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Arthritis Community Applauds CMS Decision to Reverse Biosimilars Policy

November 3, 2017 – The Arthritis Foundation, American College of Rheumatology, National Psoriasis Foundation, and American Autoimmune and Related Diseases Association, representing the tens of millions of patients with autoimmune diseases and the providers who treat them, applauds the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for its reversal in policy for how it reimburses for biosimilars in Medicare Part B, which covers provider-administrated drugs. This announcement is a positive step to ensuring a robust marketplace for biosimilars.

For the arthritis community, it is critical now more than ever to implement sound reimbursement policy for biosimilars: there are now two biosimilars on the market for the same reference product to treat arthritis. Assigning each of these biosimilars their own Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) code will foster competition and help set the standard for other markets. Competition is critical to bringing down costs and making complex biological products more affordable, and will also foster innovation as manufacturers strive to create a robust marketplace of biosimilars, and ultimately interchangeable biological products.

Our organizations have been actively involved in working towards a reversal of CMS's original policy which grouped all biosimilars for the same reference product in the same HCPCS code, and are thrilled to see these efforts become a victory for our community.