



**For Immediate Release:**  
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The following statement is attributable to Paul Larrabee on behalf of the New York State Conference of Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans:

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“The New York State Conference of BlueCross and BlueShield Plans (NYSCOP) shares the Department of Financial Services concerns about the impact that out-of-network doctors and their abusive billing patterns are having on health care costs.

The problem is most severe with a limited number of specialties, such as neurosurgery. For example, in the last year alone, billings stemming from neurosurgery in some areas of the state have increased by 49 percent. This is exactly the type of outrageous billing practices referenced by the Superintendent that will increase the cost of coverage and out of pocket costs for our customers.

The Blue Cross Blue Shield Plans base their out-of-network rates on independent benchmarks that are designed to ensure adequate reimbursement and affordability for our members. This is the proper balance that must be struck when reimbursing physicians.”

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*The New York State Conference of Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans (NYSCOP) is a partnership of Rochester-based Excellus Blue Cross Blue Shield and New York City-based Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield. Together, the two health insurance plans provide comprehensive health coverage for millions of New Yorkers and are dedicated to educating the public through in-depth research and analysis of the cost, access and quality of health care.*