



May 10, 2011

Benefits Collaborative
Medicaid Program Division
Department of Health Care Policy and Financing
1570 Grant Street
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Benefits Collaborative:

On behalf of the American Society of Transplantation (AST) and the American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS), we write to inform you of our interest in six proposed Medicaid coverage policies for organ transplantation in the State of Colorado. Our two societies represent the vast majority of surgeons, physicians, and other professionals involved in organ transplantation throughout the nation, and specifically work in close collaboration with members at Colorado's three transplant centers.

As we understand it, the Benefits Collaborative is designed to assess benefit coverage decisions for Colorado's Medicaid population using the best available clinical evidence. We thank the Collaborative for establishing a transparent process and actively seeking public input from all stakeholders. You face significant challenges. First, it is imperative that in the rapidly evolving field of transplantation, your evidence-base is current and reflects state-of-the-art practice. Second, your service to the most vulnerable of patients requires your standards, where controversy exists, not to be overly restrictive, effectively denying the lifesaving benefits of transplantation to those with no other options. We trust our members in Colorado will be intimately involved in helping you meet both these objectives.

As the Benefits Collaborative begins its work this week in the areas of heart, lung, and kidney transplantation, and later, in liver, small bowel, and pancreas transplantation, we offer our expertise and broad perspective. Our initial review of the policy briefs raises some concerns, especially regarding eligibility criteria. We hope that these will be addressed in discussions with Colorado transplant professionals in the Benefits Collaborative process. Again, we greatly appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this important process and invite you to use our societies as a resource going forward.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert S. Gaston, MD".

Robert S. Gaston, MD
AST President

AST National Office
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Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054
PH: 856-439-9986

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mitchell L. Henry, MD".

Mitchell L. Henry, MD
ASTS President

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