

American Medical Association

Physicians dedicated to the health of America



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMA: SETTLEMENT WILL MAKE IT EASIER FOR PHYSICIANS TO WORK WITH AETNA

Statement attributable to:

Donald J. Palmisano, MD, JD
AMA President-elect

“Aetna’s decision to settle a class-action lawsuit with U.S. physicians offers a very significant step in resolving contentious business practices that have long frustrated physicians and jeopardized the delivery of quality patient care.

“By agreeing to the settlement, Aetna acknowledges that to mend the breach in its working relationship with physicians, it must implement a fundamental shift in how the company conducts business.

“By being more forthcoming about Aetna’s business practices and providing unfettered access to information, John W. Rowe, MD, chairman and CEO of Aetna, has succeeded in turning his understanding of physician concerns into real changes that will lead to a new level of cooperation.

“The AMA anticipates other health plans will recognize the progressive nature of today’s agreement if they are serious about restoring confidence in our health care system and repairing badly damaged relationships with physicians.

“We commend the leadership, courage and perseverance of the individual physicians and state and county medical associations involved in the agreement. Today’s announcement is proof positive that these individual physicians and their medical associations have not worked in vain.

“The AMA is pleased it could lend physicians technical assistance in this case on numerous issues that are part of this agreement. While much still divides the managed care industry and physicians, this agreement proves that there is much that we can accomplish together on behalf of America’s patients.”

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