

My husband and I's infertility journey started 3 years ago. Of course, when we first started trying to have a baby, we didn't realize we would face such chaos. We continued with our lives, not knowing the coming battle. My husband served his four years in the military and is now working as a police officer in West Fargo. I work as a high school educator for a private school after spending years working as an EMT. For the past three years we have had no successful pregnancies, not even a miscarriage. We have been through two complete IVF cycles, both failed. And this is what brings us here today. Health insurance doesn't cover infertility treatments. Some like Blue Cross Blue Shield, allot a small sum known as artificial reproductive technology (ART) to use towards infertility treatment. We were allotted \$20,000 for a lifetime. Not including medication, this barely got us through two IVF cycles. Before this we had to go through two years' worth of other infertility treatments that were less invasive first, obviously those didn't work.

When I called Blue Cross Blue Shield to ask about how I could get coverage for a disease known as infertility that I was diagnosed with, they told me getting pregnant was a choice and that's not medically necessary even though it was a disease. Blue Cross Blue Shield does cover transition surgeries for those diagnosed with gender dysphoria. My husband and I are now trying to determine how we want to go forward; do we adopt or give up on trying to have children? We explored the avenue of adoption, discovering that it is also extremely expensive whether you're adopting through the foster care system, (whose goal is to reunite the children with their biological family), or adopting an infant. To adopt an infant here in North Dakota, we are on a waiting list to get on a waiting list in order to be considered to adopt. At this point the only other option my husband and I have is to pray that God has a plan and continue to pursue infertility treatment. Since we cannot pay for it ourselves, (Cop and teacher salaries) we are asking that you consider helping us and millions of other couples faced with this disease.

I would like to point out that I am not the only person to be facing this disease. In fact, there are many men and women that battle infertility including my own husband. Being told that there is something medically wrong with you and you cannot

have children without medical intervention is extremely difficult especially when your health insurance says that they won't cover it. You have the power to change the lives of 1 in 8 people in North Dakota. Infertility impacts 1/3 of men, women, and both. The mental health impact and the damage it can do to a marriage is serious and disconcerting. Please help make an impact on North Dakotan's lives, like other states have done. As a resource, I highly recommend you use RESOLVE, the national infertility association.

Sincerely,

Rachel Booth