

## **News Release**

For Immediate Release

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## **Missouri Society of Anesthesiologists Condemns Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield's Anesthesia Payment Policy Affecting Patient Safety**

JEFFERSON CITY, MO – Missouri Society of Anesthesiologists (MSA) strongly opposes the decision by Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield to limit payment for anesthesia services based on an arbitrary time cap, impacting patients undergoing surgical procedures. The policy poses a significant threat to the safety of Missouri patient and undermines the critical role anesthesiologists play in surgical care.

Anthem's new policy stipulates that if a surgical procedure exceeds a predetermined time limit, the anesthesiologist's services will not be reimbursed. This decision disregards the complexities of individual patient care, where the duration of anesthesia is often dictated by the specifics of the surgery and the patient's unique medical needs. The policy affects Missouri, Connecticut and New York and is scheduled to take effect in February.

"Our anesthesiologists are committed to providing safe, effective and individualized care to every patient," said Dr. Todd Glenski, president of Missouri Society of Anesthesiologists. "This policy not only jeopardizes patient safety but also breaks the trust between healthcare providers and the insurance companies that patients rely on for comprehensive care."

American Society of Anesthesiologists emphasizes that anesthesiologists assess patients' health beforehand, manage care during surgery and navigate any complications that may arise to ensure patient comfort and safety throughout the process. Denying payment based on an arbitrary time limit undermines the essential services anesthesiologists provide and could lead to adverse outcomes for patients.

"The shortage of anesthesia care providers in Missouri has already delayed patient care in many areas. Creating an arbitrary reimbursement methodology instead of one that fairly compensates physicians for the clinical care they deliver will only exacerbate this issue," Dr. Glenski said. "This policy will have detrimental effects on the recruitment and retention of anesthesiologists, as it undervalues our critical services and may deter new professionals from entering the field while pushing current providers to seek opportunities elsewhere."

"We have strong reasons to believe that this policy will worsen the existing workforce challenges and compromise the quality of care available to patients," Dr. Glenski said.

MSA called on Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield to reverse its decision implement the new reimbursement structure immediately.

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Missouri Society of Anesthesiologists is dedicated to ensuring that anesthesiologists can continue to deliver the highest standard of care to patients. We work tirelessly to push back against this policy and protect the trust that patients place in their healthcare providers.

For more information about Missouri Society of Anesthesiologists and our advocacy efforts, please visit [www.msahq.com](http://www.msahq.com)