March 23, 2015

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Act Now for a Healthy Oregon Releases Report on Oregon's Most Expensive Hospitals
Analysis shows that some Oregon hospitals charge patients nearly three times the cost for the same procedure at other hospitals

Portland, Ore. – SEIU Local 49's Act Now for a Healthy Oregon campaign today released a white paper comparing prices for common procedures at non-profit hospitals in Oregon. Based on Inpatient Discharge Data from the Oregon Health Authority, the report found that hospitals charge "wildly different prices" for the same diagnosis, with the most expensive hospitals in Oregon charging patients **three times as much** as the state's least expensive hospitals.

"Can you imagine buying a car without knowing what it costs, or which dealer is cheapest, and just waiting for the bill to show up in the mail a few months later to find out how much you owe?" asked Meg Niemi, President of SEIU Local 49. "That's basically the world of hospital pricing today, despite the fact that healthcare is one of the most expensive services we buy. Oregonians deserve to know which hospitals charge the most so they can make informed decisions about where they receive care."

The report found that the **top ten most expensive hospitals** are located in both urban and rural areas across the state:

  1 - Sky Lakes Medical Center, Klamath Falls
  2 - Asante Rogue Regional Medical Center, Medford
  3 - Legacy Emanuel Hospital & Health Center, Portland
  4 - McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center, Springfield
  5 - Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center, Portland
  6 - Mercy Medical Center, Roseburg
  7 - Providence Medford Medical Center, Medford
  8 - Bay Area Hospital, Coos Bay
  9 - St. Charles Medical Center, Bend
  10 - Asante Three Rivers Medical Center, Grants Pass

(more)

In one dramatic example cited in the report, a patient who receives and appendectomy and stays overnight in the hospital would be charged $30,117 at McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center in Springfield - versus only $9,055 at Wallowa Memorial Hospital in Enterprise.

The report also found that top price doesn't mean top quality; in fact, high-price hospitals actually performed worse in 30-day readmissions and postsurgical deaths than low-price hospitals.

"The average hospital revenue per patient has increased by almost fifty percent over the past five years, but higher prices don't mean better care," said Niemi. "It's time to bring transparency to hospital pricing so consumers know what they're getting for their money."

Next Wednesday, March 25, the Oregon Senate Committee on Health Care will hold public hearings on two bills aimed at increasing transparency and oversight in hospital pricing. Senate Bill 665 creates a Hospital Rate Commission charged with overseeing hospital charges and regulating price increases, and Senate Bill 891 requires hospitals to disclose the actual prices charged for the 100 most common procedures.

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SEIU's Act Now for a Healthy Oregon campaign is working to achieve the goal of keeping our communities healthy by achieving the Triple Aim: improving quality, enhancing access, and increasing affordability of care. SEIU is the largest healthcare union in the country with 2.1 million health care workers. In Oregon and SW Washington, SEIU represents 15,000 health care providers across the continuum of care and is the second largest purchaser of healthcare in the state.