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Orthopedic doctors to end Blue Cross contract

About 16 Treasure Valley orthopedic doctors are adding their voices to a public skirmish with Blue Cross of Idaho over how much money they get paid for treating patients.

“We have plenty of Blue Cross patients, and this is going to be a huge pain for us,” said Vivian Ransom, administrator for the Idaho Sports Medicine Institute, a seven-doctor practice whose patients include Boise State University athletes. “We don’t like it,” said Ransom.

About 23 doctors have given Blue Cross 90 days’ notice that they no longer will be in-network providers for the insurer. Without a contract, Blue Cross patients could end up paying more out of their own pockets for care. The 90 days will be up in August.

At issue with the Valley’s orthopedic doctors is the amount Blue Cross, the state’s biggest insurer, pays in-network physicians for a variety of procedures, including arthroscopies to repair knees, shoulders and other joint problems.

In addition to the sports medicine institute, the practices publicly declining to sign contracts with Blue Cross are Orthopaedic Associates, with seven physicians located in Boise; and Boise Orthopedic Clinic, which has 10 physicians and has offices in Boise and Meridian, according to its Web site.

Calls to Boise Orthopedic Clinic were not immediately returned Tuesday.