



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 27, 2007

**AMA: REAL CHANGES AMONG BLUES SIGNAL
NEW LEVEL OF COOPERATION WITH PHYSICIANS**

Statement attributable to:

William G. Plested, M.D.
AMA President

"The American Medical Association (AMA) commends the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association and 23 of its affiliated companies for agreeing to fundamentally shift how their system conducts business with physicians.

"In a series of settlements announced today with physicians and medical associations, a majority of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield system agreed to resolve contentious business practices that have long frustrated physicians and jeopardized the delivery of quality patient care.

"The Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that settled today are the latest health insurers to acknowledge there is value in fostering cooperative relationships with physicians. To preserve this growing commitment to progressive cooperation, the AMA calls on all health insurers to voluntarily and permanently establish business practices that permit fair and open dialogue with physicians.

"Until the entire health insurance industry makes a lasting commitment to an open and honest relationship with physicians, the AMA will continue to support physician efforts to resolve unfair business practices used by health insurers."

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