



AMERICAN SURGICAL HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

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The American Surgical Hospital Association (ASHA), representing physician owned hospitals, believes that quality and price transparency mean value for healthcare consumers and are natural extensions of our focus on patient choice, high quality and low cost healthcare alternatives. ASHA's mission is to improve the healthcare industry through education, innovation and transparency in our members' dealings with their patients and the public.

- We believe that patients have a right to access clear and understandable information regarding the cost of their healthcare.
- We believe that patients have a right to information that will assist them in choosing the best quality care available.
- We believe that in order for the healthcare industry to best serve patients they must be educated, responsible consumers.
- We believe that the healthcare industry must respond quickly to societal demands for information.
- We believe that all providers and participants in the healthcare industry must work together to navigate the issues, undertake a major industry "renovation" and, ultimately, establish an effective and practical system of transparency and consumer driven healthcare.

In order to realize its mission, ASHA has established an internal working committee specifically on the issue of price and quality transparency. This committee has, in turn, established the following five-part initiative:

1. Proactively voice the support of physician owned hospitals for price and quality transparency through a media relations and public information campaign;
2. Launch a public education initiative, including tools to assist patients in ensuring that they receive healthcare value, i.e., the highest quality

healthcare at the best price, which will be posted on the ASHA website and made readily available to interested parties;

3. Encourage ASHA members to post their Medicare reimbursement rates on their websites as an initial step toward price transparency;
4. Gather information from the physician owned hospital industry regarding current interest in further pricing disclosure, concerns over disclosure, and next appropriate steps to establish a transparent and patient-friendly healthcare industry; and
5. Host a Summit on the issue of price and quality transparency, inviting leaders from a full cross-section of the industry to attend and participate in a discussion of how to best accomplish the end goal.

At ASHA, we understand the obstacles that must be overcome in order to construct a healthcare system that remains sustainable in the long term. Achieving price and quality transparency is a very necessary step in the right direction. We also recognize that the issue of transparency is not a new one. The struggle for patient friendly healthcare has been ongoing for some time. Without the cooperation of all involved and a true dedication to the cause by at least a few, the patient's right to true choice will once again be denied.

ASHA is encouraged by the dedication with which the Administration and Congress are pursuing the cause of healthcare value for patients. Such leadership is the ultimate key to successful healthcare reform. We would like to express our appreciation to those who have recognized the need for educated patient choice and consumer driven healthcare. We are ready to lend our assistance to Congress and the Administration and willing to spend our time, talent and resources in the admirable push toward transparency in healthcare.