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Legislature to Take Up Health-Care Transparency

Two bills that would address health-care transparency have been introduced in this year's session of the Oregon Legislature, including one backed by the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems.



Senate Bill 900, which has 10 legislative sponsors and the support of the OAHHS, would require median prices for the 50 most common inpatient procedures and 100 most common outpatient procedures to be posted on an Oregon Health Authority website. Oregon maintained a similar database until it was eliminated during the most recent recession.

Under SB900, the price data for inpatient and outpatient procedures would be pulled from All Payers All Claims database, which is maintained by the Oregon Health Authority and is comprised of medical and pharmacy claim information collected from the health insurance payers of Oregon residents.

Michael Bennett, Asante's director of revenue cycle, said last week in [an interview with KTVL-TV](#) in Medford that

health-care transparency is gaining momentum around the country. He said Oregon providers are being progressive by advocating such an approach.

"The value of the program in Oregon is (that) it's a collaboration between hospitals and it is not being forced on us," Michael told KTVL. "We are for making things more transparent for patients and that's a mindset here in Oregon."

The other piece of legislation, Senate Bill 891, is backed by the Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG). It would require health-care organizations to post prices for Oregon's 100 most common inpatient and the 100 most common outpatient services. The prices, listed online and at clinic locations, would include charges that are billed to insurance companies and uninsured patients. The SB891 data would also include the amounts allowed by various payers, such as Medicare and insurance carriers.

Critics of the OSPIRG bill maintain that it would be a burden on health-care providers and potentially confusing to consumers.

Asante News is published every Tuesday. Deadline for submission of articles is every Friday. Send via e-mail to asantenews@asante.org.
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