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Craig Samitt, MD  
Executive Vice President and Chief Medical/ Clinical Officer  
Anthem, Inc.  
120 Monument Circle  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

**Delivered Electronically.**

Dear Dr. Samitt:

I am writing as a representative of the Kentuckiana Lactation Improvement Coalition (KLIC) from Louisville, Kentucky. Our coalition has members from all across the state and from two of the most densely populated cities, Louisville and Lexington. Our coalition is committed to the importance of breastfeeding initiation, duration and exclusivity. Recognizing that many mothers are not directly able to provide breastmilk to their babies because they need to return to work, school or are separated for medical reasons, I hope you will reconsider your proposed DME Fee Schedule cut for double electric breast pumps (HCPCS E0603) before it becomes effective on April 01, 2018.

It is our understanding that the proposed \$95 fee schedule would be the lowest in the country. At that rate, moms will not be able to access any pump of quality. This cut will result in many mothers of newborns in Kentucky to lose access to the high quality breast pumps they need to effectively remove milk and continue to breastfeed their babies and maintain their milk supply.

As members of the medical community, we are extremely concerned about the impact of reduced access to quality equipment that is necessary for successful breastfeeding. As you are surely aware, breastfeeding has a positive impact on both the mother and baby's long-term health which in turn lowers overall healthcare costs for their lifetime. Breast milk leads to decreased risks for infection, improved morbidities for premature babies and the long-term benefits of decreasing the incidence of obesity and hence the long-term morbidities associated with obesity.

In addition, we have found that premature infants given breast milk through their feeding tubes have sharply reduced rates of necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) resulting in fewer hospital readmissions and less costly medical bills in the longer term.

For all the reasons above and many others, it is our hope that you will reconsider your proposed DME fee schedule reduction for electric breast pumps. Everyone understands the need to control rising health care costs. It is our belief that access to quality breastfeeding equipment leads to fewer health problems and therefore lower healthcare costs. Our organization is working to reduce barriers to breastfeeding for families and we hope you will join us in working towards that goal as well.

Respectfully,

Kentuckiana Lactation Improvement Coalition members

CC:

Kennan Wethington, President, Anthem Health Plans of KY  
Divya Cantor, Regional VP and Senior Clinical Officer