

**Gary Feldman, MD**  
President

October 3, 2022

**Madelaine A. Feldman, MD, FACR**  
VP, Advocacy & Government Affairs

Dr. Steven Peskin

**Michael Saitta, MD, MBA**  
Treasurer

Medical Director

**Aaron Broadwell, MD**  
Secretary

Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey

*Submitted via email*

**Erin Arnold, MD**  
Director

Re: New 25 modifier policy

**Leyka M. Barbosa, MD, FACR**  
Director

Dr. Peskin,

**Kostas Botsoglou, MD**  
Director

The Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations (CSRO) is comprised of over 40 state and regional professional rheumatology societies whose mission is to advocate for excellence in the field of rheumatology, ensuring access to the highest quality of care for the management of rheumatologic and musculoskeletal disease. Our coalition serves the practicing rheumatologist.

**Michael S. Brooks, MD, FACP, FACR**  
Director

**Amish J. Dave, MD, MPH**  
Director

It has come to our attention that there is a new Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey policy (to be implemented November 1, 2022) concerning the use of the 25 modifier. This policy decreases by 50% reimbursement of the E/M service if certain procedures accompany that visit on the same day.

**Harry Gewanter, MD, FAAP, MACR**  
Director

“Beginning on **November 1, 2022**, we will consider non-preventive E&M services appended with Modifier 25 at **50 percent** of our appropriate Horizon allowance (or at the provider’s submitted charges if less) if one or more procedure codes that have a global surgical period of 0, 10 or 90 days are included on the same claim or on another claim for that same date of service.

**Adrienne R. Hollander, MD**  
Director

**These updated guidelines will not impact preventive care E&M services or non-preventive E&M services when provided in a hospital Emergency Room (ER) setting.”**

**Firas Kassab, MD, FACR**  
Director

<https://www.horizonblue.com/providers/news/news-legal-notice/policy-update-implementation-delay-e-m-codes-appended-modifier-25>

**Robert W. Levin, MD**  
Director

**Amar Majjhoo, MD**  
Director

**Gregory W. Niemer, MD**  
Director

**Joshua Stolow, MD**  
Director

HEADQUARTER OFFICE

**Ann Marie Moss**  
Executive Director

We ask that you reconsider this policy as it relates to the care of patients with rheumatic conditions, such as rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus, psoriatic arthritis and other rheumatologic diseases. These conditions are often associated with symptoms that require an acute procedure such as a joint aspiration and/or injection on the same day as their regular visit. These conditions are complex and have a number of the comorbidities that often accompany rheumatic diseases.

This new guideline by Horizon would force the patient to return on a different day to address the other issues associated with their condition or to have the procedure performed on another day and would be a significant hardship on our patients who are already suffering from their disabilities.

Please also note that due to the national shortage in rheumatologists as demonstrated in several rheumatology workforce studies, some patients - especially those living in rural areas - travel a long distance to get to their rheumatologist office. This policy would especially cause hardship on these patients if they were forced to visit the office on two different days leading to significant disruption to their care.

Because of the disabilities that afflict many of our patients, this policy is **discriminatory in nature** for those with disabling chronic illnesses. It should be noted that the Center for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS) pays both the E/M service and the procedure in full with the 25 modifier.

For clarification purposes, we assume that provider administered infusion services are not part of this policy as there is no global surgical period associated with them. Please clarify for us, if this is not the case.

We would be happy to discuss this and answer any questions. Please contact our Executive Director Ann Marie Moss at [amoss@csro.info](mailto:amoss@csro.info) or 414.231.8130 to coordinate a meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Madelaine Feldman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Madelaine Feldman, MD, FACR  
Vice President, Advocacy & Government Affairs

Cc: State of New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance; Medical Society of New Jersey