



FACT SHEET | Center for a Healthy America

IMPROVING HOSPITAL PRICE TRANSPARENCY IN WISCONSIN

Hannah Anderson | September 2024

JUST 40% OF WISCONSIN HOSPITALS ARE COMPLIANT WITH FEDERAL HOSPITAL PRICE TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- Prices for healthcare services can vary greatly by location. In Wisconsin, the lowest [cost](#) for a routine colonoscopy is \$88, while the highest cost is \$1,940.
- A patient could save up to \$1,852 by knowing about or going to a different hospital in the state for this procedure.

NEXT STEPS TO IMPROVE COMPLIANCE IN WISCONSIN

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services finalized a rule in November 2019 that requires hospitals to publish prices. Since January 2021, hospitals have been required to publish a machine-readable file of five types of standard charges for all items and services. They must also create a consumer-friendly, shoppable list of 300 items and services, including 70 identified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).
- Full compliance with the federal rule, as defined by CMS, remains low nationwide. A February 2024 Patient Rights Advocate report estimates that about one-third of hospitals nationwide are fully compliant.
- **Just [40%](#) of hospitals surveyed (17 out of 42) in Wisconsin are fully compliant.**
- However, state policies can encourage greater compliance with federal requirements, giving patients more control over their care and wallets.

HOSPITAL PRICE TRANSPARENCY WOULD HELP WISCONSINITES SAVE MONEY

- Require hospitals to publish all standard charges for items and services, including gross charges, negotiated rates with insurers, and cash prices, in a machine-readable format, such as a spreadsheet, on their websites.
- Mandate hospitals to maintain a consumer-friendly list of charges for at least 300 “shoppable” services, including any ancillary services like an MRI or physical therapy.
- Prohibit hospitals from initiating or pursuing financial debt collection actions against patients for items or services provided when the hospital is not in compliance with the price transparency requirements.
- Allow patients to initiate civil actions against non-compliant hospitals that pursue financial debt collection.

