



30 January 2024

An open letter to Louisiana's patients regarding the acquisition of Blue Cross by Elevance Health

As a patient in Louisiana, you have a right to be very concerned about the current efforts of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana (BCBSLA) to convert itself from a not-for-profit entity to a profit Stock Insurance Company to be acquired by Elevance Health. Many physicians have reached out to us and requested that we provide them with information that can be shared with their patients.

We will begin with the same statement we will end with: **As a policy holder who is deemed a voting member on the proposed plan of reorganization of BCBSLA, the Louisiana State Medical Society (LSMS) has voted NO.**

If you have been deemed a voting member, you will have received a packet from BCBSLA. **We encourage you to also vote NO!**

We don't urge caution lightly. And in today's world, we don't operate in a vacuum. LSMS has been in contact with our counterparts in other states, and physicians have been communicating with their peers around the country – to include the other 14 states where this acquisition has occurred. Physicians are not telling good stories in those states. Most reports indicate that there is a sweet start to the union, but by year two everything starts to change, as your renewal will be at the purview of Elevance – not BCBSLA. In fact, the BCBSLA mailings allude to this with the following statements:

*"The plan of reorganization does not change your plan benefits or increase the cost of your insurance **for the current plan year.**"*

And

*"The plan of reorganization will not change the doctors and hospitals in our Blue Cross networks **for the current plan year.**"*

The cash offer of \$3,000 to every eligible policyholder is an inducement to many people to vote with BCBSLA on these efforts. As we generally hear from patients that they are "paying more to get less" when they renew their health insurance, you may quickly see that \$3,000 return to your new health insurer.

Sometimes "too big" really is "too big." It is detrimental to put your health at risk simply to achieve greater profits for a corporation. Thanks to current overreaching administrative burdens placed on policy holders by corporate entities, you and your physicians are already fighting to get medical care for which you have paid. When you start adding even more layers of administration between you and your benefits, the potential to increase the corporate practice of medicine is very concerning. Do you want your insurance company or your physician determining what's appropriate for you?

We end with the same statement we began with: **As a policy holder who is deemed a voting member on the proposed plan of reorganization of BCBSLA, the Louisiana State Medical Society (LSMS) has voted NO.**

Learn more at <https://lsms.org/page/BCBSElevanceAcquisition>.