

## WellNow Urgent Care Puts Excellus BlueCross BlueShield on Notice

*Urgent Care Company Plans to Go "Out of Network" with Insurance Company by January 1st Unless Rates Improve*

CHICAGO, Oct. 5, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- [WellNow Urgent Care](#), one of the country's fastest-growing urgent care providers, today announced that it plans to exit its business relationship with Excellus BlueCross BlueShield on January 1, 2024 if Excellus does not begin paying fair rates for its care. The action will effectively force WellNow Urgent Care locations to go "out-of-network" with Excellus, impacting hundreds of thousands of Excellus covered patients who visit WellNow Urgent Care centers each year.

WellNow has been negotiating with Excellus in good faith since before the COVID pandemic. Despite WellNow's best efforts, Excellus has failed to commit to reasonable rates for services. In fact, rates from Excellus for WellNow patients have decreased in the last decade despite the massive inflation over the last several years and the fact that Excellus has continued to raise rates for its insured members. These factors make it unsustainable for WellNow to continue to do business with Excellus unless rates improve.

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"Excellus has been given permission by the New York Department of Financial Services to raise its premiums almost every year. By our calculation, that's more than an 8 percent increase in premiums each year for their customers since 2017," said Sam Meites, President of WellNow Urgent Care. "Yet, they don't want to commit to reasonable rate increases that would help pay for the dedicated healthcare professionals who have worked proudly to meet New York's urgent care needs. That's Excellus placing pure profit over its members' care."

WellNow Urgent Care provides critical healthcare services through more than 70 urgent care clinics in the state of New York, including 41 centers across Central New York. Upstate New York has long struggled with poor access to healthcare. The region contains many areas without adequate access to healthcare services, creating what experts call "healthcare deserts." Since 2005, six hospitals serving rural communities in New York have closed. Today, nearly twenty additional New York hospitals in rural communities are at risk of closing soon. The negative implications of Excellus's refusal to pay fair rates for care in communities throughout Central New York cannot be overstated.

Urgent care centers have long bridged care gaps, offering high quality, affordable and convenient healthcare options throughout the region. In fact, nationally it is estimated that urgent care centers prevent around 24.5 million emergency room visits annually.

"Unfortunately, Excellus is failing to meet the challenge to help New Yorkers close the gap between their healthcare needs and the region's shrinking capacity," added Meites. "Reimbursement rates must reflect the cost and value of services rendered, the convenience provided, and the cost savings to Excellus from providing a welcome alternative to already overburdened hospital emergency rooms. Fair reimbursement rates are not just a matter of financial sustainability for these centers; it directly impacts patients' ability to access high-quality, cost-effective care in a timely manner throughout the state."

Patients with Excellus BlueCross BlueShield insurance can visit <https://www.wellnow.com/excellus/> for more information.

### About WellNow Urgent Care®

WellNow Urgent Care is one of the fastest-growing providers of urgent medical care, virtual care, occupational health services and clinical research in the United States. Opened in 2012, the independent healthcare practices WellNow supports operate more than 200 centers across New York, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. More information about WellNow Urgent Care's services, hours and locations can be found at [WellNow.com](https://www.wellnow.com).

### About TAG The Aspen Group™

TAG was built on the simple idea of bringing better health care to more people. TAG supports more than 1,100 independently owned practice locations in 45 states through its four healthcare brands: Aspen Dental®, ClearChoice Dental Implant Centers®, WellNow Urgent Care® and Chapter Aesthetic StudioSM. Combined, the brands serve more than 35,000 patients a day and more than 8 million patients each year. TAG is headquartered at 800 W. Fulton Market in Chicago. For more information, visit [teamtag.com](https://teamtag.com), and follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

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