

Suit against health insurers dismissed

20 June 2006

A 7-year legal battle against U.S. health insurers filed by doctors has ended with the dismissal of all remaining claims by a U.S. District Court in Florida.

The class-action petition involving about 700,000 physicians had claimed the country's biggest health insurers had unfairly cut their reimbursements, reports The Wall Street Journal.

A summary judgment by U.S. District Judge Federico A. Moreno dismissed all remaining claims against UnitedHealth Group Inc., which was the last major holdout in the case, the Journal reported. Almost all of the other major insurers including Aetna Inc., Cigna Corp. and WellPoint Inc., had since settled the claims.

UnitedHealth had argued it never used the particular claims-reimbursement software system that was mostly the focus of the lawsuit.

"After reviewing thousands of documents, there is simply insufficient evidence of the wrongdoing claimed, i.e. agreeing with their competitors to defraud the doctors," the judge ruled. Lawyers representing the physician and medical groups may consider appealing the decision.

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APA citation: Suit against health insurers dismissed (2006, June 20) retrieved 20 October 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2006-06-health-dismissed.html>

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