



## NEWS

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### **WHAIC Web site Shows Charges for Hospital ER and “Top 25” Inpatient Services**

**MADISON (February 4, 2009)-----** The Wisconsin Hospital Association Information Center (WHAIC) today added two new reports on its PricePoint Web site ([www.WIPricePoint.org](http://www.WIPricePoint.org)) that expand the amount of information that consumers can now access about hospital charges.

The new reports include a summary of the charges for the 25 most common reasons for hospitalization in Wisconsin. The hospital-specific “Top 25” report provides the median charge for maternity stays, appendectomies, and knee or hip replacements, to name just a few.

The second report shows hospital-specific charges for selected non-life-threatening diagnoses that are commonly treated in a hospital emergency department, but might also be handled in an urgent care setting. If the hospital has urgent care services available, charges for the same diagnosis treated in the urgent care are also displayed.

The new reports build on Wisconsin hospitals’ commitment to make hospital costs and billing policies more transparent. First launched in 2005, the PricePoint Web site provides hospital-specific charges and financial data related to care provided in all hospitals and in Medicare-certified ambulatory surgery centers in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin hospitals have led the country in their willingness to share information on the cost, quality and safety of the care they provide in their communities. WHAIC Vice President Joe Kachelski said the new reports on PricePoint are consumer-friendly and easy to find. He said the goal is to encourage patients to ask questions about their insurance coverage and the billing process in advance of receiving services whenever possible.

“Wisconsin hospitals want patients to be partners in all aspects of their care when possible. PricePoint is designed to help consumers have a better understanding of charges in advance of their treatment,” Kachelski said.

Kachelski said a growing number of consumers are interested in learning about hospital and surgery center charges. He added, “As people assume more financial responsibility for their health care decisions through higher deductibles and co-payments, their desire for information increases. PricePoint is a good place to start their research.”

All of the data on the PricePoint Web site is collected and published by the WHA Information Center. The WHAIC has collected and disseminated complete, accurate and timely data about charges and services provided by Wisconsin hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers under contract with the Wisconsin Department of Administration since 2004.

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