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Sent: Saturday, April 24, 2010 11:10 AM

To: EBSA, E-OHPSCA - EBSA

Subject: Comment in support of RIN 1210-AB30

April 24, 2010

I am writing to support the interim final rule under the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 (RIN 1210-AB30).

I support the strong rule that would forbid insurance companies from charging higher copayments, deductibles, and other out-of-pocket expenses for mental health treatment than they would for other physical health care. Thank you for ensuring that mental health care and physical health care coverage are included in a single deductible.

This has been a practice instituted in the 1970's when managed care first appeared on the scene. Insurance companies soon learned that the mentally ill were a group that could not protect itself from their depredations because shame and stigma were part of their difficulties. They were the first groups of patient to have limited treatment and copays.

The rest of organized medicine stood on the sidelines bemused until they realized it wasn't just happening to mental patients and psychiatrists. In Europe it has been demonstrated that good mental health care reduces the costs of overall medical care.

Sincerely,

Ralph Wittenberg. MD