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Bybee, Cressinda

From: Bybee, Cressinda
Sent: Wednesday, January 07, 2015 2:58 PM
To: ronald.chronister@bipc.com
Subject: FW: Concern about the merger of Blue Cross NEPA and Highmark
Importance: High

The following public comment relating to the subject filing is being forwarded to you for appropriate response.

Cressinda E. Bybee | PIR | Senior Insurance Company Licensing Specialist
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From: Darleen [<mailto:wdkstomayko@comcast.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, January 07, 2015 2:30 PM
To: Bybee, Cressinda
Subject: Concern about the merger of Blue Cross NEPA and Highmark
Importance: High

Dear Ms. Bybee:

I have concerns about the merger of Blue Cross of NEPA and Highmark Inc. My health insurance is through Highmark and I am very concerned about articles contributed to local newspapers by Nina M. Taggart, MD, an Ophthalmologist who is the Vice President of Clinical Operations and Chief Medical Officer at Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

The articles Dr. Taggart has contributed have been to employers who provide prescription medical coverage to their employees. Dr. Taggart addresses the issue of the costs of specialty drugs as a detriment to employers providing prescription drug coverage.

I have two nephews with Cystic Fibrosis. I myself have multiple autoimmune diseases and the most effective treatment for me the past four years has been Remicade. The Affordable Care Act gave me great relief regarding losing medical coverage and life-time maximums.

I feel that Dr. Taggart is trying to help employers find ways to remove coverage that is life-saving. It is reasonable to think that if she remains in a position of management in a merger with Highmark, her opinions may become policy. A policy like that for someone like myself would be devastating and possibly deadly.

Please read this article yourself, the most current I found was on Sunday, December 21, 2014 in the Business Section at timesleader.com/business. Other articles are thetimes-tribune.com/.../bitter-pill-drugs-work-but-drive-overall-cost-1.1806338 and biz570.com/...alty-drugs-and-health-care-costs-what-employers-need-to-know-1.1803200 - 43k.

Sincerely,

Darleen Tomayko