



CONSUMERS FOR FAIR HOSPITAL PRICING

Legislative Priorities

The high and rising cost of hospital care is a leading driver of our nation's health care affordability and quality crisis. Nearly half of all Americans have reported having to forgo medical care due to cost,¹ and over 100 million people in America are experiencing record levels of medical debt.² Due to decades of unchecked health care industry consolidation and anti-competitive business practices, hospitals and large hospital systems are setting inflated and irrational prices that have little to do with the actual cost or quality of the care they offer.³ Fundamentally, the business interests of the hospital sector are at odds with the health and financial security of our nation's families.

The time for change is now!

Consumers for Fair Hospital Pricing, a coalition of leading organizations representing families, individuals and health care consumers, has developed a set of legislative policy priorities that focuses on three key areas that are critical to making hospital care higher quality and more affordable for our nation's families. These focus areas include:

- 1. Increase and strengthen price and quality data transparency** by advancing policies that make health care prices and data about the quality of care openly available to the public and policymakers, helping to expose hospital prices so that policymakers, researchers and consumers can see how irrational these prices have become and take more targeted action.
 - » *This could include establishing a national all-payer claims database (APCD), codifying and strengthening the Hospital Price Transparency rule and the Transparency in Coverage rule, and enacting ownership transparency reforms.*
- 2. Fix market failures, including efforts to promote competition within health care markets**, by advancing policy solutions that prevent further harmful consolidation within and across U.S. health care markets and prohibit hospitals and big hospital systems from using their monopoly power to set irrationally high and rising health care prices.
 - » *This could include enacting site-neutral payments and honest billing reforms, ending anti-competitive contracting practices, and strengthening anti-trust enforcement (for example, allowing the Federal Trade Commission to challenge anti-competitive practices of nonprofit entities).*
- 3. End price gouging by hospitals and large hospital systems** by advancing policy solutions that stop big hospital systems from setting inflated and irrational health care prices.
 - » *This could include increasing federally approved opportunities for states to adopt and operate global hospital budgets and other state tools, such as health care cost growth targets, that rein in rising health care costs and unaffordable care.*

Consumers for Fair Hospital Pricing is a coalition of leading organizations representing families, individuals and health care consumers, that have come together to take on the harmful pricing practices and anti-competitive behavior of hospitals and large hospital systems. Our mission is to ensure that every person has access to high-quality hospital care that helps to keep them and their families healthy at a price they can afford. To achieve this goal, we must fundamentally realign the business interests of the hospital sector with the health and financial well-being of our nation's families.

For more information on member groups and their respective missions, please visit [Consumers for Fair Hospital Pricing](#).

Endnotes

¹ Megan Brenan, "Record High in U.S. Put Off Medical Care Due to Cost in 2022," Gallup, January 17, 2023, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/468053/record-high-put-off-medical-care-due-cost-2022.aspx>; "New Survey Finds Large Number of People Skipping Necessary Medical Care Because of Cost," NORC at the University of Chicago, press release, March 26, 2018, <https://www.norc.org/NewsEventsPublications/PressReleases/Pages/survey-finds-large-number-of-people-skipping-necessary-medical-care-because-cost.aspx>.

² Noam N. Levey, "100 Million People in America Are Saddled with Health Care Debt," KFF Health News, June 16, 2022, <https://khn.org/news/article/diagnosis-debt-investigation-100-million-americans-hidden-medical-debt/>.

³ Robert A. Berenson et al., *Addressing Health Care Market Consolidation and High Prices* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, January 2020), https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/101508/addressing_health_care_market_consolidation_and_high_prices_1.pdf.