



PROVIDENCE HOSPITALS

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PROVIDENCE HOSPITALS WORKS WITH THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION AND OTHER SOUTH CAROLINA HOSPITALS TO PROMOTE PRICE TRANSPARENCY

COLUMBIA, SC – All hospitals inform their patients of relevant healthcare concerns along with possible remedies. What is rarely provided to patients is the expected cost of these treatments.

Providence Hospitals is pleased to announce our participation in SC PricePoint, a web-based guide to understanding hospital pricing in our state. Created by the South Carolina Hospital Association, the website includes information on different types of services provided by individual hospitals, the number of patients receiving those services, and the average charges by each hospital for the services. The goal of the website is to give consumers information to help them make better informed decisions about their own care.

Of course, quality of care is a critical factor in any decision regarding treatment. The quality of care provided at Providence Hospitals has been nationally recognized time and time again, and we're proud to deliver our top-notch service. While PricePoint doesn't specifically address quality, it does provide several links where consumers can read about our strong track records for successful outcomes.

PricePoint seeks to present how much a hospital must charge in order to be able provide a given service, but what hospitals charge and what patients and insurers pay are two different things. These hospital charges are similar to the "manufacturer's suggested retail price" of a store item. As with retail shopping, what the consumer pays is usually different.

SC PricePoint data is based on posted hospital charges. It's impossible for hospitals to post all of the prices individuals will pay because there are thousands of different insurance and payment plans. **The actual cost to the patient is determined by his or her insurance coverage, which is not reflected in PricePoint.** So it is important for privately insured consumers to talk with their insurance company before seeking care. Not only can the insurer tell them which hospitals and doctors are in their network, but they can also provide a better estimate of how much a patient will be responsible for out-of-pocket after treatment. The PricePoint site offers questions these consumers can ask their insurance company before deciding on a treatment or provider.

For uninsured and self-pay patients, hospitals have financial assistance programs for reduced or free care, depending on a patient's ability to pay. Hospitals can even negotiate lower rates and payment plans individually with self-pay patients. **Therefore, all uninsured patients are encouraged to contact the hospital to work out details up front.**

Though PricePoint cannot provide the consumer with complete cost information per service per patient, the site is a great start to help South Carolinians understand healthcare prices and plan accordingly. Providence Hospitals is proud to be a contributor.

For more information, go to SCPricePoint.org.

About Providence Hospitals, a ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System:

Providence Hospitals is the leading provider of cardiovascular and orthopedic services in the Midlands. Providence is composed of two hospitals, thirteen physician practices, a network of rehabilitation centers, two sleep centers, a school of cardiac diagnostics and is an accredited chest pain center. In total, Providence employs more than 2,000 dedicated staff.

Founded in 1938 by the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine, Providence is known statewide for outstanding clinical quality and compassionate care. The Providence open heart surgery program has ranked consistently in the top 15% of open heart programs for the past six and one-half years. Both the orthopedics and cardiac services have received the South Carolina BlueCross BlueShield Blue Distinction Center designation. For more information, visit www.providencehospitals.com.

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