



media@healthcareequalitynetwork.com
www.healthcareequalitynetwork.com
Twitter: [@health_equality](https://twitter.com/health_equality)
Facebook: [@HealthEqualityNet](https://www.facebook.com/HealthEqualityNet)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Friday, May 19, 2023**

America's Largest Insurer Puts Cancer Screenings Behind Complicated Approval Process

Today, as we reflect on the celebrations held over the weekend honoring Juneteenth, the Healthcare Equality Network (HEN), and allied organizations to include former Congressman Ed Towns, Dr. Ben Chavis, Jr., Black Women's Health Imperative (BWHI), The Frederick Douglass Foundation, the Southern Christian Leadership Global Policy Initiative, sent a [letter](#) to the Congressional Black Caucus urging them to review the latest policy decision taken by health insurance giant, UnitedHealthcare that we believe further expands the health disparity gap.

Recently, UnitedHealthcare announced a new barrier to care by placing colonoscopies behind prior authorization. This policy is not only unreasonable but will put millions of American patients at higher risk for complications and disease, including cancer.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), colorectal cancer is the fourth leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States. Just this year, the [American Cancer Society](#) projects 52,550 deaths from colorectal cancer alone.

Black Americans are [20 percent more likely to be diagnosed](#) with colorectal cancer and are [40 percent more likely to die](#) from colorectal cancer than any other group. This new policy will directly affect the health of our Black American communities.

It has been reported that UnitedHealthcare's new policy will create catastrophic financial consequences for many patients, endless burdensome paperwork, and numerous scheduled additional doctors' appointments, which will lead to fewer patients receiving lifesaving screenings and will result in increased fatalities.

That is why HEN is taking a stand against policies that create more barriers for vulnerable and underserved communities.

For more information on the Healthcare Equality Network, please visit:
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