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**Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama Partners With axialHealthcare to Mitigate  
Opioid Misuse and Improve Pain Care for Members**

**Birmingham, AL.** (October 23, 2017) – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama is proud to announce they are partnering with axialHealthcare, a national leader in pain management and pain medication solutions. Together they will collaborate with Alabama physicians to help curb the continuing epidemic of opioid misuse.

In 2015, Alabama ranked first in the nation in number of opioid scripts per capita. The recent [Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association's Health of America](#) Report on the opioid epidemic showed over 26 percent of its commercial members in Alabama filled at least one opioid prescription in 2015, and 16 per 1,000 members were diagnosed with opioid use disorder in 2016. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that between 2000 and 2015 more than half a million people across the U.S. died from drug overdoses, and 91 Americans die each day from an opioid overdose.

"The health and safety of our members is our top priority, and opioid misuse has been pervasive in the state of Alabama," said Dr. Anne Schmidt, Medical Director for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama. "By working in conjunction with our physicians and axialHealthcare, Blue Cross intends to reduce opioid misuse by giving our physicians resources and tools that encourage appropriate prescribing protocols."

This new pain management quality improvement program aims to support Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama providers by giving a more comprehensive view of a patient's medical history, providing ongoing consultation with axial's team of licensed pharmacists, increasing awareness of prescribing behaviors and the latest evidence-based guidelines, and sharing resources and educational tools to support appropriate prescribing protocols.

"We are pleased to partner with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama and begin offering our unique pain care capabilities to support physicians and patients while reducing opioid misuse. Blue Cross and axialHealthcare are committed to providing safe and effective pain care for patients throughout Alabama," said axial Chairman and CEO John J. Donahue.

**About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama has insured Alabamians for 81 years. Blue Cross offers coverage plans to corporations, individuals and the senior market. For more information about Blue Cross, visit [AlabamaBlue.com](http://AlabamaBlue.com). Connect with us on [Facebook](#), check out our videos on [YouTube](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) for more up-to-date information.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

**About axialHealthcare**

axialHealthcare is the leading pain medication and pain care solutions company and partners with health insurers nationwide. axialHealthcare's pain management solutions engage physicians, pain clinics, and patients with coordinated care by applying advanced analytical insight, unmatched proven clinical evidence and highly effective consumer support.

axialHealthcare's solutions optimize pain care outcomes, reduce opioid misuse and materially improve financial performance for health benefit providers. For more information, visit [www.axialhealthcare.com](http://www.axialhealthcare.com).