

Letter 41

From: Zach Wotruba
To: [ETF SMB Board Feedback](#)
Date: Thursday, August 16, 2018 3:13:53 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Zach and I'm employed by University of Wisconsin Hospital. I'm writing to you today because of a decision that was made by this board [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I'm referring to your decision to remove coverage for bariatric surgery (and other weight loss programs) from state provided health plans.

When I began researching why Wisconsin did not cover bariatric surgery, while the overwhelming majority of other states did, I assumed it was because Wisconsin hadn't gotten around to it yet and the proposal was working its way through the necessary steps to be included. Imagine my shock and dismay when I realized that coverage actually was offered up until a year ago! How is it possible that Wisconsin, one of the most obese states in the country, does not cover bariatric surgery for state employees!?

I can't think of one good reason why the board would pull this coverage. The research in the last few years has been clear, as can be seen in this excerpt from a paper published in the World Journal of Gastroenterology:

"Surgery for the treatment of severe obesity is gaining increasing favor, an[d] surgical interventions are currently the most effective evidence-based approach towards clinically significant and sustainable weight loss along with reduction in mortality and obesity-related comorbidities." (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4716069/>)

How can something that has been classified as a disease by the AMA, and declared as an epidemic by the CDC and WHO not have treatment covered by the state of Wisconsin? I urge you to reconsider last year's decision and take the advice of the Wisconsin Medical Society and reinstate this coverage. It can only lead to good things for the citizens of Wisconsin.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Zach Wotruba