

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

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Health Care Sharing Members Have Sought Transparent Pricing for Decades

The Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries Applauds the Biden Administration's Beefed-Up Enforcement Against Hospitals Who Hide Prices from Patients

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Since January 1, 2021, hospitals have been required to make prices available to patients for various procedures, but a recent [Biden Administration regulation finalized earlier this month](#) will help Health Care Sharing Ministry members, and other patients everywhere, to find and use those prices in the future. Cost transparency may be new to some patients and medical professionals, but seeking transparency is nothing out of the ordinary for members of Health Care Sharing Ministries (HCSMs).

There are more than a million and a half members of Health Care Sharing Ministries, according to data from the *Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries (The Alliance, ahcsm.org)*. *The Alliance* is dedicated to protecting and preserving the rights of their members, and Christians in general, to engage in healthcare sharing as a viable solution for managing their medical expenses. Some ministries systematically and aggressively negotiate medical bills down on behalf of their members—often obtaining for patients prices significantly lower than those associated with commercial insurance. Others coach their members how to get the lowest price from providers directly by using discounted cash prices. Others encourage cost-saving care arrangements such as direct primary care or bundled surgeries or maternity packages. Many Health Care Sharing Ministries have been on their own for decades in identifying and using pricing data to help their members get the best prices for health care. Given how few hospitals were actually complying with the new requirements—as few as [1 in 20](#)—*The Alliance* applauds the finalization of the Biden Administration proposal to significantly increase penalties for non-complying hospitals, and to end the price-hiding games played by hospitals who do post their data but try to make it hard to find or use.

“For decades, Health Care Sharing Ministries have helped their members navigate to higher-quality, lower-cost sites of care—that’s nothing new for us,” said Katy Talento, executive director of The Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries. “Our members rely on each other to seek this highest-value care because they are communities of faith accountable to one another to stretch their charitable giving as far as possible.

Now, with the recently announced beefed-up enforcement of the federal hospital price transparency requirements, we are eager to expand our strategic partnerships to include more and more price-transparent doctors and hospitals.

“The Biden Administration’s proposed improvements to the price transparency enforcement program will put the kibosh on a number of games that hospitals have played to prevent patients, employers, aggregators and app developers from finding their price data, including blocking full electronic access, imposing barriers to inhibit search engines from finding the data files, burying the files under a mountain of clicks and navigation, and so forth. The final rule also smacks down the outrageous behavior by hospitals to make it nearly impossible to get info on ‘shoppable’ services through an out-of-pocket estimator tool, by allowing queries only to users who input burdensome, often personally identifiable data in order to see the price estimate. They also return ‘estimated price ranges’ in their estimator tools instead of the actual price. The Alliance celebrates these pro-patient proposals that will help make secret health care prices a relic of the past.”

Talento continued, “The penalty for hospitals not complying with the hospital price transparency rule will now be as high as \$2 million a year—which honestly should be raised even higher—but it’s a welcome improvement. For many years, health care reform was a partisan issue. Ending secret prices is so overwhelmingly popular that it’s no longer a question of Republicans versus Democrats—it’s about the health care industry special interests versus the rest of us.”

Founded in 2007 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., *The Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries* was established as a 501(c)(6) trade organization to represent the common interests of Health Care Sharing Ministries which are facilitating the sharing of health care needs (financial, emotional, and spiritual) by individuals and families, and their participants. *The Alliance* engages with federal and state regulators and policy makers, members of the media, and the Christian community to provide accurate and timely information on Health Care Sharing Ministries.

Learn more about *The Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries* visit www.ahcsm.org or follow the ministry on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

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