the New York State Department of Health and met with the Attorney General's office. Excellus BlueCross BlueShield chose to ignore the request and implemented the program on October 8, 2007.

Your doctor wants to provide medical care for you based on your individual needs. As a patient, you have a right to receive the right medical care, at the right time for the right price....but we need your help. If you are insured by Excellus BlueCross BlueShield, please contact your insurer at 585-325-3630 or write to 165 Court Street, Rochester, New York 14647 and voice your objection to the prior authorization for x-rays requirement. If you obtain your health insurance through an employer group, please also contact your human resource representative to state your concerns.

Thank you.

MONROE COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY  
on behalf of the Greater Rochester Area Physician Community